

## The Appreciation Issue of Contemporary Artwork in View of Parnassian School and the Theory of Art for Art's Sake

Assist. Prof. Dr. Akmal Hamdy Ahmed

Assistant Professor of Criticism and Art Appreciation - Faculty of Art Education - Helwan University

[Akmal\\_hamdi@hotmail.com](mailto:Akmal_hamdi@hotmail.com)

### • Introduction:

The artist represents the most prominent aspect of the experience of receiving contemporary plastic artwork, as he is the creator who possesses technical, aesthetic and creative sensory tools, which he uses to express his own view towards what he sees in his social environment, while some artists tend to embrace philosophical and artistic doctrines that call for pure aesthetics in the creative practice of artistic work, so that the artwork is stripped of all intellectual and philosophical contents so that the artistic practice becomes purely aesthetic, and the artwork becomes away from the concepts of teleology, functionalism and utilitarianism, seeking pure beauty that is isolated from life and realistic representation of forms and subjects in the artwork. Some believe that this is a shortcoming of the artistic function, given that it is limited to the pleasure of aesthetic and creative practice, without paying attention to other considerations related to the concept, content and formality of the artwork, and it creates a real problem in the concept of the process of receiving contemporary plastic artwork.

Both the theory of art for art and the Parnasse doctrine view the artwork as an aesthetic product consisting of several formal elements with sensory significance, those elements that must not exceed their formal or sensual values as well to carry implicit intellectual, philosophical or aesthetic connotations that the artist leads to the recipient through the artistic work in the context of the experience of receiving, so that it suggests to it the meaning behind the artwork, and therefore the Bernese doctrine and its adoption of the theory of art for art is based mainly on the sensory factor, which in turn is based on the concept of the artistic aesthetic of the artwork and its role in dealing with the recipient of the artwork.

While receiving a plastic artwork presents visual problems in light of some works of art that deviate slightly from the role of artistic work, as in the theory of art for art, which limited artistic production to the sensory pleasure of practicing art by the artist, without regard for the role of the recipient in the relationship among the artist and the artistic work and the recipient. Artwork often carries a creative character, and therefore tasting the artwork has become problematic in terms of receiving and understanding the artistic relationships within the artwork or between the recipient and the artwork.

Accordingly, the process of receiving a contemporary plastic artwork is basically a communicative process in which harmonization occurs between two parties (the artist - the recipient), provided that the communication mediator between them is the artwork. While some movements misused the freedom of artistic practice of the artist in order to enjoy the artistic practice, which greatly cast a shadow over the decline in interest in the role of the recipient, which is a kind of absurdity, as the recipient is an integral part of the artistic work, so he needs to follow everything new in the field of art, by taking into account its role in the production process and artistic creativity.

- **Problem Background:**

Contemporary plastic artwork represents a creative visual text, and it is not considered a means by which the artist can express himself only, but rather it goes beyond that to the recipient of the artistic work, where the work transmits to him a sensory and aesthetic experience that directs some of his senses, such as visual and auditory, through which it is realized. Certain responses of the recipient, the most important of which are visual understanding, arousing of emotional feelings towards the artwork, motivating ideas and imagination, and directing the recipient's sensory perception through art. In this context, the philosophical essence of the art theory of art and the Parnassian school of thought is the separation between art and life in general, including the severing of the links between art and society and the individuals within it, which in turn helped to create a problem in receiving contemporary plastic artwork.

**Problem:**

– What are the possibilities of observing the problem of appreciation for contemporary artwork in view of theoretical data of the Parnassian school and the Theory of art for art's sake?

**Assume:**

– There is a problem in appreciation for contemporary plastic art work in view of the Parnassian school of thought through the adoption of art for art's sake theory as a central basis for his theoretical philosophy.

**Objective:**

– Revealing the philosophy of appreciation for Contemporary artwork, and the theoretical problem of the Parnassian School and Theory of art for art's sake in dealing with the recipient.

**Importance:**

– Study the Parnassian school of thought and the dimensions of its theoretical philosophy.  
 – Researching the problem of appreciation for contemporary artwork in view of the Parnassian school and art theory of art for art's sake.  
 – Shedding light on the problematic determinants of appreciation for contemporary artwork in view of the philosophical dimensions of Parnassian, and the schools emanating from the Parnassian school and the Theory of art for art's sake.

**Methodology:**

The research follows the descriptive analytical approach in presenting and analyzing data within the theoretical framework of the research, as follows:

**Theoretical Framework:**

– Studying the philosophical foundations of the Parnassian school of thought and the artistic theory of art for art's sake and its relationship to contemporary artwork.  
 – Studying the role of the recipient in the creative process, and the problem of appreciation for contemporary artwork in view of the theoretical data of the Parnassian school and the theory

of art for art's sake of thought up to the determinants of the recipient's participation in the process of receiving contemporary artwork.

### **Practical framework:**

– Analytical study of three selections of artworks that follow the theoretical, philosophical and aesthetic concepts of the Bernese doctrine and the theory of art for art, and clarifying the problem of receiving these artworks.

### **Boundaries:**

– The limits of the research; this study is limited to studying the philosophical and theoretical dimensions of the Parnassian school of thought, the theory of art for art's sake, and their role in creating a problem for receiving contemporary plastic artwork, and the role of the recipient in the creative artistic process.

### **• Concept of Art Theory of Art:**

The theory of art for art is one of the most important theories that are directly related to the Bernese sect, and the theory supports the concept of art for art in which art is stripped of the philosophical and ideological ideas that the theory sees as spoiling the work of art, and that the only purpose of the artwork is pure beauty, as well as the theory calls for reducing the concepts of teleology and utilitarianism in artistic work and for artistic practice to be limited to aesthetic values that give the recipient pleasure, and not to carry any other criteria, whether religious, ethical or utilitarian. The theory of art for art sees art as a subjective practice that reflects and expresses human emotions directly through the elements in the artwork.

### **• Philosophical dimensions of Parnasse:**

The fundamental basis of Parnasse philosophy and art theory of art lies in the essence of separating art from life in general, and calls for severing the ties of communication between art and society and the individuals present in it, and this in turn helped greatly to create a real problem in receiving artistic work. The beginnings of this transformation were manifested in the fundamentally transformed structuralism, which became a theory looking into the phenomenon of creativity, whether at the philosophical or aesthetic level. While determining the aesthetic philosophy of art theory for art on the following foundations:

**a)** That art is required for its own sake for purposes of pleasure, and is also neither functional nor utilitarian, as it can be studied for itself and not for its artistic subject.

**B)** Distancing from the elements of education and counseling from art in general, and focusing attention mainly on form and artistic expression as basic elements that come in an advanced position over content, which in turn makes the criteria for judging artistic work to be formal standards that do not care about content or any other criteria.

**c)** The attention to form in the artwork should include attention to the pictorial composition of the elements in the artwork and any other formal aspects that highlight the specificity of the artwork.

**d)** That the aesthetic values of the artwork reflect the expressive and emotional value in it, and indicate the extent of their impact on the artistic experience of both the artist and the recipient.

The defenders of this doctrine believe that the aesthetic sense of the recipient casts a shadow over the important role of the artwork.

e) The interest in form at the expense of the idea, contributed greatly to the marginalization of the concept of the idea of artistic work, and that enjoyment should only be limited to the form of artwork.

f) The theory believes that everything that is old must be destroyed, i.e. artistic works of meaningful, philosophical and aesthetical content, and that include ideas conveyed by the artwork to the recipient, and the foundation for all that is new, that is, the pure work of art in itself, for the sake of art. Where the pioneers of the Parnasse doctrine see that the recipient achieves happiness through art and not through science.

g) The theory of art for art and the Parnassian doctrine contradicts the vision of both "Aristotle" and "Plato" that art represents in its content an imitation of aspects of life, and is devoted to the concept that life is an imitation of art, and this in turn raises the question of the recipient about the nature of making the artwork, and from where does he get his image, aesthetics, and formal elements.

Through the previous presentation, it becomes clear that the Parnassian school of thought, through its adoption of the art theory of art, is based on a non-religious philosophy, and with the passage of time the parnassism has become a doctrine that includes a number of other schools, which depend in essence on the pure form without other elements in the work of art.

- **Art theory for art and the problem of reception:**

The theory of art for art (parnassism) represented one of the most important reasons for the widening of the gap between the recipient and the artist, as the purpose of the artwork became unknown to the recipient. The plastic reception considers the interaction with the artistic work as a discovery within the framework of the communication between the artistic work and the recipient on the grounds that the artistic work is a visual text that stimulates the aesthetic thinking of the recipient, as well as what it contains of expressive artistic elements that represent in its content the message contained in the artwork and its elements. Such as composition, line, color, space, and simple and complex formal relationships between the elements in the artwork, which is the opposite of what parnassism calls for, and represents an obstacle for the recipient in understanding the artwork, which totally affects acceptance or rejection of the artwork visually.

While "Zakaria Ibrahim" presented a summary of the stages of receiving the artwork, through which the recipient completes his sense of beauty towards the artwork, and it is summarized in the following points:

- 1) To stop following the normal ways of thinking about a work of art, and to seek immersion in the experience of watching and contemplating the work of art as an unfamiliar event.
- 2) Isolation from the surrounding reality during the experience of viewing and contemplation of the artwork, with the aim of indulging in the details of the work and enhancing the experience of aesthetic enjoyment of the artistic work itself.
- 3) Dealing with the artwork as a sensory phenomenon, not a realistic reality, because of the outward nature of the aesthetic issue in the artwork, which in turn constitutes a withdrawal in terms of interest in form and style in the artwork at the expense of the idea and content.

4) That the experience of receiving in the artwork contains an intuitive position, in which the artistic subject of interest is considered by the recipient in an intuitive manner that depends on the communication between sight and perception to understand and explain the beauty in the artwork, which in turn explains the causality of accepting or rejecting the artwork, after participating in the experience of receiving.

5) Participation in the receiving experience makes the recipient in the aesthetic situation automatically get emotionally involved with the artwork as a result of the automatic feelings he feels based on visual viewing of the artwork with its components and elements.

6) The experience of receiving in the same recipient provokes an association of different feelings and sensations in the recipient, which often stem from previous emotional experiences, which are caused by visual viewing of the artwork, and this is an unconscious deviation from the receiving experience, but this happens automatically by the recipient as a result of his involvement in the experience of receiving the artwork.

7) Often a work of art provokes in the recipient a state of symbolic sympathy or empathy with some or all of the parts of the work of art, so a kind of emotional participation is achieved within the framework of the experience of receiving the artistic work between the work itself and the recipient.

From the above it becomes clear that the recipient begins to engage in the experience of receiving and controlling his aesthetic subject, and as soon as the subject of the artistic work becomes clear to the recipient until he begins to understand the subject and then the artistic subject begins to impose himself on the recipient, this two-way relationship achieves a kind of familiarity and sympathy between the artwork and the recipient in the context of the experience of receiving.

## References:

- Ibrahim, Zakarya. Moshkelt El Fan, Alkahera: Maktabet Masr.
- Abo Rayan, Mohamed Ali. Falsafet Algamal w Nashaet Alfonoon Algameela, Alkahera: Dar Algameaat Almasreya, 1977.
- Alhaysan, Ibrahim. Altarbeya ala Alfan "hafr fi Aleyat Altalaki Altashkeely w Algamaly, takdeem: Ghareen, Abdel Kareem, Almaghreb: Manshorat Alaam Altarbeya, 2009.
- Ragheb, Nabil. Almazaheb Aladabeya men Alklasykeya Ila Alabaseya, Alkahera: Alhayaa Almasreya Alaama Lelketab, 1977.
- Abdel Hameed, Shaker. Altafdeel Algamaly "Derasah Fi Saykologyt Altazawk Alfanni", Aalam Almaarefa, Alkuwait: Almagles Alwatani Lelthakafa w Alfonon w Aladab, 2001.
- Ghareeb, Rose. Tamheed Fi Elnakd Elhadeeth, Bayrout: Dar Almakshouf, 1971.
- Fadl, Salah. Manaheg Alnakd Almoaaser, Alkahera: Meret Lelnashr w Almaalommat, 2002.
- Kasab, Walid Ibrahim. Fi Aladab Alislamy, Dubai: Dar Alfekr Almoaaser, 2015.
- Kasab, Walid Ibrahim. Makalat Fi Aladab w Alnakd, Demashq: Dar Albashaer, 2005.
- Yaus, Hans Robert. Targama w Takdeem: Benhedo, Racheed, Gamaleyat Altalaki "men Agl Taaweel Gadeed Lelnass Aladabi, Tunis: Kalema Lelnashr w Altawzee, 2016.