

## Metaphysics of Insomnia (s)

### Introspection

It's being said that modern art is the prodigal child of modernity. A glimpse at modern art virtually proves this fact. The constant alteration in the positions of subject's conscious and unconscious makes the audience face to face with a condition which enables him/her to read the artwork.

I suppose the key word for reading *Insomnia (s)* by Mehrdad Afsari lies in understanding and embracing the delicacy of the positions he has taken toward the conscious and the unconscious. As he declares, the *Insomnia (s)* have been created by multi-exposition of 10 to 17 layers and as we know in formal terms, at such condition, the measure of control over the image comes to zero. I would like to shed light on the issue by description: despite its subjective foundations, the major part of the metaphysics embodied in modern art is finally objective. For example Jackson Pollock or Mark Rothko and their peers originally selected the colors objectified on canvas, or the formal route of their works was originated from a prior subjectivity grounded in an entirely objective direction.

Nevertheless, the subjectivity of Afsari's works is not ever a priori. That's exactly why his works do not represent a mere condition but convey a real self-founded condition and they are true as well. I underscore the expression, real and true once more. As a result, his works pass through the methodological features of modern art and stabilize themselves at a distinctive position in contemporary art.

Here the definite and highlighted presence of the unconscious is not simply an intellectual gesture but an honest representation of a protest which has never find the opportunity to be objectified. Although Afsari photographs a flower, his vision is not pastoral and purified! His flower traverses the concept of rose according to Immanuel Kant as an example of cosmopolitan beauty. Thus, our artist not only tries to detach himself from modern art, but (unlike Kant) challenges the cosmopolitan concept of ideal art through his independent approach to the subject. His works clearly represent the concept of generalization but in contrast with the ideas of Chantey reneger morality-bounded.

He expresses a foundation whose share of truth is truth itself not a pastoral and ethical reading of the preordained beauty of rose...! For this reason the formal format of his works originates from abstraction, since the concept of truth is inherently and perfectly abstractive. These works never bear the methodological features of abstractive expressionism but the concept of expression. Expression founds the general base of truth which is embedded inside not on the surface of the work.

### Materialism of Insomnia (s)

Dreaming is an absolutely metaphysical phenomenon but whether seeing in the condition of insomnia is also a metaphysical phenomenon or not?

Obviously the experience of insomnia is an entirely materialistic but seeing in the condition of insomnia is something different which always faces us with a strange and unique condition, a condition between the presence of the unconscious, the absence of the conscious and vice versa. Seeing in the condition of insomnia is a unique and fantastic experience which can be regarded as the best example of experiencing the modern, as we are involved in an exhausting battle and make efforts to maintain our humane and materialistic existence, as we are relentlessly in conflict with our materialistic imperfection but try to see properly. Nevertheless who's the one who misplunged into this battle and wins? B

What we see in the condition of insomnia is thoroughly imprecise and illusionary, a multilayered experience to which we try to pay attention as we know it's already a failed attempt. In insomnia, the superimpositions of Afsari face the audience with such experience as with their bitter and poignant bluntness, they confront us with our collective absurdity. The delicacy and poetical aspect of these works created through the careful vision of our insomniac artist are embedded in the blurred boundary between materialism and metaphysics.

Selection of the title Insomnia to address this collection is imbued with a rich philosophical significance which demands more consideration and delves into their conceptual profundity.

It looks like that the images captured by Afsari are subjects seen in insomnia condition. As I told above, the experience of seeing in the condition of insomnia is a tense and problematic movement between materialism and metaphysics. Therefore it enables us to experience the condition which can be best explained as "being alive at the time when something happens". In other words, it signifies an effort for being alive in a thoroughly modern condition. The arrival of the word effort (to insomnia) reminds us of the experience of pain which is at the same time both materialistic and subjective. It looks as if the subject owes its being alive at the time when "the desired" occurs. Thus being alive when something happens is determined by basic concept called time and not space.

The experience of seeing in insomnia is not simply limited to a form among the various types of experiences but uncovers the nature of the experience itself. That's exactly why we are confronted with ambiguous, multilayered, shaking, horrific and transient images as such reading of the concept of experience, makes an impossible condition- the assembly of paradoxes- possible. It also provides the ground for betting on the impossible and as while it's not bounded to a place, it enjoys a cosmopolitan feature and leads to pure abstraction.

Dialectics of Insomnia(s)

Why the Insomnia (s) depicted by Afsari are brilliant?

Because in my view they are static. Here the issue at stake is sudden halts which he illustrates repeatedly and insistently. On occasion they are repeated 17 times. The significant concern is for a movement which ends in stillness but does not implies settlement as well! The multilayer feature of these works ends to nothing but stillness.

What is undoubtedly eliminated in the midst is the concept of mediation. What has actually happened is the emergence of image which still enjoys originality and meaning.

Afsari's approach to the being reminds me noticeably of a line in a poem by Wallace Stevens: "Of dreams, disillusion as the last illusion," or in other words, what we see is what we think. This way, we witness precise indication to the possibility of the subject's creative presence without the mediation of any other metaphysics in the works of Afsari. I believe it's the most democratic possible form for any kind of being. What he does indeed is the multilayered repetition of a particular image in order to attract the attention of his audience to the issue, dialectics of repetition and change which in its own turn leads to properly artistic reading of the concept of history with its embedded materialism.

Therefore these works can be called briefly as the precise translation of Benjamin's famous 'dialectics at a standstill' in the realm of photography. As I pointed out at the beginning of this writing, Afsari's focus on the concept of time plays a key role in these works. He selects a method of montage in which different layers of time are experienced at the same moment. Thus he is not to produce a synthesis out of visual theses and antitheses. On the contrary, his entire notion of history is offered in a tense dialectical entirety at the present time. As a result his notion of truth is intertwined with "the modern" and seems inseparable from that. Due to such reading, his approach to the being or history or "the historical" maintains its subjective feature devoid of vulgar and trivial postmodern disputes. This approach enables him to represent the originality of the subject as much as possible.

His dialectic is not an objective dialectic which puts the subject in a passive position but is a dialectic based on pause, silence, repetitive contemplation on the concept of destruction and invention. In a word, it's a static and subjective dialectic.

Let's finish the present writing with a phrase from Benjamin's thesis XVII in his *Theses on the Philosophy in History or On the Concept of History (Über den Begriff der Geschichte)* since I know he is tremendously admired by Afsari:

"Thinking involves not only the movement of thoughts but also their zero-hour [Stillstellung]. Where thinking suddenly halts in a constellation overflowing with tensions, there it yields a shock to the same, through which it crystallizes as a monad [substance of an individual]. The historical materialist approaches a historical object solely and alone where he encounters it as a monad."

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