

even at the very beginning, but their participation was not clearly seen. Mohabbati claims that this circular motion is the main feature of Eastern art and culture, especially Iranian and Islamic culture and civilization, from Ibn ‘Arabi to ‘Attār and Sohravardi. Again drawing on the metaphor of the circle, he argues that ‘Attār’s mysticism cannot be understood based on a reading of only one of his works, but only by placing all of his works in a nonhierarchical dialogue with each other: he conceptualizes them as overlapping circles that take meaning from and give meaning to each other.

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## **Ali Gholipour, Parvaresh-e zogh-e āmme dar asr-e pahlavi: tarbiyat-e zibashenakhti-ye mellat dar siyasatgozari-ye farhangi-ye dolat [Cultivating the Public Taste in the Pahlavi Era: Aesthetic Upbringing of the Nation in the State’s Cultural Policy] (Tehran, Iran, Nazar Publishing, 2019)**

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In *Cultivating the Public Taste in the Pahlavi Era: Aesthetic Upbringing of the Nation in the State’s Cultural Policy*, Ali Gholipour presents a comprehensive analysis of the intellectuals and state institutions of the first and second Pahlavi era tasked with promoting an “elite cultural taste” among the general public. Gholipour’s meticulous six-chapter book delves deeply into the elitist policies surrounding Iranian popular theater and cinema. The book adopts a chronological organization, placing significant emphasis on pivotal moments within the Iranian cultural and political landscape. A crucial juncture in Gholipour’s narrative is the year 1969, when “the Cultural Policy of Iran” was approved by the king. The document included a fundamental clause called “Culture for Everyone,” which aimed to guide ordinary individuals away from “vulgar art.” Gholipour deftly demonstrates that it was not just the state that endorsed elitist art; intellectuals, who commonly held ideologies opposing the absolute power of the monarchy, were also supporters of this elitist cultural policy. Employing a genealogical approach to this document, Gholipour examines the historical processes that led to its formation. Contributing to Iranian studies literature, Gholipour’s analysis scrutinizes both the document’s structural underpinnings and its agential origins. For instance, the establishment of the modern state during Reza Shah’s reign was accompanied by the concept of “cultivating the nation.” The dominance of a socialist discourse between 1941 and 1953 was another key structural element. Gholipour illustrates that this period, characterized by a lack of state apparatus, played a substantial role in fostering a group of elitist critics whose ideas greatly influenced the development of a non-state elitist approach to art. As for the agential factor, Gholipour explores the role of Mohammad-Ali Foroughi’s cultural policy during the first Pahlavi era. This is only a brief sample of what the book offers. *Cultivating the Public Taste in the Pahlavi Era* is an invaluable resource not only for art historians of Iran, but also those studying the cultural ramifications of nation-building.

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