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Viewpoint\ Editorial

Ignorant Tradition or Divine Tradition?

In pursuit of identity-oriented demands from society, the movement with roots in the contemporary West has been one of the primary stage directors imposing the official policy of art, especially in academic centers, since the Islamic Revolution. This movement, represented in Iran by Seyed Hossein Nasr, had taken steps to initiate artistic movements before the revolution under the management of Farah Pahlavi's office. After the victory of the revolution, the students and followers of this thought, using the religious and mystical language of the traditionalists, introduced themselves as representatives, claiming the society's demands. They introduced Iran's religion, and in the absence of careful assessment and undervaluation of art by the country's administration, they left a greater impact on the country's art policy compared to its scientific and population size. The determining presence of the adherents of this thought, who are often known as experts and not artists, in the country's political and educational institutions confirms this opinion. According to the traditionalists, the basis of their thought is a set of facts that have an all-encompassing historical and geographical scope. About a century ago, the French philosopher Ren nnon created this sect, and then it became a school of theorizing and philosophy of art by Kumaraswamy, a Sri Lankan artist and sage, and Shawan, Lings, Nasr, Palis, etc. The school of traditionalism talks about sacred knowledge and authentic ancient traditions and points to a supernatural, common, and universal truth in the heart of religions and calls it "immortal wisdom or "eternal wisdom." The method adopted by the school of comparative theology is of the contemporary era, and in the Islamic world, it is connected with Sufism and local mysticism. It is also tied to the mysticism of the Far East, which is different from Abrahamic religions. Traditionalists in Iran have theoretical discussion under the title of Islamic art and architecture, and by inventing the terms Islamic art wisdom, religious art, sacred art, and holy art, they have created materials that are poetic, emotional, and far from logical and reasoning, and in certain religious and historical matters, interpretation. They have mixed Islamic art and architecture with self-founded, strange mysteries. Some of the traditionalists became familiar with the form of Islamic art and architecture while traveling to the Arab Maghreb, Egypt, China, and India, relying on the backgrounds they had from Christianity and Judaism, and accepted Islam through Sufi sects. Shawan joined the Shazliyya Tariqat in Algeria. Burckhardt believed in Islam in Morocco, followed the Shazliyyah Tariqah, and joined the traditionalists after meeting Schwan. After familiarizing himself with Eastern teachings and focusing on the East, Guenon deals with the tradition, generality, and general view of Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism. In fact, this range of scholars, relying on the philosophy and mysticism of the great religions of the world such as Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Jain, Taoism, and Shinto, consider them to have a common truth and believe in the inner matter shared by religions. It is obvious that the existing traditions in each of these religions and beliefs have undergone changes and developments, and despite the common points or the common essence, according to the traditionalists (al-hikma al-khalida), they have gradually gone through tremendous differences. The Islamic Sunnah is different from other Sunnahs according to the text of the Holy Quran and authentic traditions. Looking positively at the activities of Western traditionalists, not much fault lies with them because they got acquainted with Sufi sects and different sects in other countries, and they also experienced the mysticism of the Far East and Hinduism. In a way, they reached the unity of religions, and from the angle of art, architecture, and sanctity, they have told stories based on the appearance of the arts. But how can it be accepted that Dr. Seyed Hossein Nasr, an Iranian Muslim, philosopher, and mystic, endorses these strange and incomprehensible claims and is a disciple of the sectarian and creator of the Marymiya Tariqat? The continuation of the trend of traditionalist thoughts and opinions affected the artistic circles and universities of art and architecture in Iran, and we are still dealing with this problem. Criticism of his opinions will open a window to knowing the truth of the art and architecture of the Islamic era of Iran and the world and highlight the superiority of logic and reasoning over emotions.

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