

An Investigation of the Influence of the Iranian 1979 Revolution on Tehran's Public Art

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Abstract : Urban spaces of Tehran, the capital of Iran, have witnessed many revolts, movements, and protests during the past few decades. After the Iranian Constitutional Revolution, the 1979 Revolution has had a profound impact on Tehran's urban space. In 1979, the world watched as Iranians demonstrated en masse against the Pahlavi dynasty which eventually led to its overthrow. Tehran's public space is replete with images and artwork that depict the overthrow of the Pahlavi regime and the establishment of an Islamic government in Iran. The public artworks related to the 1979 Islamic Revolution reflect the riots, protests, and strikes that the Iranians underwent during the revolution. Many of these artworks try to revitalize the events that occurred in the 1970s by means of collective memory. Almost 4 decades have passed since the revolution and ever since the public artwork has been affected either directly or indirectly by the Iran-Iraq War, the Green Movement, and the rise and fall of various political forces. The present study is an attempt to investigate Tehran's urban artwork such as urban sculptures and mural paintings organized and supervised by the government and the graffiti drawn by the critics or the opposition groups. To this end, in addition to the available documents, field research and questionnaires were used to qualitatively analyze the data. This paper tries to address the following questions: 1) what changes have occurred in Tehran's urban art? 2) Does the public, revolution-related artwork have an effect on people's vitality? 3) do Iranians find these artworks appealing or not?

Keywords : public space, Tehran, public art, movement, Islamic revolution

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