

EXAMINING THE EVOLUTION OF CINEMATIC POSTERS OF THE DECADES 1981-2001S

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Abstract

By far, the examination of the evolution of cinematic posters of war in 1360-80 in Iranian cinema is mostly from the perspective of aesthetics. The purpose of aesthetics concerns with technological advances in graphics technology and photography and its professional application in forming the posters.

War posters in the 1981 were mostly designed by hand which was more costly due to lack of facilities and technology. By the advent of the computer to the field of designing, a new form of poster designation has been started. Over time, the impact of technology will be manifested. This development (the use of computer - photography) is somewhat peaked in the 2001.

Given the above, we reach the conclusion that the posters of the Iranian cinema had a developing evolution since the 1981's as the computers and photography played a significant role in improving the posters which bring savings in cost and time.

Keywords: Cinematic Posters - Iranian Cinema - Aesthetics- Banners - Design

Introduction

Writing about the posters without a structural and overall looking at the initial entrance of cinema to Iran and cinema history is not possible since today, graphics is a universal language and we live in the communication era.

In our country, great upheavals took place by the arrival of computers to the art world today. In such a case that today computers are an integral part of our designers' working tools since using this tool has many benefits to the designers like showing them up with solutions which can give rise to speeding up their job, lowering the cost of working (in comparison with the past decade), and consuming less time.

Today we encounter many changes in posters planning. The initial posters were only of texts and not pictures. Gradually by the arrival of foreign films to Iran and in effect their posters, our artists (from producers to designers and painters of the posters) modeled the external sample patterns. As a matter of fact, all fields including the designers or the painters follow their external favorite models in spite of their personal quality view point and perspective. However, this is natural because the source of all main and affiliated professions to cinema is outside Iran and in effect they have achieved a wide range of experiences and conclusions earlier and in a more systematically. Similarly like the previous times, outside Iran, the painters' posters had more and much brisker market than the designers as the number of normal movies are much more than films which need

thinking. Admittedly, good movies are made there well enough which does not allow the designers to be left jobless. This is while, the posters of good films are less surrendered to painters except those broadcasters who benefit from ordering appropriate posters due to the conditions and the preferences of world markets. "But today his classification is excluded as the third successful formula has been proposed as a result of the mentioned technical progress in making films. This is, in fact, like testing different instruments in multiple levels and techniques of cinema which is a regular job in their community. This means that the quality of technical progress is not bound to one or two jobs and this has been brought to designing and painting too leading to new and bright posters which have made all normal and expert persons be stunned. The ordinary people have been astonished by the exaggerations of super stars embodied in the designs and the experts have been amazed and intrigued by the creation of new techniques and tricks. As a result, technique and art, execution with thought have been quietly mixed and mingled giving rise to killing two birds of with one shot precisely" (Mehrabi, 1982, p. 17).

Literature Review of Posters

The literature of Iranian movies initiates from explaining the origin of the name "poster": "Firstly the movie poster was named as "plaquette" which had a German origin and was used with the same name in many languages of the world including Eastern European languages but with some variations in pronunciation and writing. Plaquette had been firstly announced in our society along with a new application of posters since the late Mushekh Sarvarie as the Armenian immigrant and the first Persian designer of posters was educated at the Academy of Arts in Moscow. Furthermore, as the major part of his activities was designing and printing the cinematic posters in a limited area, this name still remains in big posters on top of the cinemas.

It is surprising that most of the movies of that day and hereafter that were brought to Iran were in English and along with their own posters; however, the English word "poster" became prevalent in our society many years later" (Mehrabi , 1982 - pp. 18-19).

By establishing the Faculty of Fine Arts of Tehran University which the poster designation were among its training courses, since its college professors were French or were educated in French, they executed the French word "offish". Therefore, its graduates used this word instead of poster or plaquette everywhere for thirty years. Suddenly, along with the inclination to the American culture, the word poster appeared in our society and replaced all previous titles. "However since the word plaquette was first referred to a hand-made poster and the word offish or poster was first meant as posters in different sizes which were mounted on the walls, none of the words of fish or poster could not delete the word of plaquette from the minds of people and especially the technicians in this field. But afterwards the word placard was propounded neck and neck to this word and gradually replaced it". But the reality is that although the concept Placard is somehow similar to plaquette and posters, its application is quite different from plaquette, poster, and offish. Understandably, Placard is a portable poster which is mostly used in marches or by missionary hawkers and which are never affixed on the walls as constants. On the other hand, we even cannot replace the word poster with its foreign words because posters and announcements have taken special meanings in the language and profession of our propagandas. They, in fact, refer to a kind of publicity (in any context and content) in a certain size that are only printed and posed in publications and printed matters and have their own rules and regulations. Unfortunately, today posters encounter a kind of change in their pronunciation that is most people pronounce it as **pooster** instead of **poster** that in effect can change its nature and concept.

After explaining the literature of posters, we now turn into its literature in our community: The fact is that the first posters and the ones which were made like our times were firstly for the movies applications and were designed and introduced after 1931 as posters were created for the need and

order of the market like all graphic productions. Understandably, as books and its programming needed and prospered the art of illustration and depiction of books and as the modern commerce promoted the design of marks and logos and set forth (Sadeghi, 2008, p.48).

It can be inferred that the market asked for a kind of means of communication and advertising which had no European form till the time. However, there were some things like posters in our community about more than one hundred and fifty years ago which concerned with the pictures of Imams, holy places, or religious, moral, and literal terms drawn or decorated on papers and which was made by hand or printed on stone in limited numbers in such a case that people fixed it on the walls of their houses and career places as blessing and boding. Understandably, they are the ancestors of the present posters that are somehow like them in shape, appearance, and even use and which share some similarities with some of the today decorative posters. Finally, the third part of the literature of our posters concerns with their designers' activities and the profound impacts which they could have left on the course of posters designing. As noted earlier the first designer of posters was Mushekh Sarvarie having his academic education in the area; his works were particularly new at the time of our community owing to propounding and promoting a fresh instrument and application. However, in spite of his left impact on his students and colleagues, poster designation was accredited to painters who used the abilities and skills of their hand and pen in a way separated from paintings and afterwards, became known as propaganda painters, a not credited title. As a result, designing posters changed into painting posters and painting the faces and scenes became prevalent instead of resorting to ideas and thoughts; this in fact still remains as a common practice to date and has left a profound and lasting impact on art and design of posters."(ibid).

Classification and Reviewing the Posters of the 1981, 1991, and 2001

Reviewing the Posters of the 1981

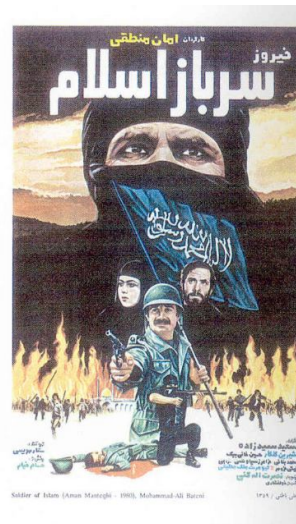
Principally, poster designation is designed to encourage the movies audiences to see the movie. As the first criterion any poster shall be required to have the necessary elements of attracting the audiences to the cinema. However, these elements differ according to time of day, and other factors at any point. But we must not forget that in any condition we should not be far from the primary purpose of poster designation that is "informing and attracting audiences". After the revolution, coupled with declaring the predetermined bankruptcy of the Persian Film and crumbling the crooked wall, stagnation and inertia governed the Iranian cinema and in effect the cinematic posters. In this course, due to the necessity of eliminating the effective and stereotyped factors from posters called business posters, poster makers like filmmakers were detained and suspended of finding good solutions for which there is no solution in their not nurtured minds. So the posters which were prepared for "survived" films of the previous period (half of which are also not displayed) had no analogous to what they needs or needed to be. The poster of the film "Divine Wrath" (1980) issued by Aziz Rafiee (and not as a director) is a comprehensive symbol of this critical area. On the other hand, the film "Fly in the Coop" (kavosh Habib, 1979) which is consistent with the previous relations, becomes new and unusual and unprecedented in the history of Iranian cinema: Apple hanging in a wooden frame (designer: Daryoush Nakhaee). What is gradually taking place and inaugurates is presenting less problematic components of the previous patterns (especially the components borrowed from foreign posters) inclined to updated attracting themes. The poster of the film "Explosion" (Samuel Khajikian, 1978-1980) has devoted much of its capacity to clenching a grenade in a hand (the image which was not allowed to be published in the past). On the sidelines of the armed fist, scenes of the explosion, armed persons, and two handcuffed men on the run have been used. At its end, an array of actors/esses' photos of the film has been arranged like the posters of the great historical films. "Forbidden" (Davoudnejad Ali

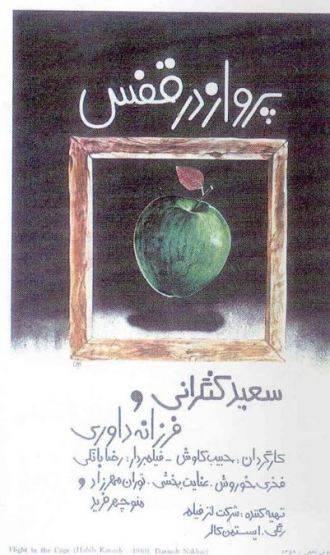
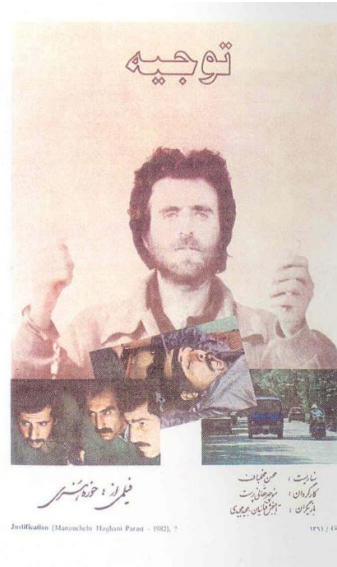
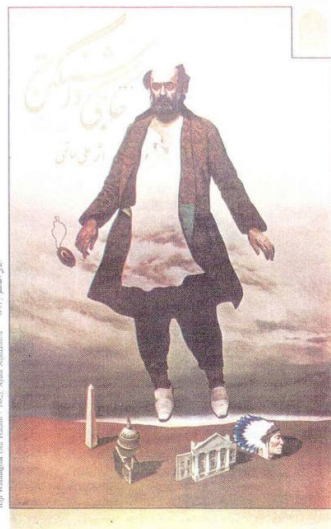
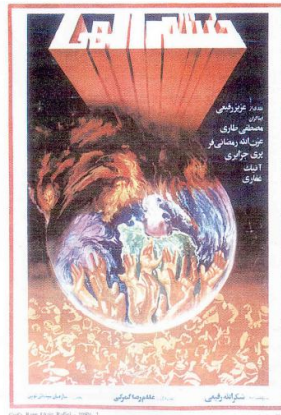
Reze, 1980), another work by Mohammad Reza Batenie, has designed a big hand in a red context (containing message) that has cut the chains of bondage. In "Barbed Wire" (Madanian Mahdie, 1980), a man wearing an over coat and boots is going towards a red circle to pass through the barbed wire. On top of this image a different picture has been painted in which three blindfolded men with breasts targeted shots have knelt down. In these years, we can find rare samples such as "Soldiers of Islam" (Manteghi Aman, 1980) the poster of which is a copy of the poster of the film Lion and Wind (Miliyous John, 1975) and in which the mentioned elements have less been used. Most posters of this historical area are not supplied without the presence of elements such as red, rifle, bayonet, and set forth and oppressed people who seek revenge and righteousness as their audiences condemn them to being meaningless and not update. The well-made poster of the film "Blood Season" (Kavosh, Habib, 1981) by Mohammad Ali Hadat concerns with a man wearing a shawl on the neck, behind of whom the red "Tash" is ended to a corpse which is moving on hands. To note another example or so-called "typic", the poster of the film "Siege" (Sadeghi, Ali Akbar, 1981, photo number 8) can be named which holds all of the above elements: A handcuffed and wounded man cries in the context of bloody rifles and bayonets. Apart from posters like "Hejira" (Milad, 1981), "Settlers in the Sunlight" (Sabbaghzadeh, Mehdi, 1981), "Justification" (Haqqani Parast Manouchehr, 1981), and "Washington Haji" (Hatami, Ali, 1982) by Aydin Aghdashloo which are almost the first signs of posters in non-commercial category in the second period, the other posters such as "Brother" and "Purgatorials" (Qadri, Iraj, 1982) evolve in the process of element growth and newly found logic giving rise to certain patterns gradually. Especially by the start of war, some elements of these posters were reinforced and found content legitimacy: "Crossing the Minefield" (Taheri, Javad, 1983). (Sahaby, 1995, pp. 57-58).

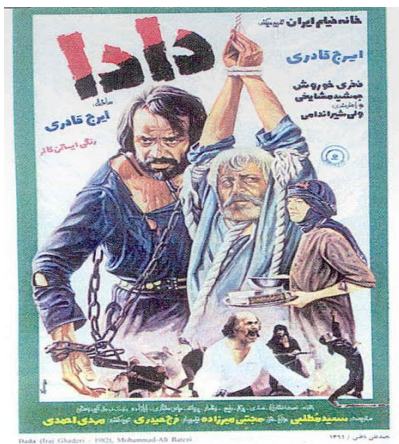
A brief period in 1981 the Placards on top of the cinemas were covered with writings and were devoid of any image; however, in other times, the posters were not too different from the Placards. As in the past, the person who orders plays a crucial role in both backgrounds of ordering the posters and placards. He or she issues the agenda and explains which figure to be bolded and which not, where (for example) the helicopter be exploded in the picture and where the cars crash together and their smoke goes into the air. The taste of the orderers is the first and last word and like the past will not give up their idea in any way since they regard much priority for the sales of the films and drawing the audiences to the cinema. This issue becomes more important when we find out that new places except the top and beside of the cinemas entrances have been provided for offering the posters in these years: street and square walls. A few years after establishing the cinema in Iran, during the 1930s and 40s, there were small placards which young children turned around the city or put on view of the passersby at busy crossings like Laleh Zar street and Hassan Abad square. After the Islamic Revolution and in effect covering the walls of the city with political writings and posters, the cinematic posters took advantage of this opportunity and won a place on the walls of the city. Hence, having such a good range of possibilities for advertisements the orderer by imposing his or her taste to the poster makers proliferates his or her presence - me - in the city. Cinema of the war like designing cinema posters of the war can be seen from different perspectives and can be investigated from multiple dimensions. However, their growth (the growth of poster designation for the films relating to war in the 1990s) has fluctuated. In the 1990s heliac hejira, considering the circumstances of that date and the war, of course, our cinema was not immune to this proceedings. That is, we can observe the traces of war, frontline, testimony, blood, fire, and set forth at that time. It is really strange that at that time the totality of Iranian cinema had an inclination and desire to expressing the issues of war and its periphery. Interestingly, some of these films were selling well in the time, especially in small provinces.

We can observe many irregularities in poster designation of the cinema of war, that is there can rarely be seen any order in it. Possibly, this chaos is designed to evoke the film itself. The designed

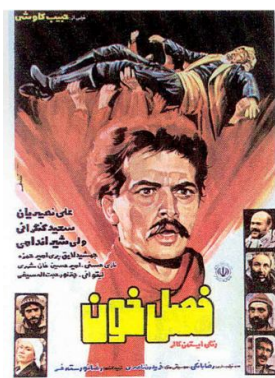
cadres are usually diagonal and not horizontal. To emphasize these posters, the Iranian champions are usually big and on the right side of the cadre and the anti-heroes are usually smaller and on the left side of the cadre. Another blockbuster film is "Eagles", which owes its sales to its posters played by Saeed Rad, Reza Rouygarie, Jamshid Hashem Poor, and set forth. The poster of this film had the main hero larger in the middle and the other two heroes at the two sides of the protagonists. At its bottom the image of an eagle was designed in order to show power and by far the image of fire and smoke, the familiar elements of cinema of the war, was designed. In general, using large pictures of actors of the film in poster designation is quite normal in every country of the world. As we become much closer to the 2001 this issue reveals more of itself to us. A look at the writings of the posters in the 2001 shows that not much importance was given to the font designation. It was usually placed on the posters in very thick and dimensional way irrespective of any order. Sometimes it seemed that they have forcefully put these fonts on the poster. Sometimes, these fonts are aimlessly written so large that decrease their readability. The more we get closer to the year 68, the more reasonable the writings on the posters become. That is, there is no sign of dimensions and thicknesses any more. By the end of the war, from 1368 onwards, our cinema finds a new approach to different types in addition to war. For example, after a long time the film "Bride" could have a new look and a new movement in the field of cinema (directed by Behrooz Afkhami). Actually, making the movie contributed the numb and worn body of cinema of the 60s to come out of this uniformity. Perhaps this time, we faced with a different movie and in effect a different poster. Now, it was possible to watch a large picture of an actress on the cinema screen at ease. This film named as the blockbuster film after the revolution owes its great 90% sale to its TV advertisements, posters, and wide screens installed on the entrance of the cinema. The design of this poster had magnified the face of its actress wearing a bridal wearing and a crown and had used the ½ large picture of its actor with a little distance below the bride and had used the poster of a Mercedes-Benz car where the bride and groom are seated at the bottom. Interestingly, these pictures and posters emerged in traditional coffee houses and at the back of the trucks gradually!!







محمد علی بھٹی / 1982
Huda (Hay) Ghaderi - 1982, Muhammad Ali Bhatti



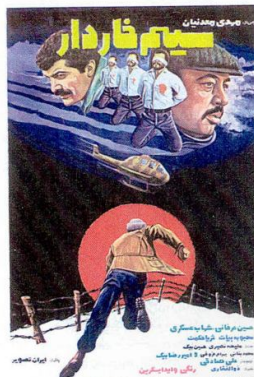
محمد علی بھٹی / 1982
Huda (Hay) Ghaderi - 1982, Muhammad Ali Bhatti



محمد علی بھٹی / 1982
The Rahman (Huda) Ghaderi - 1982, Muhammad Ali Bhatti



محمد علی بھٹی / 1982
The Rahman (Huda) Ghaderi - 1982, Muhammad Ali Bhatti



محمد علی بھٹی / 1982
Muhammad Ali Bhatti - 1982, Muhammad Ali Bhatti



Reviewing the Posters of the 2001

In this decade we face with the consequences of after war period in the films. The films of social kind (genre) are increasing in this decade. In the meantime, we see some romantic and comedic movies, the thing which was severely abstained in the past particularly in the 1991. However, from 2008 the Iranian films were mostly concerned with street friendships - the relationship between boys and girls - showing some social-political realities and

In this era, the computers gradually aided the designers in that the film producers could provide visual attractiveness for their posters and hereby caused reconciliation between people and cinema (Both in terms of subject matter – poster designation). In the posters of this decade, we no longer faced with fire, explosion, smoke, guns, shouting, and set forth and if so it was not as heavy as the previous decade. Although, some action films were produced in this period belonging to the body of cinema of the war, as it was mentioned earlier the directors and film producers mostly tried to show the aftermaths of the war. Movies like "Lovesick" and...

This emphasis of the posters of the films was not merely on the actors any more, that is half of it was devoted to actors and half to actresses. The colors used in these posters were no longer brown, neutral, or cream. It was attempted to use some milder colors in the back grounds. In fact, color was entered the posters little by little. Almost the elements changed and the sharp and incisive elements that were characteristic of the 1991 were no longer used. Factors such as:

1. Script
2. Replacing the new actors/esses (Female - Male) instead of the war heroes of the 1991
3. People welcoming the films of social genres
4. People approach towards the comedic films

These all required that our filmmakers change their previous perspectives. This change had accordingly resulted in a change in posters and placards of the cinematic films. The posters back ground of this decade is mostly the outstanding portrays of the film actors/esses in larger sizes that have applied photorealistic using graphics. However, in this decade we can sometimes see the portraits and indexes of the films in photos devoid of any photographic conversions in which we

can gradually figure out the surrealistic and symbolism mixed with imagination and symbolic images. As we get closer to the 80s, we can find some modern like works in posters that have made the works much better than the first decade.

The films like "Sol in Fire", "Kimia", "Height", "Lovesick", and set forth can be enumerated; however, works like "Kimia" had poetic and artistic motifs. Our heroes have changed in the decade and artists like Parviz Parastooi, Niki Karimi, Fariborz Arab-Nia, Parsa Pirouzfard, Leilie Hatami, Mohammad Reza Forutan, Hadiye Tehranie, and set forth could somewhat guarantee the film sales. Therefore, the large faces of these artists could be seen in the posters of this decade for attracting audiences to them. Overall the situation of the cinema is much better in the 70s than the 60s in terms of the script, acting, and careful and diverse designing of the posters. One of the reasons which contributed to improving the poster designation was using computers and the special effects which could be employed using the technology. In this decade, the poster designation benefited from some factors such as: a) being far from confusion and clutter; b) diagonal cadres that can less be seen (contrary to the 1991); c) multiplicity of the fonts used in terms of the introduction of the film and its other agents, that is considering readability in the font type . From the second half of the seventies, our films were inclined to relating the socio - political situations. In other words; we are experiencing a strange transformation in cinema in the second half of the seventies.

In the eighties, these changes were inclined to evolution and the social - cultural - love issues could be propounded much easier. If these issues were discussed cautiously in the first half of the last decade, they were recounted more easily from 2009-2010 hereafter. In this decade, we encounter more attractive genres including funning with the war that could be more cautiously seen in the film "Leilie is with me" in 2009. The poster of the film "Kimia" can be regarded as one of the good posters of this decade designed by Majid Akhavan as well as Shirin Roknie.

The poster designed by Shirin Roknie is more consistent with the disposition of the film. She has designed a desert pane full of cracks with a woman carrying a child in her arms in its left side and a greenery landscape showing a possible glimmer of hope in the far distance.

However, the latter poster designed by Mr. Akhavan can hardly be communicated with since the presence of several wheels of tank at its top is very obscure (requires greater care to). Moreover, as placing a dark element at the bottom prevents the visibility of the wheels at the top of the poster, its bottom side can be seen more clearly. The poster of the film "World Summit" by Hamid Rezaei is also a good job. This poster which won a reward at its time had designed two children under a cap bringing up the content of child war. The poster of the film "Wild Lilacs" can be considered as a bad poster of these years due to some factors: Although it is a film about the war, we see no sign of the hero and anti-hero; It is an ambiguous poster; Its readability has decreased due to incorrectly placing inappropriate text fonts. Interestingly, Mohammad Ali Batenie has designed two posters for this film both of which have many difficulties and in effect they cannot communicate properly with their viewers.



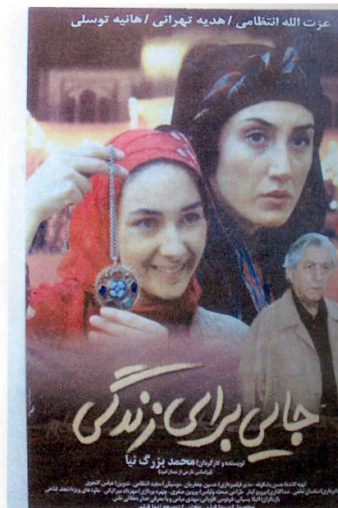
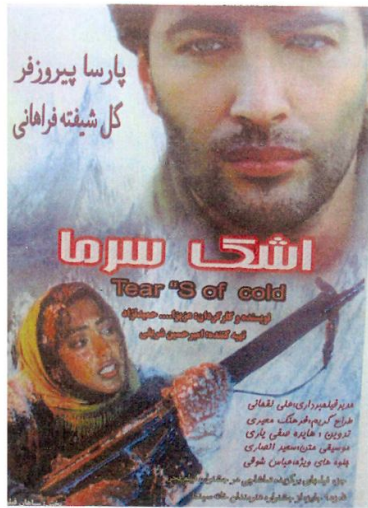
Reviewing the Posters of the 80s

It can be stated that the computers greatly aided the poster designers in this decade in comparison with the 2001 as most of the posters were "assembly". It seems that computer programs such as Photoshop have allowed everyone to make posters. The posters of this decade are mostly proscenium (of course those which cannot be found in any plan or scene of the film) (?) or the

artists' photos which have been taken and then assembled in the production office after the filming process by the respected film producer or the photographer. It can be concluded that the poster designation in this decade does not take much time as in the 1981 and the early 1991. Moreover, it is worth mentioning the point which has recently reached its peak. That is, recently (especially in the 2001) two posters are designed for each film – internal and external. When a film will be released outside Iran, it needs an external poster which differs from their internal one and concerns with much stronger aesthetics elements that can better communicate with the viewer.

Even though the new wave created by the artists leads to a major trend in Iranian cinema, the manufacturers and orderers of the so called commercial films (which includes a significant number) are not influenced. They have to order such posters because of standing on ceremony; however they order their traditional (original) posters too. Thus, from this point onward, any film would have two posters: the so-called artistic and commercial. As the film poster is not separated from its formative constitutional thoughts, the "artistic" posters were a patch for the "commercial" films. Therefore, after a while the two sides approved to pass their own favorite paths. The varied and thoughtful films had found new audiences and in effect new posters in English which were for outside of Iran due to the great joining of Iranian cinema to the world festivals. In contrast, the films of the dominant streaming having the economic leverage of the domestic market separated their expenses and were submitted to what they imagined as imposed poster and remained loyal to the traditional and long-life posters. Again, we encounter the large images of the protagonists (even in some movies like *Duel* whose star Hadiye Tehrani had played only one scene) in the back ground of the posters. In other words, they have placed woman as one of the main factors of posters just to bring the audience to the cinema or to deceive the audience. The design atmosphere of some of the posters of this period looks very stylish like "Cease Fire" in which the man and the woman of the film having a cap on their head (indicating their job in the film) back leaning against each other to a column and gaze the camera. Even the design atmosphere of the war posters differs and there is no sign of the 60s cadres any more. Moreover, they have not put the elements inside the boxes by force. Colors used in the poster designation are not pus. Even they have used the large images of women in the war posters! Something which was to refuse in the 60s. Another issue is the text fonts used in their poster designation. There is no sign of the moulded and dry text fonts of the 60s. In fact, they have become more fluent and the space has become more and more open.

Another alternative used to draw the audiences to the cinema is using posters in A5 format which is regularly distributed among the people in the streets at the time of every movie show. Sometimes, at the back of this paper this sentence has been written "giving this paper to receive discount". Of course, sometimes we can only see the photos of the movie stars (such as the film "Trap"). Hereby the film posters are easily accessible to the public. A look and a general comparison of the war posters of the (2001) like "Tears of Cold" and the posters of the 60s unravel the differences in poster designation. Some of these differences can be mentioned here: a) the poster designation of this decade has applied the minimum number of the film artists. Sometimes the picture of the main actor/esses of the film is just declared and nothing else. However, in the 60s we encounter the multiple images of the movie actors/esses. For instance, it was attempted to use all the heros of a film with 5 heroes in its poster. b) The audiences of the cinema prefer to see not much crowded posters. Thus, the poster designers of this decade have only used the photos of the popular artists and have not applied the design elements which can disclose the film itself. c) The printing of this decade encounters a movement. The existence of various kinds of papers such as cotton, ... as well as a variety of prints including digital printing, ... have given many choices to the authorities.



Conclusion

In the 1981, our artists faced with many problems due to the lack of possibilities in poster designation. Most designations were done manually with many troubles. In the 1981, graphical elements and techniques had been widely used in poster designation. The war poster designers had used design elements including weapon, fire, offense, defense, combat dress, trench, screaming, flying, airplane, barbed wire, and blast and had employed the outstanding portrays of the film actors/esses in larger sizes in its brown and creamy back ground evoking the warfare. While there was no sign of symbols in that decade, in the following decades we were headed towards symbolization. By the arrival of computers in the field of poster designation, the situation of the designers has improved and they were able to bring their pure ideas to image quickly. We can observe the peak of the poster designation in the 2001. In addition to changes in the technology (photography - computers), the social changes of these years and the improvement of print quality have all played a crucial role in the evolution of poster designation. Nowadays, we can confess that our posters can compete with their foreign competitors (of course those which are designed for foreign shows). The film poster is the best way of attracting the audience to the cinema; therefore,

the film producers being aware of this fact have made all their efforts in order to provide the best posters excerpted from the proscenium pictures or using alternatives other than designing. Fortunately, today posters could partly have a place before their fans. The victory or defeat of our poster designers depends on the fact that they can constantly enjoy innovation, thought, and creativity and they steadily remain efficient, deep, and mousing in order to undertake the capability of conducting the video taste and visual culture of the people. The contemporary graphics will not be effective unless a new generation of powerful, literate, and artist designers take over the loan from the previous generation and deliver it to the next generation in a more refined and flawless manner.

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