

Persian translation of this paper entitled:

ضرورت پرداختن به نقد در زمینه هنر و معماری اسلامی

is also published in this issue of journal.

## Viewpoint\ Editorial

# Necessity of Critique in Islamic Art and Architecture

Contrary to what is generally accepted, especially in Iran, the term critique does not mean finding flaws, criticizing, and highlighting negative aspects of something. Art history is a sort of selection. Less exists on the art of the East compared to the West, and the majority of available translated sources in art history have been on the art of the West and have also presented the East and Iran from the standpoint of the Westerners. These sources present art history, have not been the subject of any critique, and rarely have artworks been compared. Such a scarcity necessitates carrying out an analytical history, critiquing Iranian art scientifically, and supporting instances to disclose the real and true values of Iranian art and architecture. Critique should be unbiased; the subjective, emotional, and political ones harm the value of the field of art. Unquestionably, irrational critiques are not always objectionable; sometimes they stem from ignorance. The critique of traditionalists in Islamic art and architecture is one of the most significant issues that have received attention in recent years, and valuable books and articles have been published in this field.

Expert assembly “Critique of Traditionalists’ Views on Islamic Art and Architecture” will be held on October 9 and 10, 2024 at Nazargah Gallery—Nazar Research Center for Art, Architecture, and Urbanism. The purpose of holding this assembly is to present new opinions about the critique of this group of scholars and then avoid partiality and compare different perspectives through the lenses of Western, Eastern, and Iranian traditionalists. The school of traditionalism stands for a contemporary philosophy critiquing modernity and the new philosophy of the West. The proponents of the school believe in the revival of knowledge and wisdom in the sacred sense. This school was founded in the new era by the French philosopher René Guenon, and then Burckhardt, Schwan, Lings, and Coomaraswamy joined this school. The frontrunner of this movement in Iran is Seyed Hossein Nasr. Eastern and Western traditionalists argue that all divine and non-divine religions—Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Shinto, etc.—share a common and eternal truth that lies in the holy tradition or the ancient and eternal custom that exists in all cultures and civilizations. “Perennial wisdom—immortal wisdom” of this school in the countries of the Islamic world, in connection with Sufism and mystical-Islamic sects, entered the discussions of Islamic art and architecture and knotted to the mysticism of the Far East. The spread of this intellectual trend after the Islamic Revolution was accompanied by haste toward the translation of these works, of which the dire consequences are still evident. Building on the recent efforts, we have decided to follow up on the critique sessions of these thinkers in the field of art and architecture. It is hoped that young researchers and professors in art schools attempt to research and teach through logic and reasoned approach and stay away from emotions. This trend has had distorting and adverse effects on teaching, compiling articles and books, and the prevailing mood of the country’s art and architecture community. Thus, it is time to introduce some of the research of recent years in this meeting so that it can be completed in future meetings and published in the form of a collection of articles.

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