

SEPEHR ARIANNEZHAD

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Research Interests

- Marxist Philosophy
- Theories of Ideology
- Materialist Moral Theory
- Critical Musicology
- Cultural Sociology
- Political Economy

Education

University of Tehran

Master of Science in Social Sciences - Social Research (GPA: 3.92/4 - 19.02/20)

2020 – Now

Tehran, Tehran

Sharif University of Technology

Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering (GPA: 3.02/4)

2014 – 2019

Tehran, Tehran

On-going Research

On the Necessity and Possibility of A Comprehensive Marxist Moral Theory | *S. Ariannezhad*

- The 'blind spot' for morality in Marxist philosophy is a well-known fact that most scholars either outright ignore by addressing its triviality to the totality of Marxist theory of history as a whole, or resolve it by creating new (or old) dichotomies traced back to the claimed 'Aristotelian' root of Marx' perspective of morality. In this paper, I attempt at revitalizing the discussion once again - this time by revisiting Horkheimer's seminal work on the essence of morality as a rational category in a capitalist society, and picking up the idea of an Integral Marxism proposed by Kellner. Hence the title - first justifying the necessity based on Marx' own praxis and philosophy, and second by examining the possibility of such morality.

Sublimation or Repetition? A Critical Approach to the Political Economy of K-Pop | *S. Ariannezhad, N. Safapour*

- This paper examines the two-fold nature of K-Pop as a global phenomenon, one as a musical act that resembles a Brechtian V-effect and apparently breaks the current rules of musical experience; and the other being the distilled ultimate exemplary form of musical experience in the age of Neoliberalism. We attempted to address the shortcomings of analyses by Jin, Messerlin and Sheen whom neglected the dialectical approach to the inherent contradictions of K-Pop, while trying to elaborate the issue by drawing from the Frankfurtian critique of culture in the age of mass production.

Achievements and Awards

Ranked 1st in National University Entrance Exam for Master's Degree in Social Research

The national exam for entrance on Master's level was held with more than 690,000 participants in all subjects.

2020

Ranked 1st in University of Tehran Master's Program for Social Research, Class of 2020

Ranked first with a GPA of 19.02/20

2020

Ranked among the top 10 in University Entrance Exam for Master's Degree in 10 subjects

Including the nationwide rank of 6th in Philosophy of Social Sciences, 5th in Cultural Studies, and 9th in Anthropology

2020

Ranked top 0.1% in University Entrance Exam for Bachelor's Degree

Among more than 222,000 participants nationwide

2014

Silver Medal in the 9th National Olympiad of Astronomy & Astrophysics

Awarded upon passing two highly competitive nationwide exams, and an extensive summer school program

2013

Member of Iran National Elites Foundation

Awarded membership due to my Olympiad medal and sustained by exceptional performance in graduate studies

2013

Notable Courses

Theories of Sociology 1&2

Instructed by: Seyed Mehdi Etemadifard | University of Tehran | Grade: 4/4 (20/20)

2020-2021

Sociology of Culture

Instructed by: Seyed Mehdi Etemadifard | University of Tehran | Grade: 4/4/ (20/20)

2020-2021

Economic Sociology

Instructed by: Yousef Abazari | University of Tehran | Grade: 4/4 (20/20)

2020-2021

Sociology of Literature

Instructed by: Nader Amiri | University of Tehran | Grade: 4/4 (20/20)

2020-2021

Theoretical Approach to Social Problems

Instructed by: Seyyed Zia Hashemi | University of Tehran | Grade: 4/4 (19.5/20)

2020-2021

Advanced Quantitative Research Methods

Instructed by: Gholamreza Ghaffari | University of Tehran | Grade: 4/4 (19/20)

2020-2021

Advanced Qualitative Research Methods

Instructed by: Alireza Mohseni Tabrizi | University of Tehran | Grade: 4/4 (19/20)

2021-2022

Notable Projects

A Lukácsian Critique of the Novela 'Gavkhooni' by Ja'far Modarres-Sadeghi

2020

Gavkhooni is one of the most notable works of Persian modernist fiction which has been praised by readers and critics alike in Iran. In this essay, I attempted to critique Modarres-Sadeghi's work through a Lukácsian perspective, namely his reliance on the notion of 'type', which he borrowed from Engels and developed to a full-fledged literary criticism device. I had previously critiqued Tolstoy's 'The Death of Ivan Ilyich' and Zola's 'Germinal' via this perspective, but Gavkhooni proved to be the most crucial due to the deficit of Marxist literary critique in the sphere of Persian literature.

Market Fundamentalism Invades the Pitch: An Overview of the Neoliberal Takeover of Football

2021

The 2022 Qatar World Cup and the European Super League controversy once again sparked a renowned interest in the financialization of football. In this project, I aimed to trace back the mass infiltration of market fundamentalism into the football industry right to the 70s, around the same time that Thatcherism and Reaganism emerged as the political force that beat the world into economic submission under the capital accumulation regime known as Neoliberalism. I tried to emphasize on the two political economy evidence in club football that is often overlooked, the concentration of footballing success in wealthiest clubs/leagues and the ease of access of football enterprises to professional workforce i.e. the players.

Critique of Jason Manning's 'Pure Sociology' Approach to Suicide

2021

I read Jason Manning's latest book on suicide titled 'Suicide: The Social Causes of Self Destruction' to find out about different types of suicide and a possible insight into the current wave of female suicides in Iran, and upon reading it, I was staggered by the so-called 'Pure Sociology' method implemented by Manning, a follower of Donald Black's school. This highly controversial school of sociology has been extensively critiqued before, and in this project I was aiming to apply the same set of critiques to Manning's work in terms of methodology, epistemology and overall conception and approach to the age-old social problem of suicide.

A Critical Study of Tehran Urban Space Through the Lens of Engels, Lefebvre and Benjamin

2021

This project is split into two parts: First, assessing the validity of the colloquial 'north-south' division of Tehran as an objective fact by investigating different parameters such as employment rate, welfare level, capital accumulation etc. Second, I tried to draw upon the materialist perspective of Engels and Benjamin's account of the evolution of the urban space of 19th century Manchester and Paris respectively, to point out to the grand scheme of how modern Tehran is formed based on material necessities to suppress citizens.

Arab Spring, Iranian Green Movement and the Necessity of Asef Bayat's Notion of 'Post-Islamism'

2021

A joint project of my dear colleague N. Safapour and myself, we attempted to critique the necessity of Asef Bayat's notion of 'Post-Islamism' as a justifiable new category for explaining the Arab Spring and Iranian Green Movement in a historical materialism theoretical framework. We argued that while Bayat's invention seems interesting, it is still weak and potentially misleading at explanation compared to works of researchers such as Vijay Prashad on the same matter.

Against Mutilation: The Resistance Against Musical Fragmentation in Albert Ayler's 'Spiritual Unity'

2023

Perhaps my most ambitious project to date, I attempted at analyzing Albert Ayler's free jazz milestone album 'Spiritual Unity' through a negative dialectical approach, i.e. Theodor Adorno's method. The caveat of course being that Adorno completely rejected jazz as vulgar, so the analysis is greatly inspired by post-Adorno scholars of critical musicology such as Max Paddison and Tia DeNora.

Translations

The Mathematical Manuscripts of Karl Marx

On-going

By: Karl Marx et al. | English to Persian

These manuscripts have long been a black sheep of Marx' impressive body of work. Upon reading them, I grasped the necessity of translating them for the Persian audience of Marxism, based on two main ideas: First, to provide an insight into the underlying critique of mathematics as a bourgeois science that has been mentioned in previously published Marx works in Persian, and second, in order to refute the absurd arguments that claim Marx was ignorant of mathematical understanding.

The New Science

On-going

By: Giambattista Vico | English to Persian

The importance of Vico as the pioneer of the philosophy of history cannot be overstated. Moreover, his influence on Hegel and Marx can provide the Marxist (and Hegelian) reader with a rich background and understanding of the materialist idea of history. There has been no Persian translations of the works of Vico, and only a handful of second-hand interpretations are available in Persian. Hence, I recognized the necessity of a Persian translation of Vico's pioneering work.

A Mathematical Approach to Marxian Value Theory

On-going

By: Dong-Min Rieu | English to Persian

The Marxist renaissance in heterodox economics has seen attempts at understanding and formulating the Marxist tradition of political economy via advanced mathematical concepts. Having a strong background in engineering and understanding fundamentals of positive sciences, I found Rieu's book a hidden gem and one valuable for translation.