
Topographic - based Model of the Creative Art through Revolutionary Culture in Iran

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Abstract

If we accept this idea that in talking about art, there is a chasm between thought and unthought; debating on art theory in the sociohistorical context of after revolutionary Iran requires at least two items in which understanding and creating art meet one another: 1) Art as door separates intelligible from sensible, rational from irrational, and logos from pathos as well; and 2) Art as bridge not only joins together the sense and mind, but also folds and concocts these two areas of human being life. Doors divide lands into ostensibly independent parts. By doors we can recognize 'out' and 'in'. But the bridges links the land with another land in spite of the geographical limitations like water, rocks, etc. According to door metaphor, art makes a borderline between thought and unthought. Artists begin their activities based upon unconsciousness the social and political status quo have effect on them indirectly. Reversely, the bridge metaphor refers to unthinking thought and thinking unthought aspects of art creating. Thus, changing the frame of reference polarizes the entire art issue. After revolution, these two dimensions of art have been amalgamated in a concept named: 'culture'.

Simultaneously, culture has partially covered the variety of art activities and necessarily constituted an identity-centered front against the others' cultures. In the nation-state, art supports the idea of unity. Out of the nation-state, art initiates itself as the particular characteristic of our own culture among the other cultures. Apparently, the ambivalent usage of the culture culminates the polarization between creating and understanding art. Argumentatively, this paper attempts to deduce a model of theoretical basis by using contemporary aesthetic achievements toward reconciliation the conceptual thought with perceptual art creatively.

Key words: Aesthetic. Chaos Theory. Cusp. The intelligible. Mediator. The outside. The sensible.

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Introduction

Vividly, it is discernible that the after revolution development planning in Iran encounters with the new worldwide formations of communication and information. Main orientation toward art and art-disciplinary is determined by a general policies around the classical theory of culture. In modern age, nation-states tend to politicized aesthetic and also aestheticized politics around a problematic concept of culture. The experience of revolution and eight years imposed war clarifies an identity based upon religion (Islam), nationality (Iranianness), and language (Persian). Therefore, culture shapes like a triangle secured by social support (Abrahamian. 1982: 304-312).

Meanwhile, after collapsing USSR and its constellation, western culture redefines itself as a newly born discrepancy between 'global' and 'local'. Since then, each local culture is threatened with assaulting globalization. The amalgam of information technology and digitalization of all the human being history filled the sensational chasms seductively.

Concisely, art is an encounter between a world and worlds through affects and sensations¹. Nowadays, besieged by data and so-called information revolution, the mainstream tends toward reducing art as a symbolized data. Art is the way we all tend to think ourselves and our relation to the world. This study attempts to clarify the Deleuzian resistance upon

representational theory of art in which all arts show something instead of that art makes the "new" (O'Sullivan. 2006:144).

The work of art is explicated as self-expressive movements of the sensible which mode of existence is an epiphany of way of life. The main concept to understand Deleuzian scheme of art is "affect" (Deleuze.1990: 68). But before that we should explicate the precise concept of this term. Deleuze borrows affect from *Ethics*' Spinoza. Step by Step, Affect rises from the natural modality of the beings in the world (Lambert. 2002: 31-38).

Significantly, the relationship between art and culture constituted a model in which art appears as a contained of a container called 'culture'. According to this model, art changes into a conceptual 'frame of reference' for public as well as academic spheres. For instance, data-analyzing methodology spread across the art education disciplinary. Not only has this approach provided useful possibilities and efficient results, but also a problem around creativity and evolutionary modes of art. In contemporary era, art shows itself as a wave that would be modulate by other waves. If we replace wave metaphor to container-contained model of thought, it can be make a creative aspect toward human studies (especially art theory and art education). Art is not a happening in the cultural sphere, but it may be appeared as a modulating wave interwoven by the other waves in a cultural 'field'. Instead of following the preexistent culture, art

ought to create a modulated and renovated culture. The difference between these two interpretations of one phenomenon establishes a new effective variable: time-consciousness. By contrast that concept of art based upon a priori cognitive resources, creative art would be come through chaotic 'outside'. Among contemporary art thinkers, Gilles Deleuze concentrates on new figuration of sign where the cosmos and chaos cross each other in the name of an event we call it art, by definition (Lambert. 2002: 72-75). Representative art theory prefers transcendental brain by the way of depriving sensation and bodily encounters with creating and creative 'outside'. Attempting to elaborate Deleuze suggestions about art critically, it may be possible to help us understanding ever changing never changing essence of our own globalized culture.

The Boomerang of the Sensible

Jacques Ranciere (2011) believed in two different regimes of art through the wake of Modern era: representational regime and aesthetic regime. Ethnology of representational regime of art returns to ancient Greek. Basically, Plato and Aristotle established a hierarchical order in which the intelligible was superior to sensible. As a result of that context, the place of art and each creative activity of human being have been located under the place of 'thought' and understanding faculty. In the Modern era, the aesthetic

regime competes against representational theory of art. This new regime had been based on the hypothesis of equality between sensible and intelligible. Sensible people revolted the dominant intelligent authorities (Ranciere. 2011). Without aesthetic revolution, it could be impossible any sociopolitical basic change in modern age. Needless to say, the generalization of Ranciere theory of shaping an aesthetic regime on Islamic revolution requires a semi-juxtaposition of the sensible and intelligible.

In below, the topographical doughnut figure elucidates the transmutation of sensible and intelligible in before/after revolution phases. If somebody walks around this doughnut horizontally and on the same point of departure another one goes around vertically, both of them do not cross each other but the starting point. These two attribute the sensible and the intelligible. The sensible has to pass the creative direction horizontally, and the intelligible the doughnut topography of culture vertically. In the royalist despotic pre-revolution system, the authority idolized the doughnut of culture by separating the horizontal and vertical axis of sensation and thought. Therefore, it should be identified the starting and ending point in the image-space of culture (fig. 1).

The Diagram performs Before Revolution Cultural Sphere

Through the revolution, the geology of discrimination displaces with the algebra of equality. Now the new topographical shape of culture is the doughnut disfigured by a cusp. In topography, cusps look like temporal boomerang. Cusps have calculable finite area and incalculable infinite circumference. The positionality of cusped doughnut culminates new situation for everyone who want to go around the 'topos' (fig. 2). What happens if somebody tries to pass the cusped doughnut? Topologically, if everything tends go around this sort of surface, it should be crisscrossed by itself (Weeks. 2008: 53-55).

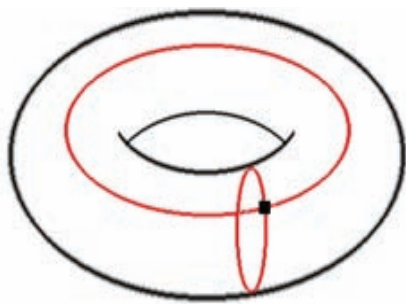


Figure (1): Doughnut (torus topological space)

The Diagram performs After Revolution Cultural Sphere.

Metaphorically, the cusped doughnut shows the relationship between the sensible and intelligible. If we concentrate on creativity, the thought is getting lost on the infinite ridge of cusp. On the other hand, if we turn to conceptual framework of understanding art, the creativity meets itself as such the shape is drawn. Thus, we are attempting to suggest some solutions to this confusion.

The function of 'outside'

Deleuze in one of his collected essays translated as *Negotiations* opened an entry about the situation in which everything not only is unbearable, but also unchangeable (Deleuze. 1995:146-149). The well-known example of this kind of

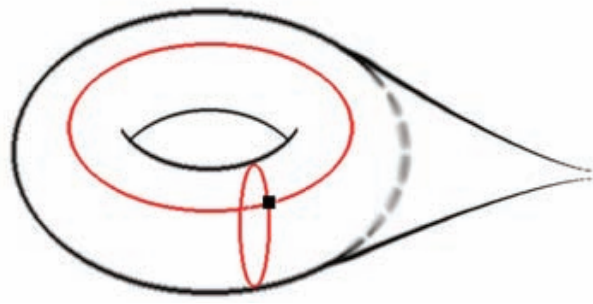


Figure (2): Cusped doughnut (torus topological space extended with one heteromorphic cusp)

situation is the postwar Italia after the WWII. Neorealist cinema shows people whom disappointed changing or bearing the situation. Indeed, the realm of disaster commands the metamorphosis. By taking the unbearable and unchangeable intensely, Neorealist Italian Cinema opens up the new observer who divides sound and sight. We can no longer mix it naturally. In other words, creativity is induced by something located in outside, but it should be noted that outside differs from out. 'Outside' refers to liminal state between 'in' and 'out'. As mentioned before, 'outside' appears as the no longer bridge and the not-yet door. In one to one correspondence, no longer bridge and not-yet door are identified with unchangeable and unbearable respectively.

Creativity: mediated, mediator or media

Peter Hallward depicts two series of creativities according to Deleuze philosophy: mediated and unmediated. Mediated creativity includes art and literature. The only possible unmediated form of creativity is philosophy. (Hallward. 2006:105) What is the difference of mediated and unmediated? Before to answer this question, it is noteworthy that based on dominant common sense the destination of art and all human products is determined by media. Media are neither instruments nor the prerequisite for having art object. In spite of media, mediators

make short-circuit the relations between appearance and modes of appearance in the world. As Hallward argued:

“If being is creation the more purely creative a practice or way of being becomes, the more intense it will be and more being it will express; a practice geared to exclusive criteria of creativity as such will be expressive of the intensity and vitality of being itself” (Hallward. 2006: 105).

Art does not expose the reality of external world. As Deleuze proposed, the aim of art is not representing the world, but creating new compositions of sensation: “The work of art is being of sensation and nothing else” (Deleuze. 1994: 164).

The extraction affect from sensation

The logic of creation opposes with the conditions of cause and effect: “Art, we might say, creates an echo chamber in which pure can vibrate in itself, in its undulated intensity, free of both *subject that senses and object that is senses*” (Hallward. 2006: 107). As a matter of fact, to have creative art, it should be necessarily to be opened up toward three fundamental factors: 1) refusal of representation or having done with exposing external reality; 2) pure sensation independently separated from the subject and object; and 3) intensity. By-product of this process renders creativity to a threshold on that we can experience something new.

Two major currents in experiencing art

On the basis of creative axis, two main understandings of art hinder creativity inadvertently. Art is neither subjective nor objective, although both of these factors effect and wrest in the process of coming out the non-being sensation. In bringing back the aforementioned model of cusped doughnut, the event of art as creative process assumes the situation in which signs overcome the sociohistorical status quo. It does not need to realize the world we live in or to illustrate the imaginary life for having a creative art, but the most necessary element is the pure actualization of sensation independent of the location of observer and also everything it is observed. In this way, it is impossible to study art as a kind of argument or presupposition. Art does prove nothing but itself. Besides, art does not repel us to imitative or expressive world that is far from the world around us.

The art of after revolution resists in two fronts of subjective and objective landscapes of art studies. On the one hand, it challenges the social realist heritage of Marxist-Leninist worldview in which art is just useful for representing the revolutionized world appeared as seven heavens; on the other hand, it is opposed with orientalist gaze upon the environment. For example the abstract painting in harmony with modern artists like Matisse or Kandinsky shot the trigger of the spontaneous emancipated

desire to create new forms. The wave of ‘*Saghakhane*’ art movement in 60’s and 70’s reveals the cusped doughnut that depicts the meeting of being Iranian and becoming the inhabitant of 20th century artist. Needless to say, under western eyes eastern culture refers to pre-modern era and the possibility of creativity is blocked by the economic and historical under-developedness. Persian modernism negates that notion and re-innovates creativity against the reflective anthropological aspect of orientalism. *Saghakhane* movement equates the sensible world around the artist with the intelligible pre-fab Iranian art framework (Pakbaz. 2010: 111-120). Instead of being ancient Iranian defined with race and the splendid illustrative past, artists refer to popular religious objects that sacrificed in shrines and the other religious places.

Creative art and its enemies

The imitative and reflective way of thinking is the two main criticisms against art creative modality. As Jacques Ranciere mentioned, “the revolution replaced the old rhetorical order of the *inventio*, *dispositio*, and *elocutio* with a new art characterized in particular two principles that are clearly antagonistic to those of representative logic. These are firstly, the suppression of any hierarchy of subjects and episodes... and secondly, there is a new relationship of part to the whole. The whole is no longer the linking of causes

and effects, the overall ordering of well-put-together parts” (Ranciere. 2011: 132). In our debate, the topographical sketch of cusped doughnut elucidates the exchange of sense and intelligent in new diagram. Reason does not control the trajectory of sensible creation.

Nevertheless, sense modulates the rational forces that interwoven with artistic acts. Art not only denies the representing the event of history or politics, but also deploys the preparation of taking place something new in the territory of culture. Ranciere rephrases this policy in another idiosyncrasy. He believes that revolutionary aesthetic is not a sort aesthetic that is about revolution, but the revolution in itself takes place in the battlefield of sense and reason. At the beginning, the reason is not located above sense. In the last analysis art provides the heterogeneous elements in spite of the prior conditions of ready-made thought about art. In other words, on the surface of cusped doughnut, the endogenous actual forces activate in the indigenous frame of reference. The creative destruction of vertical hierarchy merges into the destructive creation of new order of making art.

Therefore, those two enemies of creative art, rationalized imitation and hierarchical reflection, that tend to subordinate the constructive elements of art in either knowledge or creation vicious circle, transcend in the new order made up by the interaction of preexistent forces.

The no longer bridge unbends the circular survey infinite circumference. At the same time, finite area bends the not-yet door that opens the new direction toward repeating the difference and differing the repetition.

Chaotic entity of cusped doughnut

In accounting for experience in a non-interpretive manner, the topographical conception of creativity explained the barriers of epistemological approach that leads the art to purportedly structure. The mathematician Benoit Mandelbrot has taught us that we cannot measure the section of coastline exactly; the explanation of this happening is the greater and greater levels of measurement endlessly. According to our scheme, art takes place in a ‘state of flux’. The point of departure is simply returned to old question of the origin. Do we control our consciousness? Or is it subordinating the prerequisites of much greater force which are mystified beyond us? One of the ways to answer these kind of questions attempts to assemble aesthetic paradigm with chaos theory. Stuart Sim describes the uses of chaos theory in cultural studies:

“Systems which allow themselves to become stuck at one stage of development simply ossify; therefore the edge of chaos is to recommended place to be in evolutionary terms. It is certainly the most exciting place to be, although it is also a highly insecure state since it involves a

delicate balancing act. ... Critically, we can never know ahead of time whether a small perturbation or a complete avalanche is to be our fate: sometimes, as complexity theorists have noted, civilizations, empires, and species die out quite suddenly, as if overwhelmed by an unexpected turn of events. The edge of chaos can be exciting, but it can also be quite pitiless” (Sim. 2002: 94).

In chaos theory two variables play the main role in continuity of a system. The first is the cascade of changes. The extremity of changes simultaneously is the chance and the danger of steadily life of system. The second, the flattening phase measures the point of no returns in each system. The cusped doughnut as a topographical model of chaotic system of art creation based upon the sociohistorical context traces these two extremes. The sensible, disconnected from the reasonable frame, substitutes with cascade of changes. If the sensible does not cross the intelligibility, it dies out suddenly. The intelligible, evacuated of any sensory particle, cannot change accurately. Managing the creativity is different from controlling from outside. Outside itself is the most important entity of continuity of system.

To rephrase this process, it could be referred to the other model of thought in which the hierarchical instances of development including ‘management’, ‘decision making and taking’, ‘problem-solving’, ‘planning’ and ‘design’ change their direction horizontally. In other words,

simultaneity plays the role of a vanished mediator to make an order within chaotic conditions (Islami. 2013: 151) .

The great chain of creativity

To depict the route of creativity, we can trace four states: science, knowledge, wisdom and intuition. Making art looks like the interplay of these four milestones. Traditionally, we conceive the ordeal vertically. Step by step, from science to intuition, it has been drawn an ascending line. It may be called this process ‘the great chain of creativity’ (Islami. 2013: 149-169). But in status quo, there are circumstances in which methods do not leads to truth.

Consequently, the truth does also deviate from methods. What happens if either science or wisdom suggests two solutions for one problem antinomically? Great chain of creativity is capable to disorient the vertical hierarchy, horizontally. Among these four states, there are chasms, cuts, connections and disconnections to renovate the situation. The bridge of science tends to door of wisdom or vice versa. To put it another way, creativity does circumscribe the in-betweens of each field to transmute the situation into sign making realms.

Conclusion: The rituals of non-being art

According to Deleuze art theory,

problem-solving, especially in humanities, is an incomplete and unsatisfied process. Through the wake of problematization, an old problem will be changing its place with a new problem. In after revolution of Iran, the status of art tends toward sociopolitical decision, we can call it 'contextualization'. Incisively, contextualization implies the separation between 'our' own art problems and others' art problems (western art). On this basis, our problems do essentially differ from theirs. In light of Deleuze's thought, it could be possible to decenter the binary oppositions. Differential thinking focuses on the difference between something and itself, opens up a horizon in which each phenomenon changes immanently by encountering with an event-maker 'outside'. The attempt of this paper is to solve our art problems through changing the landscape of art. In other word, appearing art as sign transforms the art object and art subject into force relations. Consequently, art refers to neither the pure social nor the individual. Deleuze theory of art suggests individual-collective 'passing'. To access creative art, the individual could have been displaced by bloc of sensation. Sensation emerges as 'unique chances' from which the 'outside' provides 'the disjunctive synthesis' for the new (Zourabichivili.1996:196). Concisely, this paper aspires three statements about crisis in art based upon Deleuze art theory. Firstly, art behaves life as something in

the middle. Beginning to make art is not to trace the roots metaphorically, but art like grass extend itself in the middle of the affairs potentially. Secondly, historical diachronic approach is much less important than time-consciousness in creating art. We cannot understand and interpret temporal modes of art on the basis of human knowledge; sense of time needs expressions via the variations of affects and sensations. Thirdly, instead of concentrating on possibility and reality of art (representational theory), creativity changes its direction toward virtuality and actuality. The virtual can just activate through encounter with 'outside'. And then, by concocting the affects and the new strange sensation can configure something like art. Virtuality does not belong to our own ready-made property, but its emergence (actualization) is established by encountering the outside and bloc of sensations. Our art is waiting for the artist's bower instead of conceptual seclusion.

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