Analysis of the Portrayal of Women in Iranian Movies after the Islamic Revolution

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Abstract
The way working women are portrayed in Iranian media is one of the social and cultural factors that influence traditional gender stereotypes about women and their occupation. This can contribute to changing cultural perceptions about women’s employment. The main objective of this research is to examine the portrayal of working women in Iranian cinema after the revolution (1979) and present a comparison in different political periods of post-revolution. In order to achieve this goal, prominent films produced in each period (focusing on women’s employment) were selected and analyzed. In the theoretical part of this study, the representation theory of Stuart Hall is used. The research methodology is the semiotics of John Fiske. The results of the study presented that the modern working women, contrary to traditional female stereotypes, had the power and were more independent from their husbands. In most of the films dealing with professional women, the directors have tried to criticize the patriarchal ideology while defending the ideology of egalitarianism and meritocracy in the profession; although the social conditions of each political period were effective in the way working women were portrayed and the ideology of the film. Despite the attempt to avoid patriarchal ideology, the naturalization of domestic work for women can also be seen in these works.

Keywords
Representation, Women’s Employment, Cinema, Gender Stereotypes, Ideology.

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Abstract
After the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979, women were the subject of various discourses. The media played a central role in the discourse construction about women. Written media, including artistic-literary journals, can construct social realities that influence society. This paper inquires into the ways in which women have been constructed by these journals in the reform era (1997-2005) to find out how these journals have represented women and to what field of discourse they refer. Thus, Stuart Hall’s theory of media representation, which focuses on the construction approach, was applied to the study of 27 selected artistic-literary or art journals published during the reform era. The selected art journals were analyzed using thematic analysis. The results showed that the studied journals that represented women were classified into three categories: 1. The ones that ignored women; they did not play a discursive constructive role for women in the reform era 2. Those that had a low representation of women; they put women in the side lines 3. The journals that constructed women in a particular discourse. The constructed representation of women in the 3rd category of art journals studied appealed to the reform and popular-commercial discourse.

Keywords
Reform Era, Woman, Construction, Representation, Artistic Magazines.

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Influential Instagram Women; Femininity Portrayed on the Pages of Iranian Influencers

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Abstract
Influencers, through their posts on social media, are the online thought leaders who influence the behavior and decision-making process of the mass. Many Instagram influencers are now women. The image they present as women is an influential image of femininity. This research attempts to analyze the femininity presented on Instagram. For this purpose, the pages of four Iranian female influencers were selected as a sample and the posts of these pages were analyzed using the social semiotics of the image of Cress and Van Livon. The research results show that there are four different ways of portraying femininity on these pages: "modern corporeal femininity", "traditional femininity in new form", "anti-dominant femininity", and "femininity in public space". These types have both similarities and distinct differences from each other. They pay attention to the two categories of "female body" and "traditional female roles", and their representations are formed around these two categories. The female body and female roles are influenced by two processes of commercialization and socialization, one by capitalist discourse, the other by feminist discourse. Furthermore, in all the types of femininity presented, religious discourse is either completely rejected or ignored.

Keywords
Influencer, Women Influencer, Femininity, Social Semiotics, Instagram.

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Orientalism and Neo-Orientalism in the Contemporary Art of Middle Eastern Women
A Study of the Exhibitions of Breaking the Veils (2002) and She Who Tells a Story (2013)

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Abstract
Women artists from Muslim societies and Middle East are confronted with visual clichés of “being a woman”, “being a Muslim” and “Middle Easterner”. In art exhibitions and events, such artworks that reproduce the stereotypes of re-orientalism and Neo-Orientalism are welcomed. After the September 11 attacks, the number of art exhibitions dealing with Middle Eastern women increased. This was an opportunity for women artists to put their subjects in the spotlight of the public and the world media; on the other hand, women were confronted with some hidden expectations and stereotypes perpetuated by Western art events, so these events tended to direct artistic experiences towards the Western stereotypes. In this paper, using the methodological approach of “event studies”, we examine some of the most important art events for the Middle East; we also focus on two exhibitions “Breaking the Veils” (2002, Greece) and “She who tells a story” (2013, USA), which took place with the aim of rethinking stereotypes. The results showed that the works of the female artists of Middle East can be classified in a bipolar spectrum: from the image of women suffering from war, the repressed beauty of the countries of the Orient, the deplorable oppression of women, to the image of resilient and strong women. At both ends of this spectrum, from the passive victim woman to the rebel and anti-tradition activist, are diverse works covering a wide range of topics. Women artists are looking for a way to both critique the limitations of patriarchal culture and overcome the reductionist and exotic expectations of women’s art. This difficult path must be taken against the expectations of the art market and the political expectations of art exhibitions.

Keywords
Women Artists, Middle East, Arab Artists, Muslim Women, Art Exhibitions, Event Studies.

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Calligraphy and Manifestation of Otherness in Artworks by Immigrant Women Artists from Islamic Countries

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Abstract
Migration is now described not only as a geographical phenomenon but also as a cultural one, encompassing issues such as identity, language, alienation, nostalgia and roaming. These experiences can affect the process of creating a work of art. The art of migrants is known worldwide due to its representation of important themes and issues. In this context, migrant artists from Islamic countries have been able to show their artwork in many aspects. One aspect of culture that develops during migration is language, followed by calligraphy. Calligraphy is an important part of the artworks created by artists from Islamic countries. In fact, its importance to language has made different functions. Among immigrant artists, female artists have also chosen calligraphy as an important element of their work. The main question of this paper is what the reason is for the use of calligraphy by migrant women artists. When looking at the artworks, it becomes clear that female artists from Islamic countries use calligraphy to represent their identity and otherness. Mikhail Bakhtin is one of the most important philosophers of the 20th century. One of his theories includes otherness. He believes that man always needs another man. In other words, man sees himself in the eyes of the other. This research, using the descriptive method of analysis and library sources, considers Bakhtin’s viewpoint when analyzing works of art. Among many works by female artists with migrant backgrounds from Islamic countries including Iran, Iraq, Morocco, Egypt, Palestine, and Algeria, three artworks by Moroccan, Iranian, and Iraqi women artists were selected to be specifically studied. The selected artists are Lala Esayyadi, Shirin Neshat, Havy Kahrman. These artists create their artworks in the position of otherness and they also want to highlight their identity with their otherness.

Keywords
Migration, Calligraphy, Women Artists, Islamic Countries, Mikhail Bakhtin.

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Supermoms and the Concept of Motherhood in Instagram
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Abstract
This study attempts to examine the characteristics of motherhood according to the role presented by mothers on Instagram. It also examines the lifestyle and other aspects of the lives of supermoms and their followers. To achieve these objectives, we used netnography and direct observation. The results of the thematic analysis include six main themes as follows: “the presentation of perfect motherhood”, “the aestheticization of motherhood”, “the reproduction of traditional patterns of motherhood”, “the presentation of the ideal self”, “the stylization of everyday life”, and “the presentation of the happy family with the desired relationship”. Supermoms attempt to reshape the image of motherhood as a desirable role through aestheticization. The ideal and deceptive image of motherhood presented by supermoms on Instagram, though it may be unattainable for other mothers, has created a new image of motherhood. Just as they provide a new image of motherhood, they do not necessarily challenge traditional motherhood. Rather, this image is a continuation of the traditional motherhood pattern, but in a new guise. Although motherhood still means sacrifice and love, and is semantically no different than it was decades ago, Instagram mothers acted differently in their maternal and personal identities, as well as in their parenting.

Keywords
Motherhood, Maternal identity, Instagram Influencer Moms, Instagram, Netnography.

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Official Gospels and Women in the Apostolic Role: A Case Study

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Abstract

Contemporary studies find different perspectives when discussing the role of women in religious communities and the influence of religion on the social representation of women. Some scholars have viewed religion as a tool to oppress women, and for this reason have attempted to reduce its value in the eyes of women believers. While others, due to the significant population of women believers, have viewed religion as a factor in reviving the status of women. In the feminist approach, with the help of modern study methods, the sacred religious texts, especially the Christian texts, are read, understood and analyzed to explore the influence of religion on the status of women in the light of a new perspective. In this study, an attempt has been made to first discuss the apostolic role played by women with Jesus Christ in the New Testament. Then we will examine the four Gospels’ account of Mary of Bethany and Mary Magdalene, who accompanied Jesus on his journeys, and find a model for the presence of women believers based on a feminist approach. Both women played a dynamic role in various social activities and in different religious fields, both practically and theoretically. Hence, they have attracted the attention of feminist scholars. This research also attempts to examine the components of women’s faith in a descriptive-analytical method.

Keywords

Gospels, Feminism, Feminine Faith, Mary of Bethany, Mary Magdalene.

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