The Analysis of Iran's Art and Cultural Policies in the Post- Revolutionary Period: Special Reference to Animation

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Ⅰ. Introduction

This study attempts to examine the changing approaches to art and cultural policies since the Islamic Revolution of 1979. Followed by the analysis of general trends in the last 39 years, this article delineates characteristics of the policies over the past ten years when changes have become evident. A special focus is made on dramatic arts, and animation which the government of Iran has particularly drawn its attention and recognized its significance. In response to the government-led production of animation, negotiation strategies between the artists and the producers in this field and the government will be discussed in the final section of this article. A trend of gradual expansion of the producers' autonomous space will also be noted as an emerging phenomenon in today's Iran.

Despite the fact that Iran's government was predicted to fall within a few years since the Revolution, Iran has recently been one of the most politically stable countries in the region. The solidarity of the state has often generated an argument, particularly among American and European scholars, that solidness of the government indicates Iran's rigid framework of Islamic theocracy founded on militant Islam. For example, Mehdi Khalaj at the Washington Institute considered that Iran's militarization of cultural areas was seen through its "soft power" approach but insisted that such a policy was failing as the Iran's regime may not be able to cope with the emerging social trends (2012, 1).

It is generally conceived that Islamic ideology has shaped the government policy in post-revolutionary Iran. Cultural policies are not the exception. The state has monopolized not only the production of art and culture but that of artists. However, the review of Iran's art and cultural policymaking in the post-

revolutionary period shows that Iran went through different phases in its art and cultural policies. Despite such visible changes, few studies have been conducted to shed light on how the government has coopted with the changing reality of the growing youth population. What policies has Iran employed in art and culture? How has the government adjusted its art and cultural policies to maintain Islamic ideology? How has the government negotiated with the people, particularly the artists? The following sections will answer these questions.

Ⅱ. The Post-Revolutionary State Policies in Art and Culture: General Trends

1. Islamic Revolution and State as Guardian of Culture

The Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979 was fundamentally a cultural and ideological revolution. The Islamic government which took over the state power after the revolution primarily defined its role in a religious and cultural framework. The cultural goals of the government originated from two directions. One was rooted in the belief of modernist theoreticians such as Jalal Al-e-Ahmad and Ali Shariati. Al-e- Ahmad, an Iranian secular intellectual, initially emphasized the necessity of removing effects of West-toxication (Gharb Zadegi) in Iran to regain Iranian political and cultural identity. Ali Shariati, a key ideologue of the Revolution, adopted this concept and identified it as the result of the Shah's modernization policies.

The other direction was the call for the regeneration of authentic Islamic culture which was considered to have declined during the past Pahlavi regime. Religious thinkers such as Ayatollah Beheshti, Ayatollah Motahari and Ayatollah Khomeini emphasized the need to strengthen Islamic religious values.

On this basis, the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran officially employed the concept of Velayat-e Faqih (the Rule of Ulama) as the centerpiece of the Iran's government and political system to allow multilateral interference and presence of the government in all cultural developments of the state in order to establish a type of religious society. As Bayat and Janbaz argued, "the government interfered in all aspects of social life with the hope of creating a cultural utopia and considered cultural affairs as political affairs and undertook its responsibilities" (Bayat & Janbaz, 2011, 35). In 1985, according to the order

issued by Khomeini, the Supreme Cultural Revolution Council (SCRC)[1] was established to act as a center for cultural policy making.

2. State Monopolization of Media

In the above-mentioned context, the media, through radio and television broadcasts, has played the task of preserving and promoting national and cultural values, namely Islamic-Shia ideals. The concept of "fight against West-toxication or Westernization", being one of the ideals of Iran's revolution, originally meant Iran's fight against western technologies which had entered Iran during the 1960's and the 70's.

It was assumed that they made the body of the Iranian society sick.[2] However the leader of the revolution, Ayatollah Khomeini did not reject media technologies altogether; instead, he believed such "features of modernity" were in need of a thorough "cleansing": the elimination of Western cultural values such as individualism, the pursuit of liberty without fulfilling one's social responsibility (Mottahedeh, 2008, 2).

As a result, the broadcasting was "no longer an instrument of the Great Satan,[3] but became a powerful tool for spreading the message of the Revolution and Islam" (Khiabany, 2009, 165). Television broadcasting is the most popular and available mass media in Iran which has enjoyed a remarkable expansion and development after the revolution.

Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic (VVIR) which later changed its name to IRIB (Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting), was founded as a public service based on a profound reform of the previous Shahi TV[4] in order to Islamicize the medium. IRIB was under the direct control of the Supreme Leader.

In this process of Islamizing broadcasting, various reforms have taken place in the organization. Despite state effort to incorporate the voice of the people in the program, the content of radio and TV broadcasting was, in reality, the mere reflection of what the government considered the voice of the people and thus became weapons of the government's propaganda (Sreberny and Mohammadi 1994, 196).

Thus, IRIB was the propaganda tool of the Khomeini-led government to preach Iran's Islam, the so-called revolutionary values and spirits such as independence, resistance and Islamic values. The Revolutionary government in the formative period of the Islamic Republic called for national mobilization in

the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988). While the Ministry of Islamic Guidance and Culture (MIGC) has generally played an important role in shaping media and press policies, the power of IRIB was much stronger. IRIB channels were the only TV channels until 1995. The government also established the Islamic Propagation Organization which has closely worked with the MIGC.

The above-mentioned state monopolization of the media continued until the end of the Iran-Iraq War. The reconstruction period (1989-1996) of the war-torn state of Iran witnessed a change in the government management from revolutionary and ideological to more pragmatic policies. This change was reflected in the government approaches to culture and art described in the following section.

Ⅲ. Changing Policies and Emerging Dilemmas

1. Toward the More Audience Receptive Programming

The post-war period of Iran has faced various political, economic and social challenges. The death of Ayatollah Khomeini in 1989 brought about a new need of state legitimacy. The new Supreme Leader Khamenei came to power in 1989. Economic reconstruction called for changes in policies for women's participation in the labor market, which constituted a social and cultural debate. Due to political and economic changes which took place in the reconstruction and subsequent periods of the reformist government led by Muhammad Khatami (1997-2005), art and cultural policymaking has also faced some challenges.

One of the biggest challenges was how to adjust to the new realities of Iran's society in which the new and young generation and the emerging middle class people had different tastes and expectations on the broadcasts.

There was an increase in people using illegal satellite dishes. It goes without saying that the popular use of internet also increased since the middle of the 1990's. People started to receive international TV programs among which have been produced in the Iranian diaspora communities in the world. Under these circumstances, IRIB faced the need to reconsider measures on safeguarding its broadcasting as well as the national interest which was presumed to have been secured by a rather repressive broadcasting management.

With a growing number of the younger generation who are very indifferent to the religiously oriented IRIB channels, the government undertook different

measures: increasing the number of IRIB TV channels and broadcasting foreign movies and programs which are not fully consistent with Islamic rules and guidelines,[5] consequently tackling and visualizing controversial social issues which have been regarded as taboo in Iranian traditional society.[6] The government has also increased the production of commercial and entertaining films and serials, expanding the provincial networks to broadcast local programs. Furthermore, measures were taken in increasing the official or state-sponsored, and pro-governmental private satellite channels while also jamming foreign satellites, and increasing internet filtering.

The above-mentioned changes in the direction of the state policy can be traced through the emergence of a comprehensive policy framework, "Five-Year Plans for National Economy and Social and Cultural Development (FYDP)." A series of FYDP have been issued by the government in the last two and half decades and have projected the art and culture policies of the state on a macro level.[7]

The review of defined cultural goals and policies in these plans shows a remarkable change from the 1990's to the period after 2000. For example, in the first FYDP (1990-1994), the focus of cultural policy was on the nationalization of cultural activities and the avoidance of "governmentalization"[8] for cultural affairs. On the other hand, the main aim of the second FYDP (1995-1999) was to fight against "cultural invasion." The conservative faction of the government considered the massive proliferation of the foreign-sponsored satellites, Persian news and TV channels which IRIB itself recognized as attractive, as a sign of cultural invasion.

Both plans for govermentalization of cultural affairs and the fight against cultural invasion were partially implemented. The above-mentioned partial implementation of the two FYDPs led to a new policy. The third FYDP (2001-2005) was planned to improve the management system and implement necessary structural reforms such as the promotion of the private sector.

The government decided to allocate US16 million to IRIB to produce original films and programs. IRIB thereafter started to mobilize two other affiliated organizations, Sima Film and Saba Cultural Artistic Center. While Sima Film provided facilities needed for producing films and programs, Saba facilitated "services and facilities for animated, computer generated audio-visual programs" (Khiabary, 2009, 174-175). Thus, these two IRIB affiliated production

organizations started to play a significant role in making TV films and animated and computer generated programs more appealing to the audience.

The Fourth FYDP (2006-2011) being associated with Iran's 20-Year Perspective Document stated the position of Iran in 2024. Here, much weight was placed on the issue of national identity. Moreover, the role of the media, particularly animation was highlighted as a key policy agenda in protecting, developing, and promoting national and cultural identity. This emphasis on the construction of national and cultural identity through the media has manifested a new approach under the name of "soft power", which will be discussed later.

2. The Construction of the Civil Society and "Beautifying (Ziba Sazi) Public Space"

The emergence of the reformist administration (1997-2005), led by President Muhammad Khatami marked a turning point in Iran's art and cultural policy. His initiative in promoting the "Civil Society" (Jame'ye-madani, literally meaning Medina's Society) became a driving force for liberalizing public space by moderating press regulations and codes and by establishing art and culture centers. The Bahman Cultural Center (Farhangsara-ye Bahman) was already established during the Rafsanjani's period (1989-1997) symbolizing the state-led promotion of art and cultural events, and continued to be active during the Khatami's reign.

Yet, the more obvious support of the government in cultural and art activities was shown in this period, represented by the House of Artists (Khaneye Honarmandan) established in 2000, and the Saba Cultural Artistic Center (Moassess-e Farhangi va Honari-ye Saba) in 2001 (Gligor, 2014, kindle,2252/6576). It was also in the Khatami's administration that several dozens of state-owned museums were established and hundreds of private galleries received permission to open (Ibid, 330/6376).

The increasing number of art galleries and museums symbolized not only the promotion of the civil society but the attempt to "beautifying" (Ziba Sazi) public space. Moreover, it was an effort of making public space more entertaining (Ibid, 1520/6376).

This opening of the art and cultural areas was led by Ataollah Mohajerani, then Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, who was appointed by then President Khatami in 1997. Mohajerani was one of the strongholds of the

Khatami's administration promoting the freedom of expression as well as supporting social and cultural activities. A reform oriented and moderate thinker, Alireza Samiazar, was also appointed by Mohajerani to take on the post as Director of The Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (TMOCA) as well as that of Director General of the Visual Arts Office that was affiliated to the MCIG (Ibid. 3123/6376).

On the contrary to the above-mentioned state-led promotion of cultural and art activities, the freedom of expression and publication generally curtailed from Khatami's second term to the Ahmadinejad's period. A growing number of secularist and reformist journalists and writers began to be suppressed after the Student Revolt of Tehran University's Dormitory in July 1999. Dozens of publishing houses lost their permission to continue. However, this general trend backlashing publications was not directed to the art and culture policies. This is partially because of a paradoxical relationship between the state's desire to safeguard national and cultural identity and the state's deepening policy to accommodate the youth. The more the state endeavors to secure national and cultural identity through arts and cultural works, the more it needs to relax or moderate regulations in broadcasting and public space so as to attract the audience including the youth.

Ⅳ. The Emergence of Soft Power Approach Toward Opening a Discursive Space

1. The Discourses of Soft War and Soft Power

As analyzed earlier, the government developed much concerns about "cultural invasion." Yet, it was ironical that the phenomenon of cultural invasion was partially the sub-product of the government's employing a more accommodative approach to the audience.

The idea of cultural invasion was closely linked with that of "soft war." According to statements made by the Islamic Development Organization in Iran, a post-revolutionary institute that has promoted "Islamic Revolutionary" (meaning, Iran's Shi'i revolutionary) values, soft war is "any kind of psychological warfare action and media propaganda which targets the society and induces the opposite side to accept the failure without making any military conflict" (Price, 2012 ,2400).

Though there is no clear definition given by the government, the term "soft war" started to be employed by Supreme Leader Khamenei around 2012 when nuclear negotiations appeared to be at a deadlock. His reference to soft war was generally in the context of his criticism against the US policy toward Iran. Given the fact that Iran had been under economic sanctions and has a confrontational relationship with Israel and the US, Khomenei insisted that the US and Israel (referred to as Zionist regime) imposed economic sanctions and launched incessant political criticisms against Iran's policies toward Iraq and Syria as well as Iran's nuclear energy policy. Khamenei regarded such characteristic of the policy as soft war implying that there was no real military war against Iran but emphasizing that a series of the US antagonistic statements and policies attempted to weaken Iran's revolutionary values and harm the establishment from the inside.

Thus, soft war as interpreted by Khamenei meant whatever rhetoric and tactic the US uses to attack Iran verbally, not militarily. It is soft as opposed to military. It is sort of war which is psychological in the sense that media was utilized as a propaganda tool as noted above (Price, 2012, 2400).

As a rhetorical counterattack to the soft war that Khomenei considers Iran was placed in, Iranian academic and media circles have developed the idea of "soft power." It is to be noted that Supreme Leader Khamenei has not used the phrase "soft power" in his speeches. The idea of "soft power" has been first used among Iranian intellectuals as a key element of Iran's defense and security strategies.

As is well known, the concept of soft power originated in the works of Joseph Nye in the post-Cold War era. Nye argued that an alternative way of exercising power by using culture and communications replaced military power and that the real power is the ability to influence the behavior of others to get the desired outcomes in the age of information (2009, 160-163).[9]

One of the central points of Nye's thoughts on soft power is the use of culture as an important part of public diplomacy (Nye, 2004, 102-103). By referring to the idea of cultural or "public diplomacy," Iranian media and academicians adopted the term soft power as a representative approach of the state to exercise a countermeasure to the West's launching soft war against Iran (Price, 2012, 2397).

On the other hand, the notion of soft power and that of soft war changed over the years. Its real meaning in actual practice depended on the political and international environment Iran was placed in. When Iran faced a series of verbal attack from Israel on possible military attack, soft war was identified as "Zionist" intrigue by the Supreme Leader. The government also started to employ the strategy of soft power as Iran's non-military, security policies toward Iraq and Syria (Akbarzadeh & Conduit, 2016, 158-162). As a matter of fact, political and logistical involvements of the Islamic Republic Revolutionary Guards Corp (IRGC) in Iraq and Syria are today referred to as soft approach (Ibid).

In the context of Iran's contemporary art and cultural policies, the debate on soft power between the government and stakeholders in art production is mainly on the government's involvement or interference in art and cultural activities. The recent development of this debate will be briefly covered in the next section.

2. Emerging Discursive Space: Dialogs between the Government and "Artists and Scholars"

The debate on soft power in the arts and cultural activities started to become more visible in the last five years. A series of state-led conferences and seminars commenced since May 2014, such as the Conference of "National Power in the Mirror of Dramatic Arts" held at the University of Arts in Tehran on June 2, 2014. The objective of the Conference was to initiate "a potential dialogue between the representatives of state and those in the field of art in academia."[10] The University of Arts in Tehran has been one of the leading universities in Iran that has historically produced many prominent artists: painters, sculptors, animation producers and so on. It was in this context that the above-mentioned conference was held in this university.

According to the symposium's discussants and latterly published proceedings, the Conference of National Power was primarily designed to analyze the potentiality of dramatic arts in theater, cinema and animation as the means of exercising soft power (Hosnaee, 2014, 7 & 11). The conference covered eleven academic seminars and three round tables with the participation of researchers and scholars from academic circles. Representatives from IRIB, the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs (MOFA), and the Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces Logistics (MODAFL) were major participants from the government.

Since the objective of the conference was to provide an opportunity for opening up "a discursive space" between artistic research centers and strategic and defense research centers (Ibid, 5), in addition to plenary sessions, several separate panels with specific themes on the relationship between dramatic arts and national power were conducted.

According to Saeedeh Mousavi, the conference speaker and observer, the idea of soft power dominated the heated discussions both in the plenary and panel discussions. A group of lecturers representing the government put much emphasis on the role of soft power. For example, Mostafa Moslehzadeh and Kazem Gharib-Abadi, diplomats from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, articulated that the government expected dramatic arts to play the role of endorsing both the government's domestic and foreign policies. The use of the state's dramatic arts is, as they argued, an aspect of cultural and public diplomacy. They also insisted that the artists and scholars in this field should play a vital role for this purpose.

Thus, by interpreting soft power as manifested in cultural and public diplomacy which is presumably in the hand of the government, the government ultimately reduces the role of the artists to an instrument for the state to legitimize its policies. This dominant view was apparent from the government speakers.

An alternative view was expressed by many academicians and artists, particularly sociologists and semioticians. They argued that state-led productions of films and television programs still remained a "propaganda" approach, implicitly meaning the state's dominant discourse emphasizing Islamic values and revolutionary spirits. As a result, the programs were, as they stated, not reflecting political and social conditions and did not meet the needs of Iran's society.

By criticizing the current policies of the government, they argued that artists should be responsive to the demands of the society and thus stay independent from the control of the government in order to fulfill this task. Achieving such responsibility by the artists will be, they say, the basis for strengthening national power and solidarity (Moradi, 2014, 63).

Based on this alternative view of the state-artist relationship, a group of scholars and artists who hold this view suggested that IRIB as a national broadcasting medium should be more neutral and provide a foundation on which state and civil society can interact and mutually produce discourses (Azimifard, 2014, 60).

Discussions at this conference also touched on how much the art and cultural products should be designed to answer the audience. For example, Farzan Sojoodi, professor in the field of semiotics advocated the necessity of incorporating a "targeting audience" approach in the state-led broadcasting programs and films. In particular, he emphasized the significance of understanding the needs of the youth in Iran. Along this line, the filmmaker Majid Sheikh Ansari emphasized the role of animation as an effective source for making collective memories which can construct the identity of children and the youth, ultimately leading to social cohesion.

Those who emphasized the role of animation brought up the Japanese animation industry as an exemplified case of a state achieving soft power. A special reference was made to the animation series Captain Tsubasa (1983-1986) as a successful case which well utilized the popularly accepted baseball to generate a collective memory among the Japanese.

To explain the reason for putting much emphasis on animation, a few reasons should be addressed. First, much was shared through animation programs broadcasted on TV immediately after the Revolution. With the post-revolutionary elimination of dramas and films produced in the West, Japanese animation programs dominated TV programs as non-Western products and were mainly designed to target children for both educational and entertainment purposes. However, not only the children but adults also watched animation.

Second, owing to the state's reliance on the animation programs being the major TV channels, the government considered animation as an important tool to transmit political and religious ideology. Third, the global expansion of Japanese animation products as a pop culture reached the youth in contemporary Iran. Though Iranian people have been attracted to Japanese animation and manga, viewing of TV programs declined. In order to increase the viewing rate, the government promoted the production of animation by state owned broadcasting companies, and started to outsource parts of animation production to Iranian artists and producers.

Due to the constitutional constraint which limits privatization of industries, the promotion and construction of the animation industry still remains a question. However, a sign of the progress in opening further opportunities for privatization of animation production was visible at this conference.

A newly appointed director of Saba (Animation Center), Rahim Livani, stated in his introductory speech that Saba today considers economic orientation in animation production. This direction is in contrast with the official declaration of the center[11] giving Saba the mandate to produce "pure and religious animations" (Zarei, 2013). As is well known in Iran, IRIB has lost much audience partially because of the dominant features of religious animations.

As previously addressed, a quasi-privatization started in IRIB affiliated organizations. With the closing of its internal production studios in early 2016, decentralization of production in Saba began by subcontracting to private animation production companies on a contract-based framework. The separation of the Saba administration from IRIB's Pooya channel, an animation and children's TV channel considered to be the main medium for screening domestically produced animated films, has significantly expanded the domain of activities of the independent animation producers.[12]

The above-mentioned development has had a visible impact on the quality and to some degree the popularity of the programs. In addition, the launching of new children and youth channels like Nahal and Omid shows a policy shift heading for the production of more target oriented TV programs in terms of age. This trend has generally led to the development of an audience conscious approach: TV program producers started to pay more attention to the taste and preferences of their audience.[13]

Thus, the above-mentioned statement by Livani can be considered a sign of a developing tendency inside Saba to shift from its conventional educational and religious approach in animation production to something more entertaining. In order to achieve this, Saba is obviously required to expand autonomy of the artists in production in the long run. Though it is likely to take time until IRIB and Saba adopt this degree of expansion, the emerging audience oriented consciousness of IRIB's and Saba's is significantly manifested in the conference.

The above analysis of the conference discussions shows a newly emerging relationship between the state and artists. It is true that the speakers representing the government largely remained in the framework of the

propaganda approach. Yet, the fact that the conference was held in an attempt to create a space of dialog between policymakers and artists and scholars is, in itself, a new phenomenon. Moreover, it is to be noted that such an attempt actually led to a heated and continuous debate.

3. Increasing Interactions between Policymakers and Artists

In general, the state has maintained its control over broadcasting and national cinema by setting up a licensing system which closely supervises privately produced programs to verify their consistencies with Islamic rules and laws. Through this system, producers must follow specific and sometimes 'unwritten' codes in order to obtain the authorization for their programs. These codes are placed within the Islamic framework which determines the content, dialogue and language, sexuality, and violence of the programs produced.

However, there is much ambiguity in the government censorship and monitoring of production outsourced to the private sector. There is a general perception among outsourced producers that no specific guideline is provided by the government yet they should always follow some unwritten codes.[14] So-called self-censorship always exist in a society like Iran not only for artists but also for writers, as backlash often takes place after some moderation of press codes and liberalization of expression, during the political fluctuation period between reformism and conservatism.

As is often pointed out, less progress was made in economic privatization during the past administrations. Yet, the above-mentioned phenomenon of actual films and TV program outsourcing is an exceptional case in which the privatization policy of the Iran media functioned, and a paradox emerged in the field of the artists' expanding their involvement in the state-led enterprises, ie, TV and animation programming and production. Whether or not this engagement of the artists can be considered as an expansion of autonomous space requires further studies. Given the observation of the fact that the participation of artists in film and animation production is growing, the outsourcing effect is likely to widen the space for artists to negotiate with the government through their activities.

What is notable here is that the above-mentioned trends progressed regardless of whether the administration was reformist (Khatami's in 1997-2005) or conservative (Ahmadinejad in 2005-2012). Despite the fact that the

state monopolizes the ultimate decisions in art and cultural policies including media policy on the surface, an actual battle has started between the state and scholars, intellectuals, and artists.

V. Conclusion

Since the Islamic Revolution in 1979, the state has been a central actor in shaping art and cultural productions. Radio and TV programs as well as films that were publicly broadcasted contained religious and ideological values. Art and culture reflected in these programs as well as films were in the hand of the government, namely under management of the state authorities.

With the changing needs of the audience, particularly that of the growing young population, the government has experienced a dilemma. While continuously seeking for preservation of religious and ideological values in the art and cultural production, the government has faced the necessity to reform policies in order to maintain the role of art and cultural productions as a tool for state's political and religious propaganda.

The artists have generally responded to governmental directions in diverse and unexpected ways, often uncovering subtle critical views on the way authorities handle art and cultural productions. It can be observed that in recent years, the nonconformist approach by artists to policies and regulations of the establishment has led to the formation of a new discursive space which strives to push the government to reconsider its instrumental and cultural policies by participating in interactive dialogue with the artists.

While safeguarding of the national interests and social and cultural identity has been a priority to the state, the last decade in particular has witnessed a new phase of Iran's political development where Iran has internationally confronted cultural invasion or soft war. Government authorities and scholars and the artists together have developed the debate on soft power. Regardless of the obvious gap in the interpretation of "soft" or soft power between the state and society, the government has today accommodated more space for the artists than any other period since the Revolution. In this process, the government has mobilized the artists and scholars for their own benefit. However, the active engagement of the artists and scholars through dialog with the government as well as through their artistic production has accelerated the formation of a discursive space.

The state's concern for the growing young generation was a factor in promoting this emerging new wave, yet the blurred border between what is official and what is private also played a part in the opening of this discursive space.

Endnotes

1   The Supreme Cultural Revolution Council was in fact a continuation of the Cultural Revolution Headquarters established in 1980.
2   Al-e-Ahmad refers to a sense of intoxication caused by the West and western technologies which have sickened Iran in a way that the country, instead of being a producer and controller of technologies and machines, turned into a mere consumer, resulting in the decline of the country's producing abilities along with weakening of the Iranian traditional industries.
3   Great Satan has become a disdainful title for United States in the Iranian political and religious discourse, originally used by Iranian leader Ayatollah Khomeini to describe the Imperialistic nature of the United States.
4   Related to the Shah (King)
5   As Gholam Khiabani (2010, 176) has mentioned, IRIB still devotes time and effort to censor undesired elements of many foreign series and films. This approach leads to a kind of "free dubbing" that involves censoring of programs and changing the dialogues deemed inappropriate for the Iranian audience.
6   This tackling taboos and controversial social issues are especially visible in Iranian Cinema.
7   FYDPs are national plans, devised and directed by the government in order to decide and practice nationwide programs and direct the overall cultural development of the state. FYDPs have been revised every five years with various steps in planning, policymaking and designing cultural programs through legislative, executive, and judicial measures.
8   The process of de-governmentalization of the cultural sectors began from the first FYDP in 90s, and based on this policy the government of Iran is in charge for providing the required means and support for ceding the cultural organizations and associated centers to the general public. Privatization efforts were seriously followed by reformists of the Iranian government and society, resulting in the design of a more feasible and concrete plan to speed up the implementation of privatization in Iran in the 4th FYDP. Based on the 4th Five-Year Development Plan, privatization in the cultural sectors should lead to cultural development and economic promotion of cultural sectors by enhancing the quality of cultural goods and services, encouraging a competitive ambient, and creating new cultural resources with fair distribution.
9   Hans J. Morgenthau, Klaus Knorr, and Ray Cline were among the earliest intellectuals who studied possibilities of using cultural power and attractions in international relations.
10 [https://papers. iafor. org/sub mission04956/accessed September 20, 2017]
11 Doctoral Dissertation of Nasser Golmohammadi, *An analysis of the circumstances and factors that have influenced the development of Animation Industry in Iran in the 1960-2002 period*, 2003, pp. 205-230.

12　This is based on the observation of Saeedeh Mousavi who lived in Iran during this period.

13　Ibid.

14　The authors' interviews with outsourced producers conducted in June 2014 and August 2015 in Tehran showed this trend. All fifteen interviewees responded that they followed what they thought would be acceptable to the government as they otherwise may not receive a license for broadcasting their products on TV, and in this case should find other sources such as Home Video circulations (Resneye Pakhshe Khanegi) or online streaming service to sell their films.

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Abstract

The Analysis of Iran's Art and Cultural Policies in the Post- Revolutionary Period: Special Reference to Animation

Hisae Nakanishi & Saeedeh Mousavi

The objective of this study is to examine the changing approaches in art and cultural policies since the Islamic Revolution of 1979, particularly in the last decade when the changes have been more apparent. A special focus is made in the last section on dramatic arts, particularly animation where the government of Iran has drawn its attention and recognized the significance and where animation artists negotiate with the government to expand their autonomous space.

Since the Revolution the, state has been a central actor in shaping the art and cultural productions. Radio and TV programs as well as films that were publicly broadcasted contained religious and ideological values. Art and culture reflected in these programs as well as films were in the hand of the government, namely the management of the state authorities.

However, faced with the changing needs of the audience, particularly that of the growing population of the youth, the government has experienced a dilemma. On the one hand, it has continuously sought the preservation of religious and ideological values in the art and cultural production. On the other hand, it has faced the necessity of reforming the policies in order to maintain the role of art and cultural production as a tool for state's political and religious propaganda.

The artists in these fields have generally responded to these governmental directions in diverse and unexpected ways which often uncover subtle critical views against the way the authorities of the government have handled art and cultural activities. It is observed that in recent years, nonconformist approach of the artists' toward the policies and the regulations imposed by the establishment has led to the formation of a new discursive space that strives to push the government to reconsider its policies.

Though how to safeguard the national interests and social and cultural identity has constituted a priority of the state, the last decade has witnessed a new phase of Iran's political development in which Iran has internationally confronted cultural invasion or soft war. Both the government authorities and the scholars and the artists together have developed the debate on soft power. Regardless of the obvious gap of what state and society interpreted about what is "soft" or soft power, the government has today accommodated more space for the artists than any other period since the Revolution. In this process, the government has mobilized the artists and scholars for their own sake. However, the more active engagement of the artists and scholars through the participation of the dialog with the government as well as through their artistic production has accelerated the discursive space.