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Self-portrait, 2004

Beyond History

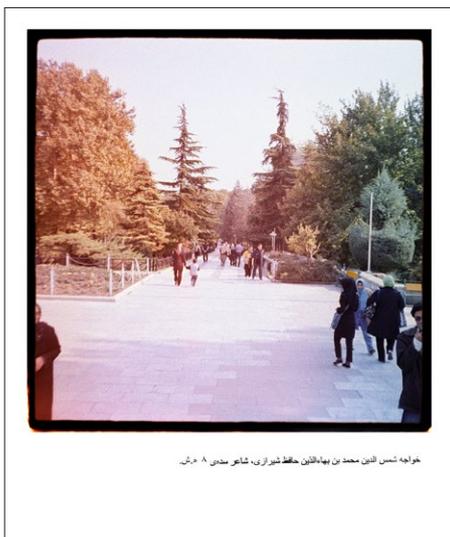
3 in the Crisis of History series

March 15th – April 26th, 2015
Curators: Elham Puriyamehr (Iran) and Robert Kluijver,
with the support of Framer Framed

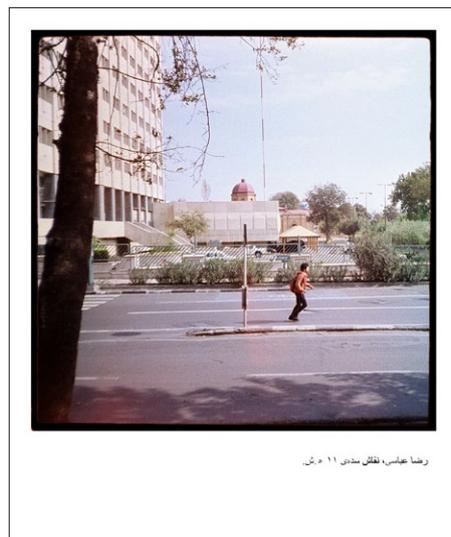
دوران ما از مجمع الجزایر روایت‌هایی تشکیل شده که تنها خصوصیت مشترک آنان در خصیصه گفتمانی بودنشان نهفته است. آنها در حال تکثیر و تغییر شکل‌اند، با این وجود همچنان در قاب روایت کلان تاریخ قرار گرفته‌اند. روایت‌های بومی به دنبال موقعیت کثرت‌گرایی هستند که در آن دنیاهای به ظاهر ناسازگار با هم همزیستی کنند؛ موقعیتی که به ظاهر امکان‌پذیر است. ساختار این روایت‌ها به هم نزدیک است اما مضمون آنها بسته به موقعیت جغرافیایی هنوز دربند تعاریف تاریخی است، مرزهای تاریخی و جغرافیایی که به نظر می‌رسد شرط لازم "روایت تاریخی" هستند. بنابراین ما با یک وضعیت متناقض مواجهیم: خرد شدگی تاریخ درون تاریخ.

هنر معاصر ایران از خرده روایت‌هایی تشکیل شده که از تردیدی تاریخی سخن می‌گویند. نگاه به تاریخ همچون ابژه‌ای سنگین و بازتعریف شکاکانه روایت کلان آن در بیشتر آثار هنری به چشم می‌خورد. روایت‌های کلانی که زاییده مدرنیسم ایرانی است. مشروطه خواهی، ملی‌گرایی، حزب توده، بنیادگرایی و... که هر کدام به روشی خود را تاریخی نموده‌اند و موجب رسوخ تاریخ نظری و بیشتر عملی در تجربه زیسته مان شده‌اند.

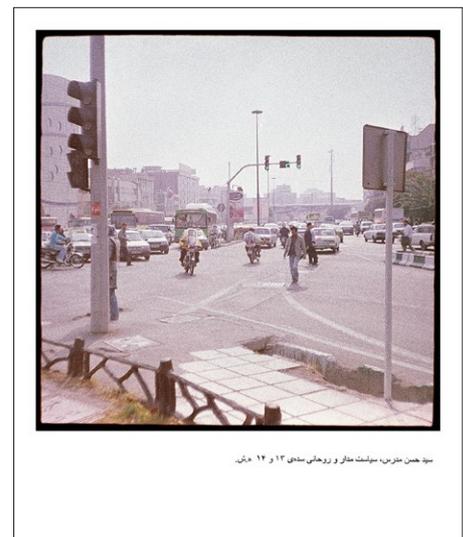
در چند سال گذشته برگزاری نمایشگاه‌های متعدد در رابطه با تاریخ ایران گواهی این ادعاست. بازبینی گروهی که در شکل نمایشگاه تجسم می‌یابد. هر چند فرارفتن از این وادی در حال حاضر بعید به نظر می‌رسد اما شاید تنها راه نزدیک شدن به «فراتاریخ» گردآوری خرده روایت‌هایی است که هر یک از زاویه دیدی متفاوت به آن می‌نگرند. هنرمندان این نمایشگاه هر یک رویکرد متفاوتی به موضوع «فراتاریخ» دارند و با آثارشان این پرسش را مطرح می‌کنند که آیا «فراتاریخ» آرمان شهری دیگر است و یا واقعیتی است که در آن به سر می‌بریم؟ این نمایشگاه می‌کوشد با جمع‌آوری روایت‌های متعدد در فضایی بدون چهارچوب، مفاهیم را تکثیر نموده تا تجربه گفتمان دیگری از عدم قطعیت معاصر را فراهم سازد.



خواجگه شمس‌الدین محمد بن بهاء‌الدین حافظ شیرازی، شاعر سده ۸ هجری.



رضا عباسی، نقاش سده ۱۱ هجری.



سید حسن مدرس، سیاست‌مدار و روحانی سده ۱۲ و ۱۳ هجری.

Khajeh Shams ed Din Mohammad Ibn Baha ed Din Hafez Shirazi, 14th Century, Poet from the "where the Heads of the Renowned Rest" series 2009 - 2011 | Analog photography Cross process | Lambda print facemounted to acrylic 134.4 x 112 cm | Edition of 7

Reza Abbasi, 17th Century Painter from the "where the Heads of the Renowned Rest" series 2009 - 2011 | Analog photography Cross process | Lambda print facemounted to acrylic 134.4 x 112 cm | Edition of 7

Seyyed Hassan Modares, 20th Century, Cleric and Politician from the "where the Heads of the Renowned Rest" series 2009 - 2011 | Analog photography Cross process | Lambda print facemounted to acrylic 134.4 x 112 cm | Edition of 7

We live in an era marked by a multiplicity of narratives, whose only common feature is the fact of being discursive. Although these narratives proliferate and metamorphose, they remain within the framework of the historical meta-narrative. Local narratives seem to be in search of a kind of pluralistic state, in which the apparently incompatible worlds co-exist; a situation which seems to be possible. The structure of these local narratives is very similar, but their contents depend on the geographical context and are bound by historical definitions, these historical and geographical boundaries seem to be the prerequisite for their status as 'historical narrative'. Therefore we face a paradoxical situation: the disintegration of history inside history.

Iranian contemporary art consists of micro-narratives which talk about a historical doubt. In most of contemporary Iranian works of art, history is depicted as a heavy object and its meta-narratives are skeptically redefined; Meta-narratives mostly born out of Iranian modernism. Constitutionalisms, nationalism, Tudeh Party, fundamentalism, etc., have become historicized in a manner and have let theoretical and practical history to find their way into our lived experience.

Holding many exhibitions in relation to Iran history within the last few years is a good evidence for this claim. A group revision which is realized in the form of exhibitions. However going beyond this seems to be unlikely now, but possible the only way of approaching "beyond history" is collecting the micro-narratives which look at this from different points of view. Any of the artists of this exhibition has approached the concept of "beyond history" from a different angle and through their works of art they pose this question "Is "beyond history" another utopia or it is the reality in which we live?". This exhibition tries to collect various narratives in a non-framed space; to proliferate concepts and create a different discursive experience from contemporary uncertainty.



Whereas Elham believes that the only way to approach the state of 'Beyond History' is by looking at the present time from different angles, I do believe the artists in fact look away from the present time. With their back against the present, they investigate the landscapes outside the historical narrative; what they see is in a past, in a present or in a future, not in the past, present or future. In the public realms we always hear talk about the future, not a future.

I do back Elham's suggestion that 'Beyond History' may well be the state we're living in, rather than some kind of utopia. Beyond History is not a state we must reach by some kind of revolutionary struggle against 'The System', but by flicking a switch in our mind. It is not a minor operation, because by erasing the great narrative of History, we are pulling the rug under much certitude that we have been taught from our youngest years.

To be perfectly clear: by suggesting to erase the narrative of history, I do not suggest to erase history, or advocate any kind of hostile attitude towards the past. I am simply suggesting to free the field of historical interpretation to more narratives, other ways of connecting the dots of the past, leading to other futures.

Maybe it is time to proclaim, in the style of Nietzsche, that 'History is Dead'. This sounds purer than Fukuyama's ideological assertion 'The End of History' which assumed that Western history had reached its climax, its final and definitive state of bliss, some kind of neo-conservative Nirvana. Fukuyama's History has stalled, whereas it seems urgent to abolish it altogether.

The artists participating in Beyond History: Exercise of Imagination can no longer find comfort in the tired imagined identities of the past. They must find a new basis, and that is an interesting research spearheaded by these artists. Imagine a history which sails clear of nationalism altogether, or a history written by the vanquished, or by the forgotten actors of the past. Imagine a history that brings humans together in different kinds of communities, which ask for a new type of politics!

Robert Kluijver

