

Persian translation of this paper entitled:
نقدی بر تاریخ‌نگاری آندره گدار با نگاهی به
زمینه‌های تاریخ‌نگاری او
is also published in this issue of journal.

A Critique on André Godard's Historiography Considering the Fields of his Historiography

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Received 2017/11/12

revised 2018/03/07

accepted 2018/03/13

available online 2018/06/22

Abstract

Architectural historiography is one of the most important areas in architecture, and the main problem is that in Iran, it is not considered by domestic historians as it should; on the other hand, the existing historiographical works, which are mainly the result of the work of Western historians, are less criticized and their strengths and weaknesses are unclear. Therefore, in this research, as one of the historians influencing the history of Iranian architecture, Andre Godard's historiographical works will be criticized and investigated. These works used as a reliable source for the study of Iranian architecture have not been reread and criticized, its criticizing is necessary. It is not clear that what aspects of the Iranian architecture is investigated by the historian based on his particular attitude and his historiography method and which aspects are neglected. Therefore their review clarifies the existing defects, on the one hand, and on the other hand, it can be a guide for mapping the history of Iranian architecture by Iranian historians.

The objective of this research is to criticize and investigate Andre Godard's historiography considering the fields and context of his historiography and how to reflect these fields in his historiography works. In this research, extraction of data from the written works of Godard's historiography is a large part of the research process, and therefore the grounded theory that is a theory derived from the data collected and analyzed systematically during the research process was selected as the method of this research. The results of this study indicated that Andre Godard influenced by the fields of his era has investigated the historiography of Iranian architecture with a particular attitude which affected type of his recognition from Iranian architecture and in general, he can be introduced as a partial thinking historian, product-centered and regardless of the influential fields in architecture, Physics-centered, regardless of architectural aspects.

Keywords: *Historiography of architecture, Critique of historiography of architecture, fields of historiography, Andre Godard.*



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This article is part of Soudabeh Adibzadeh's M. A. thesis entitled "Iranian Architecture from Viewpoint of Western Architectural Historians with a Focus on Effective History of Architecture Books in Pahlavi Era", under supervision of Dr. Mohsen Abbasi Harofteh and Dr. Ahmad Aminpour in the Art University of Isfahan.

Introduction

Architectural historiography is considered an important area in architecture, and Western countries have a long history in systematic investigation of the history of Western architecture. However, Iranian scholars have tried less in mapping the history of Iranian architecture, and this issue is more evident in comparing the quality and quantity of Iranian architectural history books with Western examples. Many of the compilations of historiography of Iranian architecture belong to the history of western architects that in geographical and cultural boundaries of Iran have attempted a lot and their works in the shortage of compilations of domestic contemporary scholars, and lack of ancient texts of architecture are considered the main resources of recognition of the past architecture of Iran. Although these compilations have been taken place from western perspective and derived from Western scientific methods, these historians have often not been familiar with Iranian culture and worldview, and their effects in terms of understanding the spirit of Iranian architecture and art can be disturbed. But it is impossible to ignore the high value of these works in the systematic, scientific, and widespread recognition of Iran's architecture. Andre Godard is also one of the historians that criticizing his writings is considered in this research.

Statement of the problem

As mentioned above, most historiography books of Iranian architecture have been written by Western historians and their works are used as sources for studying Iran's architecture in the world, but critique of their works has not been considered, and the shortcomings and mistakes are not clear in them. Therefore, the necessity of this research is that critique of the works of historiography can be used both as a basis for mapping Iranian architectural history by researchers as well as the driving force for the historiography space and theoretical principles of Iranian architecture. Therefore the strengths and weaknesses of the historiography of Iranian

architecture will be specified and the future of Iranian architectural historiography will be clarified more. On the other hand, every historian investigates historiography with his attitude and angle, and this angle, which is shaped by the influence of fields of his historiography, influences his achievement and thus the recognition of the hidden aspects of his work. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to criticize and investigate the historiography of Andre Godard, according to his historiography's fields. And in this regard, This study is looking for answers to these questions. In what context Andre Godard has studied Iranian architecture and what are his historiography fields? How has been the effect of fields in the formation of the historian's attitude and the subsequent formation of his historiography's works? What have been the main weaknesses of his work?

Theoretical fundamentals of research

As historiography of architecture in Iran, like other theoretical issues in the field of architecture, is not placed in its proper position, the study and critique of the historiography of Iranian architecture has not been considered well, and less researchers have conducted it. One of the few studies in the critique and study of the works of historians was conducted by Mehrdad Ghiyomi Bidhendi. He relied on the assumptions and methodology of the historian in his studies, thus emphasized the type of historian's view and assumptions about the method of work and cognition that he gained from architecture. (Ghiyomi Bidhendi 2012: 9-10), (Ghiyomi Bidhendi 4, 2005 to 36), and (Ghiyomi Bidhendi, 2010: 253- 351)

In the meantime, other scholars have emphasized the importance of influencing the historian's attitude on his historiography, and tried to investigate the total typology of some attitudes. Among these categories are two orientations of Orientalism and Historicism (Imani, 2005) or categorization of attitudes into four categories of historical, architectural, artistic, archaeological, and analogical attitudes (Goleijani Moghaddam, 2005), or the

historicism and typological attitude (Pour Jafar, Akbarian, Ansari, Pourmand, 2007). These scholars have not entered the critique path of the works of a particular historian due to these attitudes, and these categories provide very general criteria for criticizing historiographical works, but the exact critique of the works of a historian needs something more than general criteria, and it is necessary to examine the fields of his historiography in order to find suitable criteria. About Andre Godard's historiography, any research cannot be specifically identified. In a study by Nasrin Goleijani Moghaddam, about historiography of Iranian architecture, only a short critique is taken place by André Godard's historiography and the researcher has not described the fields of his historiography and his influence on the outcome of his work. (Goleijani, 2007). Therefore, it can be said that no specific research has ever been done on the critique of works of Godard's historiography.

Research method

The research method is qualitative in this research and based on the theory of grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin method).

“This theory, based on the principles of induction, discovers the concepts implicit in phenomena and provides patterns of concepts and communications between them. Its main purpose is to produce the theory, not its confirmation. This approach, research, does not begin with a theory and its proof, but the process of research begins with a field of study, and gradually, related issues emerge” (Strauss & Corbin, 2011: 263). Therefore, since the purpose of the research is to critique and investigate works written by André Godard, extraction of data is a large part of the research process, and also because of the originality of the subject, the grounded theory that is a theory derived from the data collected and analyzed systematically during the research process is an appropriate method.

“Historians prior to historical research are subject to a certain viewpoint in the definition of architecture

and the work of architecture, so that this view, as a priori knowledge, determines their attitude to history and historical works. ... This way of thinking can ignore the historian from many historical events” . “(Khoei, 2006: 26)

“Architectural history, like all branches of history, is not frozen or fixed. Often, historical interpretations change fundamentally. By emerging new evidence and the intervention of today's view, historical events will be placed in a new issue. Historiography is the study of the evolution of historical interpretations in any given historical period. By changing the tastes during each period, the interpretations of the important events of the architecture are completely transformed” (Conway & Ronish, 2005: 24-36).

Thus, the fields lead to the formation of the historian's attitude and the choice of his historiography method. Based on the difference in attitudes and methods, different achievements are obtained in the study of architectural history (Fig. 1). So, for the critique of the historiographical works, the proper understanding of the fields leads to more comprehensive criticism and more accurate and fairer analysis.

Research findings

•The fields of Andre Godard's historiography

Godard's historiography was also taken place at his

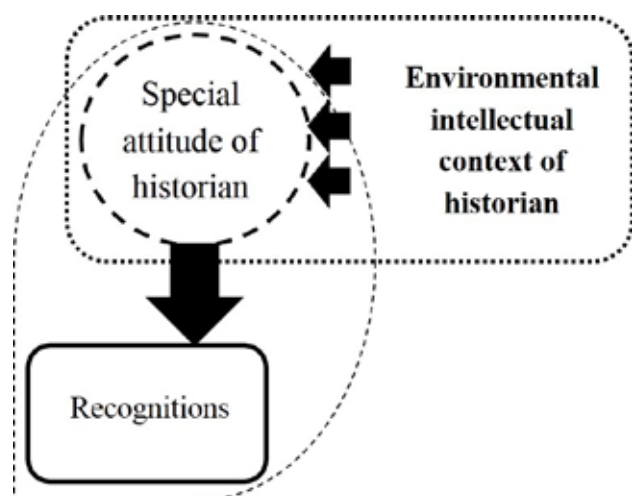


Fig. 1. The Impact of Fields on Historiography. Source: authors.

own spatial and temporal context, and therefore, in studying and critiquing his works, studying and recognizing this context is necessary. The studies carried out in this study identified four important and influential fields in his work, which are discussed below.

•Political, cultural and social conditions of Iran

Andre Godard came to Iran “in 1928, according to the invitation of the Iranian government to establish an archaeological service and act to an accurate assessment and setting a list of the historical buildings of Iran, and restoration of buildings “ (Godard, 1979: 1) so that Godard has described his working conditions in Iran (Fig. 2).

At that time, people were unaware of the value of the historical works and the importance of the recognition and preservation of cultural heritage, but he was supported by the government due to the concurrency with the emergence of the idea of nationalism in Iran and following the need of sovereignty to recognize the past civilization and to redefi n e the forgotten identity. So, he had the facilities in the path of his work that former historians did not have. (Ibid: 3, 4- 5).

The beginnings of architectural historiography in Iran

Another field is the beginning of architectural historiography in Iran at the time of starting

Godard's work. He is one of the first Western historians who attempted to write the history of Iranian architecture. Due to the fact that most of Iran's architectural monuments are unknown and due to the lack of information and most of them are exposed to destruction, the great burden of widespread recognition of the many monuments in Iran was on his responsibility and other historians at the same time. Therefore, the initial recognition of the Physics of historical monuments or, in other words, the documentation of historical works can be considered as a need for the historiography of Iranian architecture at that time. On the other hand, limited data on the historical monuments at that time was also the result of orientalists and archaeologists, and due to their specific features and their impact on the formation of Iranian architectural historiography, their thoughts and attitudes are considered other fields in Godard's historiography (Fig. 3).

The presence of thoughts derived from orientalism

For the first time, Westerners studied Iranian architecture in the form of orientalism studies. Orientalism studies were associated with their own thoughts, and though by passing time, Westerners systematically and differently studied the architecture

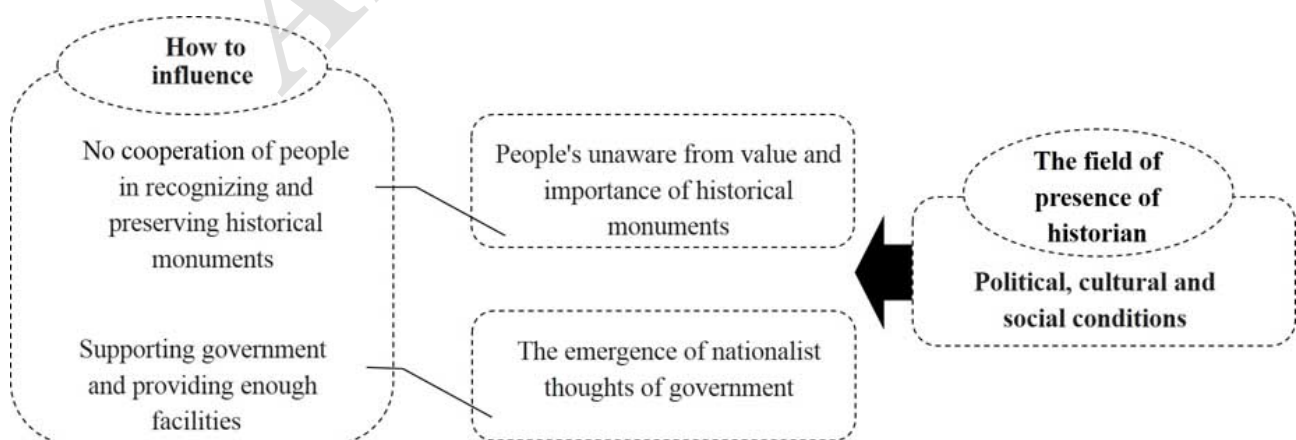


Fig. 2. How to influence the field on historiography. Source: authors.

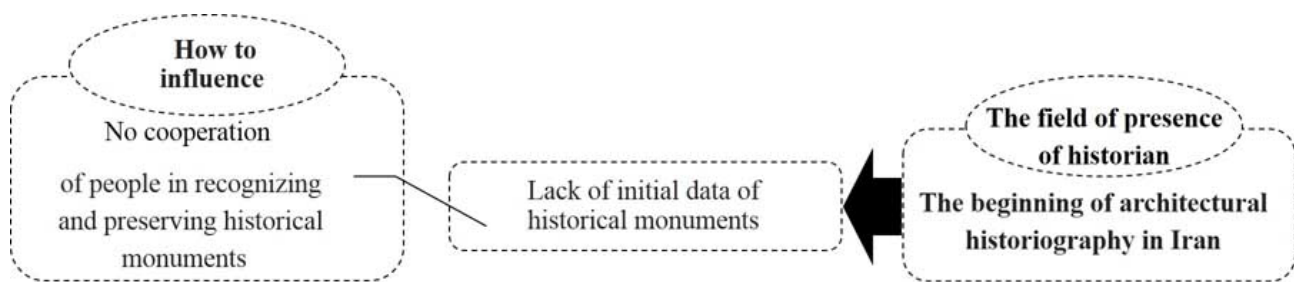


Fig. 3. How to influence the field on historiography. Source: authors.

of Iran, but there is still a trace of their previous view in these studies. It seems that the Orientalist view has “been institutionalized in their structures and traditions within a few centuries and academic and research systems created based on it” (Goleijani, 2005: 221) Superiority, external view and neglect of the fields can be cited as the most critical views of orientalists.

“Orientalism contains this implicit prejudice that human history is the stage by stage evolution in which the progress of science and technology (in its western sense) is the criterion of measuring its stages, and should be given to any society according to these stages of evolution and since Europe is the last point of this evolutionary line, other human civilizations and cultures inevitable, according to these evolutionary stages, are placed in pre-European stages. (Ashuri, 1972: 13) Andre Godard is also a Western scholar whose sense of supremacy over the land for studying is considered a strong background in his work. Godard’s glorious glance at French architecture has had its impact on his historiography. For example, he certainly considers the architecture of the West superior and incomparable to the architecture of the East, and in his view, “none of the Islamic buildings are comparable to the pantheon of Rome or the Amin Church” (Godard, 1979: 345) and “Stone Architecture” of Europe is superior to Iran’s “brick architecture”, because in Iran, appropriate materials were not available to the architects, and what there was from his view, is so brief in front of the stones in France. (Godard, 1968: 159) In his view,

although Iran’s architecture is influenced by Western architecture, but it doesn’t affect western architecture, for example, he posed the possibility of the influence of Iranian arches from the western arches (Godard, et al., 1988: 172), which he criticized Diallafoa in proposing the theory of influencing Gothic structures from Iranian structures and labeled it as romantic (Ibid: 70). It is clear that these influences and impacts cannot be commented so easily, but from all these discussions, Godard’s bias can be clearly seen in the superiority of Western architecture.

Another view influenced by the critics in identifying orientalists from the phenomena in the East is the non-Iranian view or their external view.

“It is believed that this feature is an advantage in scientific research issue, since when a researcher studies a cultural system from its external view, it is expected that, because of predilection and fanaticism, he sees its fault and goodwill better than his affiliates, and his judgment to be more fair and enlightening” (Zarshenas, 2012: 48). But this could be a serious harm in the field of historiography. In other words, “when history is written by an alien perspective, it can be expected parts of it to be neglected” (Ghiyomi Bidhendi, 2007: 5). Therefore, in studying the phenomena associated with the alien public culture, there is a danger that the researcher sometimes makes unknown mistake and considers factors that are not defined in their circle of thought and culture. This mistake is due to the alienation with the people’s worldview. In the works of Andre Godard, there are also some analyses from Iranian

architectural works based on the modernist notions of Western architecture. Among them, the praise of honesty in architecture means showing the structure of the building in its appearance and the completeness of the decorations in a colorful form. For example, Andre Godard says about Iran's architecture in the Safavid era:

"Here we are far from the purity of the solutions of Seljuk era architecture. The architecture of the Safavid era has a very beautiful appearance, but under this beautiful appearance, the skeleton of building is completely hidden" (Godard, et al., 1988: 117). Godard even considers the rise of modern architecture in Iran exceeding Safavid era architects in concealing skeleton (Ibid: 177). From his view, everything in the Iranian architecture that does not benefit him is an adornment. In another example, he questions the benefit of existence of numerous porches in the building of Robot Sharaf and replies: "No, except that they have had the title of decoration. (Ibid: 192). However, although efficiency in architecture is expected to be a major part in his analysis, it can be seen that he has not always adhered to this principle and ignored it as its supremacist viewpoint. For example, he did not pay attention to the efficiency of building materials in the climate and geography of Iran and did not consider the proportionality of the use and preference of brick in Iran's architecture with climate of Iran, and limited his view to Iranian architectural materials solely to its visual features.

Another critique to Iranian studies is not to focus on the formation of phenomenon and production-oriented view and partial thinking. Western Iranian studies investigates "the details of linguistics and archeology and the history of military and religious conflicts, and the precision and obsession in correcting and coping with the prescription, and it neglects the fundamental issues related to Iranian history and culture, and according to Europeans, western Iranian scholar has seen tree but not the forest" (Zarshenas, 2012: 48). Although Andre Godard regards architecture as "the spirit of the community of a nation" (Godard, 1979 : 344)

but he didn't pay attention to the fields and the process of forming the architecture of Iran he paid more attention to the historical building of Iran as a product. His attention to the product is apart from the evolutions of Iranian architecture throughout history. He has investigated historical monuments separate from time and space and field more than anyone. The structure of book Iran's Works, parts of which are devoted to historical monuments, is based on historical monuments of a geographic region. Of course, in his work, the influence of cultural and religious fields on the formation of Iranian architecture can be seen. For example, he says: "Avoiding the gravity is the feature of Iranian literature and art architecture," and "what the Iranian architect is looking for is the beauty of thought and expression, and more than it comfortable and light feeling" (Godard, et al., 1988: 96). Somewhere else, according to the ideas of Sufism and Persian poetry that emphasize the instability of the world, Andre Godard concluded that the Persians had made their buildings unsustainable, relying on this belief (Godard, 1987: 262-264), and of course, in his opinion, "the ideal of a real master," is to build from knowledge and vision and forever "(Godard, 1979: 345), and that is why he infers that the Iranian architect "was never at all fond of his own building, in contrast, following" the whole people die, "he denied it, he could never be a real master"(Ibid: 345). Such an interpretation can be called a personal interpretation that can be seen in the Monuments of Iranian historians of architecture, and so it can be described as the damage to historiography of Iranian architecture.

That is why "studying the history of Iranian art and architecture, whether by Iranian or non-Iranian researchers, has problems. Among these problems is the turmoil in the way of attributing these arts to Islamic religion in non-historical or historical interpretations. A group of scholars are referring to the fact that the works of Islamic art are the manifestation of truths based on revelation of the mystics, which is not essentially in the form of time

and space and is non-historical or meta-historical” (Allen, 2006: 51). The terms used in works of Andre Godard are considered as such. If “people of this view typically neglect this fact that even in order to show the ratio of the artistic work to the eternal truths, inevitably the issue of history and spatial and temporal situation occur” (Ibid: 52); (Fig 4).

The presence of archaeological approaches

As mentioned, the documentation of the building of Iranian history is considered to be a major need in the historiography of Iranian architecture. Andre Godard also focuses on documenting the historic building of Iran. The documentation requires the attention to the physics. Godard is a historian who introduced the details and decorations, and sometimes the construction methods of the historical monuments with a special obsession. Although the historiography of Iranian architecture at that time justifies the physics-centered, but on the other hand, how can it justify the attention to some aspects of the physics and neglect others?

Space is ignored by Andre Godard as one of the main aspects of architecture and climatic strategies used in building as a way of linking architecture and its natural context, and the impact of lifestyle in building on the physics as a way of linking man and building

in the recognition of the physics.

“The writing of the history of architecture and art from the point of view of a particular archaeological museum is the main feature of archaeological attitude to the history of architecture that considered historical works in the aspect of their memories and elements rather than the space and the process of its production as a cultural product. Architectural experts have always emphasized archaeological limitations in introducing the foundations and essence of architectural history. “(Goleijani, 2005: 209-210). In fact, the architectural Physics, like the Physics of any other historical object, has been studied. And although, as stated, he has always criticized the serious presence of decorations in Iranian architecture, but he is thrilled when facing with an architectural element decorated as a gigantic gypsy altar, and the architectural descriptions are sacrificed for detail descriptions (Fig. 5).

Discussion

As mentioned above, the research carried out in relation to the subject of this research is very little, and among the few related studies, Mehrdad Ghayomi emphasized the importance of examining the methodology and approach of the historian in criticizing the works of architectural historiography

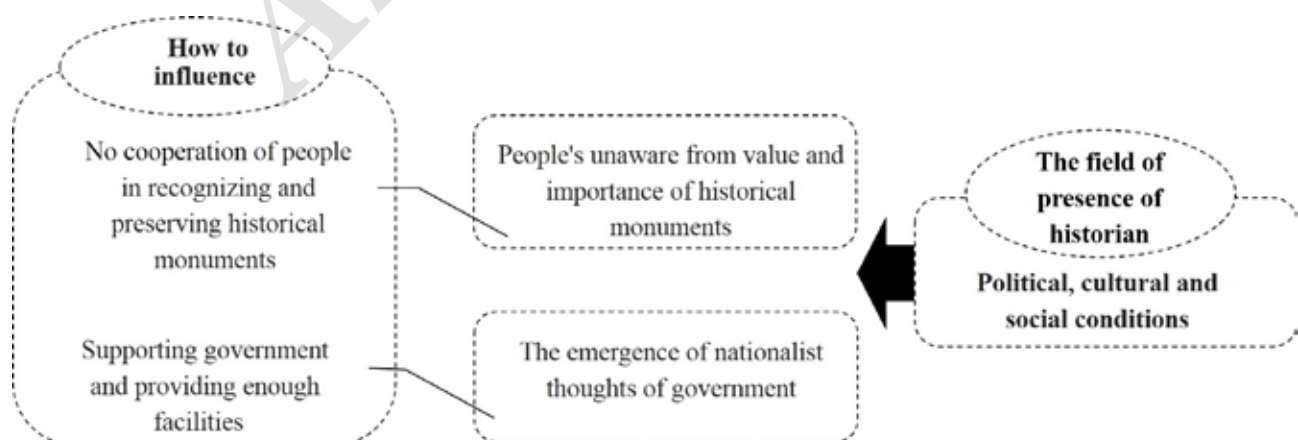


Fig. 4. How to influence the fields on historiography. Source: authors.

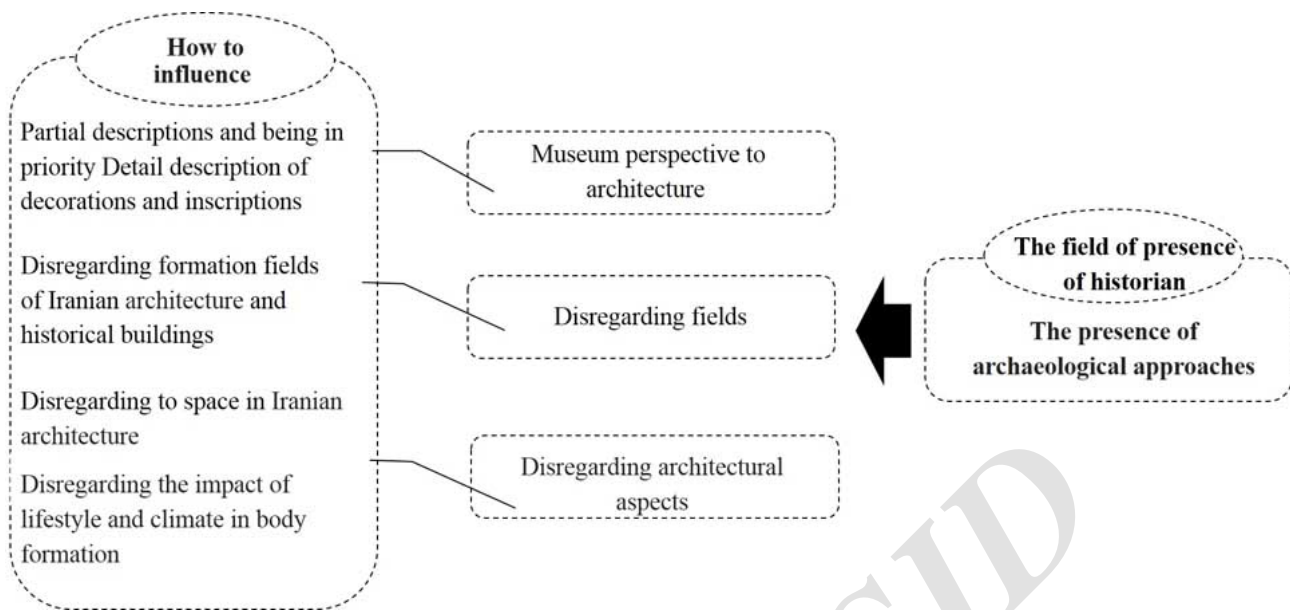


Fig. 5. How to influence the fields on historiography. Source: authors.

titled “Assumptions and Method” of historiography. Although some scholars have emphasized on the importance of recognizing the historian’s approach and attitudes in the study of historiographical works, but the result of their work is the general criteria for criticizing the works of historians and they themselves didn’t criticize historiographical works of a historian. While, in order to understand more about the factors shaping the historian’s attitude and its impact on its historiography, the study of the fields of historiography and the achievement of certain criteria is essential. Historical fields help us in their better understanding and identifying specific criteria of historian critique as the source of historian’s attitudes. Attitudes, like glasses of historian’s understanding, affect the facts and can lead to damage in his historiography work. But so far, research on the subject of the historiography fields has not been done around Andre Godard’s works. In this research, the study of the fields of Andre Godard’s historiography clarified some hidden and clear issues. The precise recognition of how to influence field in Godard’s work was made considering the possibility that the method of grounded theory was provided by the help of the principles of induction and codification and the

discovery of the high-level concepts and categories of his work. Therefore, this research compared with other research with a more fundamental view tried to identify the fields of formation of these attitudes in addition to recognizing and introducing the views of the historian

Conclusion

Considering the fields of Godard’s historiography, the influence of these fields on his work, including the attitudes and fundamental damages in his historiography, was identified. (Table 1) In other words, the fields as the source of these damages and attitudes led the researcher to identify them. A field as the presence of orientalist ideas led to the identification of harmful attitudes, such as historiography with a Western supremacy view, historiography with external view and historiography, regardless of the fields. Andre Godard has been careful in his historiography, lest he says words that Iranian architecture is considered comparable to Western architecture, or the reader feels that there is a building in the architecture of Iran, alongside the works of the Western architecture. He has studied Iran’s architecture from the perspective of a researcher

living in the modern era in the West, in other words, he has not tried to think as Iranian historic human and has looked at Iranian architecture from his own view. He has also not paid attention to influencing fields in the formation of Iranian architecture, and therefore, historiography is product-oriented focused on the physics, not the process of architectural formation. Except this, other damage is seen in Godard's work. His limit efforts in investigating the fields are a major damage in historiography of Western architecture, and it is the use of personal interpretations in analyzing the impact of culture and religion on Iranian architecture.

The beginning of historiography of Iranian

architecture is considered another area of his work. The lack of sufficient information from Iran in an architecture places the documentation of the buildings in order to recognize and prevent their destruction in the priority of André Godard's historiography, and the necessity of documentation is the attention to the Physics. The attention of Godard to the Physics is similar to the archaeological approach to the historic building which relates to the other field of his work, i.e. the presence of archaeologists' thoughts. These thoughts, as most of the existing data on Iran's historical monuments at that time were the result of the work of archaeologists, become more highlighted. And its result is damage as considering architecture

Table 1. How to influence fields on the Historiography of Andre Godard. Source: authors.

| Fields of André Godard's historiography | | The impact of fields on the formation of André Godard's historiography |
|---|---|--|
| Political, cultural and social conditions of Iran | The emergence of nationalist thoughts and having governmental support No cooperation of people due to people's unawareness of value and importance of historical monuments and the need to recognize and preserve them | Providing appropriate conditions for the study of historical monuments of Iranian architecture |
| The beginning of architectural historiography in Iran | unavailability of information about Iran's architecture lack of initial recognition of historical monuments | Documentation of Iranian monuments Utilizing little data from the work of archaeologists and orientalists |
| The presence of ideas derived from orientalism | The superiority of the West Disregarding the fields External view | Superiority of Western architecture towards Iran architecture Influence of Western architecture on Iranian architecture The impossibility of influencing Iran's architecture on western architecture Showing the structure of the building in its appearance Critique of the presence of decorations Belief in the necessity of architectural efficiency while neglecting the efficiency of architecture in terms of supremacy Disregarding fields influencing the formation of Iranian architecture |
| The presence of archaeological approaches | museum perspective to architecture Partial thinking and disregarding fields Disregarding architectural aspects | Limited analysis of some fields affecting Iranian architecture based on personal and meta-historic interpretations Special attention to the details specially decorations in Iranian architecture in spite of its critique Disregarding space Physics-centered Disregarding the impact of climate on Iranian architecture and climatic strategies Disregarding the impact of culture and lifestyle on the formation of the Physics |

as an object and away from the architectural view. The political and social conditions are another influential field that affects André Godard's historiography. The symmetry of Andre Godard's presence with the nationalist ideas in the government helps him and he is supported with the aim of redefining the historical identity of Iran and provides the appropriate facilities.

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HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE

Adibzadeh, S., Abbasi Harofteh, M. & Aminpour, A. (2018). A Critique on André Godard's Historiography Considering the Fields of his Historiography. *Bagh- e Nazar*, 15 (61):17-26.

DOI: 10.22034/bagh.2018.63860

URL: http://www.bagh-sj.com/article_63860_en.html

