

The Position of Women's Art in the Historiography of Mohammad Hasan Khan Etimad al-Sultaneh and its reflection in the illustrated version of Naseri's Thousand and One Nights

Abstract

Historians of the Naseri era were mostly Qajar princes and educated sections of the society; however, within this section, a group worked in favor of the government and an assembly against the government, both in the field of chronicles and memoirs. Nevertheless, the main reason for the opposition and the urge to strongly criticize the government was rooted in Iran's confrontation with the West, and that was the intellectual evolution in the concept of history. This development led to the emergence of a new method in the field of historiography that is based on the efforts of historians of the Naseri period to change the traditions of historiography. Mohammad Hasan Khan Etimad al-Sultaneh is one of the historians of the Qajar period who discussed the status of social groups such as women in his works. The present research has been carried out in a descriptive and analytical manner and by relying on the data of library sources. The findings of the research indicate that various social themes regarding women and women's art are mentioned in this historical work. Among other works of this period, the illustrated version of Naseri's Thousand and One Nights is also worth considering as women are among the main characters of this famous book.

Research aims:

1. Recognizing the historiography of Mohammad Hasan Khan Etimad al-Satneh.
2. Investigating the position of women in the historiography of Mohammad Hasan Khan Etimad al-Sultaneh and the illustrated version of Naseri's One Thousand and One Nights.

Research questions:

1. What are the characteristics of the historiography of Mohammad Hasan Khan Etimad al-Satneh?

2. What is the position of women in the historiography of Mohammad Hasan Khan Etimad al-Sultaneh and the illustrated edition of One Thousand and One Nights of Naseri?

Keywords: historiography, Mohammad Hasan-Khan Etimadul-Sultaneh, women's art, Naseri's One Thousand and One Nights.

Introduction

Historiography in Iran entered a new phase from the contemporary period and historians went beyond dealing with political affairs. Historians of the Naseri era were mostly Qajar princes and educated sections of the society. with the difference that there was a group in the direction of the government and an assembly against the government, both in the field of chronicles and memoirs. Nevertheless, what caused some people to strongly criticize the government rooted in Iran's confrontation with the West, and that was the intellectual evolution in the concept of history. This development led to the emergence of a new method in the field of historiography. In this sense, history was not a description of the successes and failures of kings; rather, history was considered to be a stream that is constantly moving forward, and in this onward evolution, at times it suffers from weakness and backwardness, and on other occasions it reaches progress and prosperity, however, the rise or fall in history is introduced as a result of a series of factors. The new historiography is based on the efforts of historians of the Naseri era to change the traditions of historiography. There have been changes in the concept and method of history, and they have used proof methodology and realized the disadvantages of traditional historiography. There was a special interest and attention towards the history of ancient Iran, which itself was a result of the spread of nationalist thinking. In the Naseri era, on the one hand, the tradition of official court history writing continued, and on the other hand, intellectuals influenced by the West created changes in thinking and vision and the type of history writing method. Attention to cultural and social history and the role of women was among the features that reached its peak at the time of the constitution. Mohammad Hasan Khan Etimad al-Sultaneh is one of the historians of the Qajar period with many works; hence, examining his historiographical style and the themes he addressed is worth studying. Among the subjects mentioned in this work are women. Among the other works of this period that chose women as a theme is the illustrated version of Naseri's One Thousand and

One Nights; Consequently, in the current research, the status and position of women and their art is investigated.

Examining the background of the current research indicates that so far no independent work with this title has been published; However, several works have addressed the issue of women in the illustrated version of Naseri's One Thousand and One Nights. Hosseini and Zarezadeh (2009) in an article entitled "Comparative comparison of women's faces in the stories of the Thousand and One Nights and Sani al-Molk Naqash's paintings" investigated the position of women in this work. Shin-Dasht Gol (2005) in an article entitled "Illustrated Manuscript and One Thousand and One Nights Surviving from the Court of the Naseri Dynasty" has examined the illustrated manuscript of One Thousand and One Nights of the Naseri Era. Conversely, in these works, women's art is not addressed independently; Therefore, in the present research, this issue is analyzed via a descriptive and analytical method by relying on the data of library sources.

Conclusion

The historiographical method of the Qajar period was diverse due to the changes in the Iranian society and can be scrutinized in the traditional and modern ways. Following Iran's defeats against Russia, many politicians and elites considered reformism and modernism, and this assumption made them appreciate the necessity of acquiring the sciences and techniques of new civilization. Criticism of the status of court women and their involvement in political affairs and the lack of cultural education of women are among the issues that historians of the Qajar period have measured. In this regard, intellectuals realized that one of the most important tools for the progress and development of societies, along with the expansion of education, is the growth of people's awareness of world news and developments. This led to the entry of the printing industry into Iran, the establishment of Dar al-Funun and Dar al-Tarjme, followed by the political school. Attention was drawn to fields such as history, politics and literature among others and a necessary part of various programs was modernized. In this way, a large number of European historical books became available to Iranians through translation. During the era of Naser al-Din Shah, there were activities to modernize Iran's educational system, and the opening of Dar al-Funun is one of these efforts. Many historians have paid attention to the learning of women and their education, and efforts have been made in this field. Revision of traditional education methods also resulted in changes in educational content. Especially during the period of Muzaffar al-Din Shah, books were

written to teach history. The approach to history is no longer merely political history; rather, social and economic, cultural and folk history have been emphasized and this is what can be considered as a paradigm in historiography. In this regard, Sani al-Molk, in his paintings, discussed the status and art of women of this period, although in some cases he drew pictures of women that are contrary to the society of that period.

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