



**Qualitative Study of Cultural Tourism Policy in Iran: A Comparison of Rafsanjani,
Khatami and Ahmadinejad Governments**

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**Qualitative Study of Cultural Tourism Policy in Iran: A Comparison of Rafsanjani,
Khatami and Ahmadinejad Governments**

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Abstract

The present study seeks to study the policy of cultural tourism in Iran after the Islamic Revolution, with emphasis on Isfahan province. To achieve this goal, the cultural policies of Hashemi Rafsanjani, Khatami and Ahmadinejad governments have been investigated in a comparative way. The research method is qualitative and is based on qualitative content analysis. Data collection tools are semi-structured interviews. To this end, semi-structured interviews have been conducted with 21 experts in the field of cultural tourism in Isfahan province. Also, the statistics in the statistical journals as well as the laws and regulations legislated on cultural tourism have been used in each of the above-mentioned governments. Findings of the research indicate that Ahmadinejad's government has been somewhat more successful in the parameter of efficient management. In terms of political interaction, Khatami's government has shown a better performance. In general, Ahmadinejad's government has been more successful than Hashemi Rafsanjani's and Khatami's governments in allocating credits to cultural tourism. In the field of cultural policy, Khatami's government generally worked better than the other two governments, Ahmadinejad's government ranks the second and Hashemi's is the last. Ultimately, in the field of macro strategies, Khatami's government worked relatively better than the other two governments, Ahmadinejad government is the second and, ultimately, the government of Hashemi Rafsanjani ranks the lowest.

Key words: Cultural tourism, Policy-making, Efficient management, Allocation of credits, Cultural policy



Introduction

Today, the tourism industry has developed a lot in the countries of the world, and many countries have been able to improve their situation to a considerable extent and cover many of their problems, such as unemployment, low income levels, per capita and currency depreciation. In this context, the role and position of the government in the tourism industry is an undeniable and irreplaceable alternative to other parameters such as individuals, groups and transnational actors. This industry is not able to survive without government intervention because only governments are capable of providing political stability, security, regulation of the laws and financial frameworks required by this sector, and able to provide the necessary services and facilities and basic infrastructure. In addition, only governments can negotiate with other states and agree on issues such as the form of immigration or flight and landing in the national territory (Banadarwish, 2003: 23.)

Tourism experts believe that the path to tourism development is possible through taking into account the main factors of policy making regardless of the subject of tourism and specialist tourism (Shojaei and Nouri, 2007: 63). International tourism is largely dependent on countries' communications and cooperation, with a complex network of laws, regulations and policies (Timothy & Hun, 2007: 1032) On the other hand, security is considered as the most important factor in the formulation of tourism development strategies in the world and is directly related to tourism. Because one of the most important factors threatening people's presence in public spaces is fear and insecurity. The insecurity of places and public spaces disrupts vitality and health in everyday life, and imposes high costs on the community by creating a barrier to cultural growth and public participation (Kamran & Shoa Borabadi, 2010: 2). Therefore, strategies for creating and maintaining security in different places and cities should be considered in planning and policy-making related to tourism. (Sadykova et al., 2018; Zamaidinov et al, 2017) After the end of the imposed war and with the establishment of a relative peace in the political and economic situation of the country, the country's management was also led to program management. In this regard, the organization of management and planning of the country, with the preparation of the first five-year program of economic, social and cultural development (1368-72), considered the development of tourism along with other economic sectors .

Considering the multifaceted nature of tourism and the complexity of intra-organizational relationships, it is important to understand the tourism, tourism policy and its implementation (Partoee, 2008: 78). The proper planning and management of tourism is very influential in variation and enrichment of the national and local economies. Because tourism is a factor in the growth of small businesses, the growth of gross domestic product, the reduction of regional



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disparities and, ultimately, the emergence of economic variation and transformation. On the other hand, it seems that the basic task in developing countries is to provide more people's participation in the economic, social, political and cultural affairs of the country, and to add people's skills and knowledge, as well as linking them as a nation and helping them in finding their cultural and individual identities in different areas of social life, tourism is not an exception (Hall and Jenkins, 2010). International tourism, to a large extent, depends on the communication and cooperation of countries, due to the complex network of laws, regulations and policies. For example, in air travel from one country to another, ticket availability, flight rates, and flight costs are subject to travel deals between the two countries. All of this reminds us of the importance of tourism policies. One of the ways to further develop the activities of the industrial and tourism world is government policies based on research studies that make it important to study in this regard. (Antúnez, 2016)

One of the tourism destinations in the world is religious and cultural metropolises (Gil & Curiel, 2008). Metropolises such as Mecca, Medina and Mashhad attract many tourists and each one has a special status in the Islamic world (Amirian, 2010; Ebrahim Zadeh et al., 2011). In this regard, if we consider the role of cultural metropolises in the field of tourism such as the metropolis of Isfahan as one of the cultural centers of the Islamic world, we will see the growing role of metropolitan cities in the Islamic world and in Iran in the field of tourism. Isfahan, as a historical, cultural city with plenty of tourist and recreational attractions, has a great potential for attracting tourists (Yambushev & Mihajlova, 2017). However, in most studies, only the historical features of the city have been investigated and the role of cultural places in tourism and attracting tourists has been neglected to the point where the cultural tourism industry in Isfahan seems to be weak and inadequate. This obsolescence of the cultural tourism of the city of Isfahan can be attributed to the incorrect policies of governments in Iran. The question is, how was the performance of post-war governments regarding tourism policies regarding cultural tourism in Isfahan? Which one of the governments is more powerful and which one is weaker? Which policies have been optimal in this regard? What has been the policy trend in post-war government plans? In this study, we try to address the policies of the three post-war states regarding cultural tourism in the city of Isfahan and to study them comparatively.

However, attention is drawn to the fact that the pursuit of policies and critique of them can play an important role in demonstrating the future if along with the field data and based on interviews with tourists and experts on tourism as the main target community the data needed for more accurate analysis of the results will be provided. A look at the market for the press and mass media indicates that tourism and infrastructure have become the headlines of our cultural, political, economic and social news (Ahmadi Shapourabad and Sabzabadi, 2011: 114). However, real figures and statistics indicate the turmoil in our country. Since cultural tourism is one of the important indicators of tourism, which accounts for a significant share of tourism activities (Shayestefar, 1389: 67), and considering the inadequate situation of the cultural tourism industry in the country, it is necessary



to study in this regard and to study the policies of governments as well as to analyze the views of tourists and experts in tourism affairs. Taking into account these points, the researcher in this study has sought to conduct a research in the form of descriptive-analytic study.

The main question of the research is: how was cultural tourism policy in the three post-war governments (Hashemi, Khatami, Ahmadinejad) and what differences did they have with each other? To answer this question, based on the methodology of research, five categories have been identified that cultural tourism policy in each of these categories will be studied comparatively in each of the governments.

Review of literature

Wang and Up (2012) studied the factors influencing the execution of tourism policy in a conceptual framework in a case study in China. Four important factors were identified in this study: economics and environment, organizational hierarchy, inter-organizational relationships, and interest groups effective in executing tourism policies. Finally, this study examined the effect of each of these factors on China's tourism industry.

Liu et al. (2011) examined the improvement of tourism policy execution using the MCDM hybrid model. The purpose of this study was to study the problems of tourism industry using the MCDM hybrid model (multiple criteria of decision making) and to investigate the relationship between different dimensions of tourism policies and criteria, and finally, suggest a plan to improve Taiwan's tourism policies. The proposed model was effective in identifying both influential networks and the efficient network of tourism, and the arrangement of priority and rules and policies related to tourism.

"Mexican Tourism Policies Encrypted in Relative and Competitive Advantage" is the title of the study by Rojas (2012), in which he analyzed the policies of the Mexican government based on two approaches. The first approach was the relative advantage where the boundary of the land was considered as a passive factor that does not matter, and the other approach was the competitive advantage that considers active agents in the realm that determine the regional and local benefits. In this research, a case study was also carried out at Bahia De Banderas to examine how these tourist policies were pursued.

Lotfi et al. (2008) studied tourism, government and political economy in Iran. In this study, the reasons behind the government's transition from policy-making to brokerage and business affairs at a low level were explained using the components that affect Iran's political economy, such as the imperfect state-building process or the historical weakness of the bourgeoisie, the oil-dependent economy, the formation and expansion of the informal economy and its generalization on the tourism industry. To this end, they used the dependency index and legal characteristics of



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the places and centers visited by tourists. The results showed that most of the centers were affiliated with government agencies and institutions. Although the private sector has also been well positioned in terms of quantity, it seems that the lack of the necessary grounds for the emergence of a competitive market has left less room for them.

Shojaee and Nouri (2007) studied government policies in the tourism industry and provided a sustainable development model for the country's tourism industry. The results of the research showed that tourism policies in each of the five-year plans, including the third development plan suffered from the lack of the specific policy model, and in particular the attention to basic policy indicators such as concentration and cohesion in goals, a systematic and integrated view among policy makers, the degree of policy responsiveness and effective performance evaluation.

Lotfi Far and Yaghfour (2012) examined the role of security in tourism development in Chabahar. Considering the tourism potential of the city of Chabahar and the enjoyment of this region from the privileged position of geopolitics and the free sea and tourist attractions, this study attempted to address the security sensitivity of tourism in Chabahar and the potential of this port city to provide a suitable solution to upgrade this section. The research method is descriptive-analytic. The results showed that security is a decisive factor in Chabahar tourism development. Finally, the problems and obstacles in the city of Chabahar were examined and some solutions were presented to improve the tourism industry.

Conceptual Literature

The two main concepts of the current research are cultural tourism and policy-making, which are briefly discussed in this section.

Cultural Tourism

Cultural tourism is the travel of people from their places of residence to places of cultural interest. This move is done in order to obtain information and to meet the cultural needs of tourists (Kazemi, 2006). Today, ancient, historical and cultural attractions are important factors in attracting tourism, because the ancient works of each society represent the specific culture of the that country, with the characteristics and values worth considering. These works have plenty of spiritual values for that people and are attractive to others, and as a result attract others to visit and recognize them. Cultural tourism emphasizes the prevailing theories of ancient attractions. As Herodotus, a prominent historian of 2500 years of age, has been named as a cultural tourist, because he traveled in order to visit ancient sites such as the Pyramids of Egypt and recognize the architects of these buildings.



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From Coltman's point of view, travel is a short-term tourist journey that starts from the starting point and eventually ends there. During a journey, various places are visited and a large amount of foreign exchange is paid to the host country. (Coltman, 2010). Cultural tourism is also a kind of tourism that recognizes civilization, culture, customs and traditions of a group, society, region or country through visiting ancient buildings, architectures of various historical periods, museums and participating in the artistic festival. Cultural tourism wants to get acquainted with the culture of different regions and explore cultural perspectives of human societies and understand them.

Cultural tourism has close ties with cultural attractions. Cultural attractions include all the exterior and cultural manifestations of each country's culture that can be seen, displayed or presented. These attractions are part of the tourism product and are divided into soft (spiritual) and hard (material) attractions. The cultural attractions include historic sites, museums, architecture, religious buildings, cultural centers and contemporary residential centers.

In general, cultural attractions include:

1. Historical attractions and human civilization, such as ancient artifacts and museums, and the living legacy of the past
2. Religious attractions such as beliefs, religious ceremonies, etc.
3. Social attractions such as general public culture and the characteristics of governments
4. Anthropological and folklore attractions such as ceremonies and cultural traditions of different ethnic groups of national celebrations and ceremonies
5. Technological attractiveness, such as technology engineers, trade and industrial fairs
6. Sports Attractions
7. Educational and research attractions, universities and research centers

Historical district of cities is a valuable architectural legacy of our past. This part of the city is a manifestation of the economic, social and cultural dimensions of the people who have spent their lives in historical periods in this part of the city and recorded its cultural identity. Therefore, preservation, restoration and regeneration and their adaptation to urban system is one of the necessities that can advance the life of the historical area in line with the city (Khalilabad Kalantari, 1999).

The cultural effects of tourism are changes that occur in the arts, habits, customs and architecture of the people living in the host community the term "socio-cultural effects" refers to changes that



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occur in the daily experiences of values, lifestyle, and artistic and intellectual products of the host community. These changes are longer-term, and occur as a result of the development of the tourism industry (tourism). Considering that the cultural impact of tourism is very wide, cultural tourism in each region generally can have the following positive effects:

- Rediscovering the significance of the lost cultural traits and effects of local residents
- The possibility of recognizing and developing regional awareness in the spatial dimension and cultural identity and the growing development of a good sense of belonging to a culture
- Establishing economic infrastructures in a long term
- Increasing employment in a stagnant economy

One of the positive effects of tourism in rural areas on cultural aspects is the preservation and expansion of cultural relations. If culture of a society is a dominant culture and the local people respects their cultural norms and traditions, communication and cultural exchanges will be positive, and the culture of the guest community and the host, due to the confluence of cultures, reinforces its positive aspects and tries to replace the negative aspects with the positive ones. The issue of cultural invasion, cultural transformation and the destruction of cultural effects due to overuse of less informed tourists are among the cultural tourism disadvantages. But the possible troubles should not prevent the development of cultural tourism. Education, control and supervision can make cultural tourism sustainable both for host and guest communities. The main negative impacts of tourism on the host society are:

Destruction of Cultural Heritage: Excessive visits of important historical sites by tourists may lead to their destruction gradually. This devastation may be due to the lack of attention to the capacity of the site or the profitable activities of untrained tourists

Cultural Transmutation: Due to the particular fragility of cultural heritage, tourism development may damage the authenticity of local cultural patterns. Locals who live in a traditional way may be disturbed in their contact with tourists forever.

Cultural Invasion: the validity and authenticity of religious rituals, habits and traditions, celebrations and plays, crafts, music and other cultural patterns may be lost, in other words, local values may become commodities due to extremes in creating the attractiveness of tourism and the excessive trade- like behavior toward cultural influences for tourism purposes, In addition, due to the consumerism of tourists, people especially the young as tourism objectives may be tempted by foreign tourists and imitate the behavioral patterns of tourists. Such imitation occurs without recognizing the difference between cultural backgrounds and socio-cultural status of tourists. Also,



unbalanced exchanges between tourists and locals may lead to antisocial behavior in the young people.

Cultural Abnormalities: Misunderstandings may arise due to differences in language and habits between local residents and tourists (Papeli Yazdi and Saghaei, 2006).

Policy-making

As Hoges (1998) suggests, the separation of "managing the organization" from the idea of "management or policy" is difficult. Policy-making from a perspective is also a matter of decision-making, because when a policy is set, a decision is made; The difference is that the policy is higher and more fundamental than secondary decisions (submission, 1999) The word "policy" refers to the stated tendencies of parties in elections, general laws like foreign policy, government decisions as a written policy, and even in a broader sense, such as "what the government does ". Some of the features of public policy are: cohesiveness, integration, concentration, flexibility, risk taking, dynamism, accountability and responsiveness (Badie, 2000). Among other features that increase the power and efficiency of decisions are:

Extraction Capability: It is possible to discover the material and human resources necessary to achieve the desired goals of the system.

Adjustment Ability: Enables adequate and consistent supervision of the system over individuals and groups.

Responsiveness: It shows the degree of sensitivity of the system and its skill in satisfying the demands (Akhavan Kazemi, 2014: 12)

Regarding the policy making patterns, we can point to the efforts of Alison, the management theorist in the 1960s and 1970s, who over the course of two decades categorized policy making pattern into four groups (Shojaee and Nouri, 2007):

Rational Patterns

In the rational process of policy-making, the formation of a policy is derived from tool-goal analysis and a policy is good if it can provide the most suitable tools for achieving the most desirable goals (Shfritz & Hyde, 2004). This model involves stages of setting goals, designing solutions, examining outcomes, and choosing the way to best meet the goals (Denhard, 2003).



Systematic Patterns

The basis of this pattern is asking the questions that addressing them allow policy making (Chandler, 2000). In this model, decisions are not the results of deliberate choices, but should be viewed as the returns of organizational processes that are affected by current organizational affairs. Accordingly, despite the impact of organizational processes, executive leaders can influence decision-making, but these effects are much more limited than complete control and can be applied through organizational processes (Alvani, 2005). Allison has argued that decisions are not considered as deliberate choices, such as the first model, but are regarded as the achievements of organizational processes (Schwank, 1991)

Political Patterns

Based on the third pattern, Alison views the pattern of bureaucratic politics as a result of political decisions or as a negotiation between individuals. In this model, the organization is presented as a negotiating table, and the way power is distributed affects decision outcomes. In describing this pattern, Alison claims that the consequences of the political games of the "decision-makers' negotiation between the people" are such that each of the decision-makers in foreign policy wants to achieve a particular goal, or a particular interpretation, of national interest. As a result, foreign policy decisions and actions are deemed as the result of political negotiations processes and the game of current power in decision-making organizations (Seifzadeh, 2003). This model is based on the assumption that the main mechanism of management is a political process of negotiation i.e. the skillful combination of coordination and contradiction in situations where there is mutual interdependency between elements (Schwank, 1991).

Combined Patterns

This pattern prevents us from relying on a particular methodology in policy making as the only appropriate method. Using this pattern, it is possible for policymakers to choose the best and most suitable method by using all available practices and patterns, and with regard to environmental conditions and circumstances, and to help them choose and set policy. In this pattern, a method is viewed as appropriate if it adapts to the cultural, political, legal, economic, administrative, organizational, technical, climatic, and geographical contexts of that particular society. Each environment influences the choice of the pattern and the appropriate method with respect to the subject, and according to these effects, it should adopt the appropriate method (Kiamanesh, 2003).

Methodology

The methodology of this research is qualitative and the method of research is qualitative content analysis. In qualitative content analysis, the goal is to examine the content of the text. In this



analysis, the scholar typically begins with a set of principles and seeks to extract meaning from the text or the special rules and principles (Mohammad pour, 2013: 100). Analysis materials "(Miring, 1987 quoted by Mohammad pour, 2013: 100) includes the transcript of interviews with experts in the field of cultural tourism in Isfahan province. Also, some of the documents and other statistical data have been used to reinforce the results of the research. The statistical population is Isfahan province. The sampling was purposeful sampling. Due to the subject matter, our selected sample interviews were mostly academic or non-academic, who have specialized in the field of cultural tourism. A total of 21 semi-structured deep interviews were conducted. Of these, 17 had a Ph.D. and four had a master's degree. Furthermore, 18 people of those interviewed, were professors of state or nongovernmental universities, and 3 were also experts in cultural tourism in Isfahan province. Out of 21 people, 19 were men and 2 were women.

"Analysis technique " (Miring, 1988, quoted from Mohammad pour, 1392: 100) is a kind of "summarization" that seeks to reduce the textual material (the text of the interviews) to maintain their substantive content and significant bodies representing the original and original content. To this end, the texts are first parsed, then made abstract and generalized and eventually reduced. "Paragraph" is considered as the unit of analysis in this study to avoid generalization and specialization. "Analysis method" is a type of inductive analysis. According to the research purpose regarding the pragmatic approach of research which analyzes qualitative content for exploratory study to determine categories, this method is used. In this regard, the text is studied exploratorily and descriptively then the data will be put in the form of concepts and categories derived from the text. In this approach, three-step encoding open, selective, and axial (Flick, 2008) has been used to construct the categories.

Data Analysis

As indicated in the research methodology section, the analysis of the text of the interviews has been carried out in a deductive manner and attempts have been made to propose abstract categories which can determine cultural Tourism and Cultural Tourism policy in Three Hashemi Rafsanjani, Khatami and Ahmadinejad Governments through transition from purely objective and empirical codes. The main question of the present study is the comparative comparisons of tourism policy in three governments of Hashemi Rafsanjani, Khatami and Ahmadinejad. On this basis, based on each of the fundamental categories, it will be tried to consider the tourism policies of each of the countries in a comparative way.

Cultural Tourism Policy and Efficient Management

Specialized forces and the manner in which they are used is the first issue in the comparative comparison of governments with regard to the efficient management of cultural tourism. Based on the coding of interviews with experts in the field of cultural tourism, it can be said that Hashemi



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Rafsanjani's government has not had much success in this regard. 8-year imposed war and the resulting damages had been the main reason of bad economic situation. In fact, during this period, the government was engaged in rebuilding the country and reducing its losses, and had little financial resources to pay attention to the tourism industry, and in particular cultural tourism. On this basis, in this government, we did not have special specialists in the field of cultural tourism, and cultural tourism had not yet been raised as an issue and need for the country. One of the experts interviewed says:

"I think that the government of Mr. Hashemi did not work for tourism as expected, because his view was constructive and active to the consequences of the war. That is, there was no opportunity for tourism development".

During the Khatami period, there has not been much attention to the use of specialist forces in the field of cultural tourism. Although for some reasons which will be discussed in the following sections, Khatami's government has somewhat succeeded in developing cultural tourism, this period did not use tourism experts due to lack of specialized and trained forces in the field of tourism. This was a general issue in the post-Islamic era, and in all the governments we have faced with the weakness of the special forces, a problem that was more obvious in Ahmadinejad's government. Analyzing this period, we face a minimal development of cultural tourism, but there are no specialized forces in this field and the development of cultural tourism is facing a problem. One of the specialist professors interviewed in this regard believes that:

"Unfortunately, in the previous government (the Khatami's government), the recruitment of manpower has not been taken so far. It appeared in Ahmadinejad's government but specialists were not recruited. What we are suffering now is that we don't have 100% expert both in the public and private sectors. While those countries are successful in the tourism industry which have employed specialized forces in the field of tourism."

Another issue in the field of efficient management of cultural tourism in the three discussed governments is the issue of privatization. In the previous sections, the necessity of privatization and its importance in the development of cultural tourism were discussed. Based on the coding of interviews with experts in the field of cultural tourism, we can say that the privatization problem has not been seriously pursued in any of the three governments. One of the experts interviewed says:

"The most important disadvantage of all these governments is that no government has been able to privatize tourism. In Ahmadinejad's period, some announced the slogan of tourism privatization while they were not able to do this. When it comes to managing an organization with part of the government's credits and part of its own earnings, it certainly will be losers in the private sector's competitive market".



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If we want to talk in a comparative and comparative way, we can say, based on the findings of the coding of the interviews with experts in the field, generally privatization in any of the governments has not been seriously pursued. But Ahmadinejad's government has taken some and more serious steps in this regard in spite of not achieving much success. One of the people interviewed is comparatively pointing out this:

"The first government (Hashemi Rafsanjani's government) was more involved in the war. The second government (the Khatami government), put forward many slogan issues. In the third government, few steps were taken though more can be done. If the individuals employed were specialized and did not behave politically, previously recruited employees could have better performance."

For a closer look at the issue, we need to look at the statistics and information available in this field, but there are no precise and consistent statistics capable of comparative comparison. Nevertheless, it is possible to cite Deputy Directorate for Development of the Organization for the Management of the Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism at Ahmadinejad Government. He believes that at present (the last year of the Ahmadinejad government), there are 2,345 people working in headquarters of the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization. Of this, 420 have a specialized degree and one thousand 633 people have a general degree. Interestingly, 50% of these forces have a diploma or high school degree. Due to the lack of coherent statistics related to other states, it is not possible to express views comparatively and the present research in this section is based on interviews with the experts in the tourism field of Isfahan province.

Moreover, regarding the privatization of the tourism industry, it can be said that, in this context, cultural tourism is also considered as a subset of tourism as a macro industry. For a better review of this issue, we need to take a look at the laws related to each of these governments. The most important point in examining the laws related to Hashemi Rafsanjani's government is Article 5 of the Law on the Development of Tourism, which was approved in 1370 and amended in 1994 and 1996. The article states that "banks are obliged to provide and pay for bank facilities in order to encourage private and public-sector investment in the development of tourism and tourism facilities. This article shows that in the government of Hashemi Rafsanjani, the private and public sectors are basically seen together and are not considered as an independent sector in tourism. In Khatami's government, this issue is somewhat more considered." This issue has been somewhat taken into consideration, according to the executive regulation of the formation and management of tourism sample areas. Of course, this regulation also refers to investment in tourism in general and the issue of privatization has not been discussed as it should be. In the rest of the internal guidelines and regulations, this can be seen to some extent. In the Ahmadinejad government, the laws are practically taking on a political hue and the tourism industry becomes a political entity with the presence of Baqaei and Mashai, and practically the privatization debate is not much



touched. This, of course, does not mean privatization, but good actions have been taken. However, the overriding influence of political laws on them has weakened its functionality to some extent. In this period, the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization has been trying to issue licenses for popular activities in the fields of cultural heritage, handicrafts and tourism. To better understand Ahmadinejad's performance in the field of privatization and competitiveness in the tourism industry, the report "Travel and Tourism Competitiveness 2015" can be helpful. Iran ranked 12th among Middle Eastern and North African countries, according to the report. The United Arab Emirates ranked first in the region, with Qatar and Bahrain in the second and third positions of the region. On the infrastructure and policy in the tourism sector, there is also an intermediate situation. The worst ranking of Iran is associated with travel prioritization and tourism with the rank of 130th in the world. And the best rank is the price competition in the tourism industry, which is the result of the sharp increase in the exchange rate in 2011 and 2012. The increase in exchange rates in these years has led to a sharp rise in the purchasing power of foreign currencies against the Rial and a dramatic drop in costs of travel to Iran for foreign tourists. Although this has a positive impact on the improvement of this sub-index, it has not had much impact on the overall ranking of Iranian tourism. In terms of subcategories of human resource, environmental sustainability, travel prioritization and the infrastructure of tourist services, there is a huge gap between Iran and the countries of the region. The report suggests that despite measures to privatize in the Ahmadinejad government, Iran actually has not gained a good overall ranking in competitiveness, a good indicator of the performance of tourism in the governments.

In general, if we are to talk about the comparative comparisons of the three mentioned governments in the field of efficient management of cultural tourism, based on qualitative findings, we can say that Hashemi Rafsanjan's government was more involved with post-war issues and had little opportunity to manage effective cultural tourism. Khatami's government was also more involved with political issues and political decontamination, and had not worked well in the field of efficient cultural tourism management. Despite serious weaknesses in this regard, Ahmadinejad has worked better than two other governments, although in many cases the success of this government has been engrossed in political slogans and superficial successes. In general, Ahmadinejad's government has been somewhat more successful.

Policy of Cultural Tourism and Political Interaction

This section deals with the comparative comparisons of Hashemi Rafsanjani, Khatami and Ahmadinejad's government on the impact of political interactions on cultural tourism policy. Hashemi Rafsanjani's government was more involved in the economic status of the country and post-war economic reconstruction of the society. Though cultural tourism programs were not raised in his government, attempts were made to rebuild relations with Western countries during this period, which could somehow succeed if there were plans for the development of cultural



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tourism, but Due to the lack of management and cultural tourism programs, this did not actually happen.

"Mr. Hashemi tried to make good relations with his neighbors. At that point, it has been said that Iran and Saudi Arabia are pursuing the Islamic world, but due to Saudi interference in the imposed war and its support for Iraq, it is natural that we did not have a positive attitude towards Saudi Arabia. This was aggravated after the Hajj massacre in Mecca. But Mr. Hashemi tried to improve the neighboring region. In the European area or in the neighboring Arab countries, he tried to improve the situation, but these conditions were more sensitive to Iran's treaties or economic efforts."

As it is known, Hashemi Rafsanjani's government was involved in interaction with neighboring countries, and was about to decontaminate this field, and entered less into the area of political interaction with the European countries which have the most cultural tourists in terms of economic efficiency. Most of this perspective was also involved in the economic dimension, and the cultural aspects were not taken into account very much. Khatami, with the idea of Dialogue Among Civilizations, practically entered into political interaction with European countries and tried to decontaminate politically. Based on the encoding of interviews with experts in this area, Khatami's government was very successful in this regard, and political interaction and political affiliation were formed at a favorable and appropriate level. One of the people interviewed in this field believes that:

"In the Khatami government, a lot of good things occurred in the field of culture and politics. As a result, Iran's atmosphere was prepared for the entrance of tourists. In Khatami's government, the image that was shown from the country was a much more delicate one. As a result, the number of incoming tourists increased."

Therefore, the expansion of political relations and political development in the Khatami government fairly contributed to the relative development of cultural tourism. Another interviewee says:

"Khatami's government got better. And the relationship with the world got better too. There was a sharp drop in oil price. We had to refer to other incomes, where tourism was one of the indicators."

Despite the political development, detente and expansion of political relations in Khatami's government which led to the relative development of cultural tourism, some believe that Khatami's government did not have a coherent program in this regard and sought more political considerations than to consider cultural tourism as an industry. In fact, what was fundamental to his government was political development, and tourism was developed as a consequence of this.



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However, some believe that during this period only views were improved slightly and tourism did not actually improve. One of the individuals interviewed said:

"In Khatami's government, some events happened. He believed that attempts must be made to move country away from that initial passive and political state and he aimed to pursue détente policy and improve relationships with the neighboring countries. But again, nothing was done technically and just views changed and turned into positive ones. On the other hand, satellite and internet networks emerged gradually and as a result Iran started to be recognized by others. Even so far, many thought that Iran was a desert country with primitive people who ride camels.

The political interaction and détente that were formed in the Khatami government virtually disappeared in Ahmadinejad's government, and the country was involved in a long period of political tension and political conflict with European countries and even neighboring countries. Indeed, if we can consider Khatami's government a government that has made political détente, Ahmadinejad's government developed a form of détente by designing political slogans that reduced political relations and even cut political ties with some European countries. In this situation, the minimal development of cultural tourism formed in the Khatami government due to the expansion of political space and political détente has been eliminated again.

One of the interviewed expert professors said:

"During the Ahmadinejad period, due to the bad communication between our country and other countries, especially Europe, some countries closed their embassies. Tourist traffic faced a recession again. It doesn't mean that it didn't grow, it grew but very slowly."

Some argue that Ahmadinejad's slogan policies in international politics caused political tensions, which also damaged the development of cultural tourism.

"During Ahmadinejad government, with statements and speeches made in different periods, he failed to show a good image of the country during these years. Of course, tourism is an extremely vulnerable industry. A slogan, a speech, a statement could affect, and this also had a negative impact on tourism development".

If we want to more accurately compare the performance of these three governments, we will need to refer to the statistics and information available. These statistics show the superiority and better performance of Khatami's government in this regard. For example, entry of foreign tourists can be the most important component for measuring political engagement. According to the available statistics, in 1992 i.e. in the middle of the first government of Hashemi Rafsanjani, only 89.3 percent of the tourists who entered Isfahan province were foreign tourists (7,373 people). This



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amount was 18.8% at the end of Hashemi Rafsanjani's government in 1996. In other words, in the Hashemi Rafsanjani government at best, about 92% of the tourists entering the city of Isfahan were domestic, which is by no means desirable. In the Khatami government, this rate is faced with a sharp rise so that this amount reached about 21% at the end of Khatami's government. In fact, in this government, 21% of tourists entering Isfahan province were foreigners indicating that Khatami's political interaction and détente with foreign governments had been developing. But in Ahmadinejad's government, these statistics declined again and the entry of foreign tourists to Isfahan province was less than before. Finally, in 2013, the end of Ahmadinejad's government, this amount dropped by about 15%, much less than Khatami's government. In other indicators, this issue is also largely true.

In general, if we want to draw a comparative conclusion from the discussion of political interaction and the development of cultural tourism in the three Hashemi Rafsanjani, Khatami and Ahmadinejad governments, we can say that in the Hashemi Rafsanjani government, political interaction began partly with an emphasis on neighboring countries, But this minimal interaction could not contribute to the development of tourism due to the lack of specific programs and the dominance of the economic potential in it . In the Khatami government, the situation completely changed, and political development and political détente with Western countries peaked and slightly contributed to the development of cultural tourism. In the Ahmadinejad government, the issue came back to the initial stage, and the design of political slogans on the international level led to tension, the reduction of political relations, and even the cutting off of political ties, which had damaged the cultural tourism industry. In general, Khatami's government can be considered better in this regard than other governments, Hashemi Rafsanjani's government ranks second and the Ahmadinejad government is the last.

Cultural Tourism Policy and Allocation of Credits

Regarding the allocation of credits in the cultural tourism industry and how it affects the development of cultural tourism, it can be said that Hashemi Rafsanjani's government was a government that had come into existence after the war and began to work. The country suffered a lot from the war, and most of the government funding in the Hashemi Rafsanjani government was spent on the economic reconstruction of the post-war society. Hence, the government did not have good performance in terms of credit allocation and financial and non-financial financing in the tourism industry in general and cultural tourism in particular.

"In the field of financial resources, most of credits were spent on infrastructure due to the problems we faced both during the war and in the post-war period."

"Well, for example, I do not think Mr. Hashemi's government deserves negative points because Iran had regression in economic and social terms, which could not do anything in



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the field of tourism, and I give it the right to rename its campaign as construction, a kind of reconstruction of everything that was lost."

Therefore, in general, it can be said that Hashemi Rafsanjani's government had little success in funding and allocating credits to the cultural tourism sector for the above reasons. Of course, the reconstruction of the destroyed economic infrastructure by the 8-year imposed war could, in the years to come, be the basis for the development of cultural tourism, but for some reasons this did not happen.

In Khatami's government, this issue continued to some extent. Khatami's government was more involved in political issues, political development, political détente, and so on. It was fairly successful in this regard. Though it encouraged the development of cultural tourism, it was virtually impossible to achieve in this area due to lack of adequate funding and sufficient funding because of economic problems. The Two mentioned examples of cultural tourism experts in the field of allocating credit in Khatami's government and related economic affairs confirm this claim.

"In Mr. Khatami's government, allocation of credit to cultural tourism was weak and it was related to the economic conditions of the government. Mr. Khatami did not fund economic issues as much as he did for culture. If he had paid attention to economy as much as he had to culture, perhaps the movement called Reformism would have supported him. And the weakness that could be associated to this government is economic dimension."

"At the time of Mr. Khatami, due to the anarchies that we had in the field of law and have yet, any function was carried out in this field took on a political hue rather than being regarded as an economic issue. Sometimes, attempts were made to fight against those who blocked this field. Due to political conflicts, financial and economic dimensions were neglected."

The issue of credit allocation improved to a great extent in the Ahmadinejad government. One of the reasons for this was the sharp rise in oil prices, which led to a dramatic increase in the government's budget, which naturally found itself in the cultural tourism industry the communications infrastructure improved to some extent in the Ahmadinejad government, welfare facilities have been improved, and positive steps have been taken in the field of cultural tourism marketing. However, in some of these cases, these steps took on a political and ideological hue and created problems for the country, but in general, the performance of the Ahmadinejad government in this regard can be viewed successful compared with the other two. One of the university professors who is an expert in tourism comments on the credit allocation in Ahmadinejad's government:



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"What must be admitted is that in our ninth and tenth governments (the Ahmadinejad government), our tourism infrastructure, our tourism resources, and our tourism facilities obviously show that investment has had a significant growth. We are in fact in a situation where our priority is not reconstruction after the war, that is, we have gone through this stage and we have now come more towards tourism in the context of cultural consolidation and we were able to build the infrastructure in this government so that tourists can enter the country."

"Considering infrastructures, we have the most infrastructure in Mr. Ahmadinejad's government both in tourism and tourism facilities."

"In terms of advertising and marketing, there was a great rise in Ahmadinejad government and Iran participated in some fantastic exhibitions."

For example, based on the Statistical Yearbook of Isfahan Province, the number of hotels in the province was 28 units with 1303 rooms in 1991. This number increased by only 8 units at the end of the Hashemi Rafsanjani government i.e. after 6 years. Of these, there was only 1 unit of luxury hotel with a capacity of 245 rooms in 1991, which remained the same 1 unit at the end of Hashemi Rafsanjani's government, but its capacity decreased to 220 rooms. At the beginning of the Khatami government, the number of hotels in Isfahan province was 36 units. At the end of this government, the number reached 45. In total, 9 new hotels were built in Isfahan province during the Khatami period. This indicates that the performance of the Khatami government and Hashemi Rafsanjani's did not differ significantly in this regard. In Ahmadinejad's government, the issue is completely different. At the beginning of Ahmadinejad's government, the number of hotels in Isfahan province was 45, but in 2013, the year after Ahmadinejad's government, this number was 86. The 31 new hotel facilities were completed before the completion of the government, which is indicative of the performance of the Ahmadinejad government in this regard. The number of beds in hotels in Isfahan province has doubled in Ahmadinejad's government (from 3653 to 6474 beds in 2011.) Also, if we look at the infrastructure, for example, at the end of Khatami's first government, there were about 77 passenger transportation agencies in Isfahan, which at the end of Ahmadinejad's first government reached 118, showing a remarkable growth. This number has reached 92 in the following years due to the dismantling of some cooperatives. There are no accurate statistics of Hashemi Rafsanjani's government.

In general, based on the findings of the coding of interviews with cultural tourism experts in Isfahan province, we can say that the government of Hashemi Rafsanjani was heavily involved in the post-war economic reconstruction of the country, and had virtually no financial resources to allocate credit to the cultural sector, nor did it take any action in this regard. Although the situation in Khatami's government was a bit better, in this government politics and culture overcame the



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economy and did not see much growth. Although political détente led to the relative development of cultural tourism, the economic weakness of the government and the sharp decline in oil prices effectively prevented this from happening successfully. But in Ahmadinejad's government, the issue varied greatly. The sharp rise in the price of oil provided a lot of financial resources to the government, and the government also sought to allocate more credit to the cultural tourism sector, rebuilt the infrastructure to some extent, worked well in the field of tourism marketing, and as a result had more success than the other two governments. In a final summing up, we can generally say that Ahmadinejad's government was more successful than Hashemi Rafsanjani's and Khatami's in allocating credits to cultural tourism. Khatami's government ranks the second and eventually Hashemi Rafsanjani's government has the lowest rank.

Policy-making of Cultural Tourism and Cultural Policy

Cultural policy and its prioritization are of fundamental importance in the development of tourism. Based on the coding of interviews with experts in the field of cultural tourism, it can be said that there are several weaknesses in this field. As an example, institutional non-interactions are one of the most important weaknesses that have seriously damaged cultural tourism. If we want to compare the three Hashemi Rafsanjani, Khatami and Ahmadinejad governments together, we can partly repeat the same ideas in the Hashemi Rafsanjani government. Hashemi Rafsanjani's government was heavily involved in the post-war economic reconstruction of the country, and we certainly cannot comment upon it. But if we want to comment on this government in general, we can say that cultural policy in this government has not been substantially discussed, and cultural tourism and the prioritization of these policies are not, of course, possible. Hashemi Rafsanjani's government was more involved with the economy, in other words, the main focus of this government was the economy, not culture. One of the experts interviewed says:

"I think that the government of Mr. Hashemi did not do anything for tourism, because his view was a constructive and active approach to the consequences of the war. That is, there was no opportunity for tourism development."

But in Khatami's government, the problem has changed to a great deal. In this period, much attention was paid to culture and civil society. The topic of attention to ethnicities and linguistic and cultural diversity was raised, which could help to develop a minimal cultural tourism. This issue has increased especially in the second period of the reforms i.e. since 1380. In this government, the government's top priority was related to political development, which naturally covered social and cultural development in part. Therefore, based on the coding of the interviews with experts in the field of cultural tourism in the city and province of Isfahan, we can conclude that Khatami's government was fairly successful in this regard, and there were positive steps in the



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direction of achieving cultural tourism development. Statements of the two experts participated in deep interviews confirm this claim.

"I think that Isfahan can be a summary of Iran. Iran has limitless diversity and is great to visit due to its linguistic and climatic and national and ethnic diversity. It is very important that we have such features in Isfahan (ethnic, language and religious diversity). Due to this long variety, Isfahan has been able to keep these diversities together with each other in a peaceful atmosphere throughout history and to prevent the gaps from being deeper. I don't think much has been done in this regard during war period and after construction phase. But we had a gradual growth since Mr. Khatami government."

"Most attention was paid to tourism in the second period of Reformism. That is tourism in terms of organization, construction, regulations and so on gained a good status. At a period of time, good debates started in the field of tourism.

Therefore, in general, Khatami's government could be considered relatively successful in this field. But in Ahmadinejad's government, this matter changed again. The cultural policy debate in the field of cultural tourism was again forgotten, and the community again was split. The discussion of cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity, which was of great importance in the development of tourism, was forgotten and the government failed to do so. Interviewees' statements in this study confirm this view. The same people who commented on the policies of the Khatami government expressed their views in the context of cultural policy and cultural tourism in Ahmadinejad's government as:

"When I look these years, I see that there was no opportunity cultural development since the war period and the era of construction. Or better to say, thinking about tourism began during Mr. Khatami's government, but as I said, this did not continue successfully in the previous government (Ahmadinejad's government), and there was a pause until the beginning of the present government."

"The pressures led to a government in Iran that had a fundamentalist look, so that it could show its resistance more than before, but we have not seen any particular activity in this area. The instability that we witnessed in the Heritage Organization itself at that time shows this. Heads of Heritage Organization changed repeatedly in Ahmadinejad period far more than other governments which indicates that the government has not been concerned about tourism development."

"I think that from the point of view of planning and culture, the cultural heritage and the development of tourism have not been taken into account in Ahmadinejad's government."



In general, if we are to talk about comparisons of these three governments, we can say that the Hashemi Rafsanjani government had little success in this regard for the reasons outlined above. Because it was involved with economic issues, the construction and reconstruction of the post-war society, and the economic dimension dominated the cultural policy. In Khatami's government, the issue has changed, and the main attention has turned to politics and culture. In this period, we are faced with the expansion of civil society and attention to the linguistic, ethnic and cultural diversity that played a fundamental role in the development of tourism. Although the lack of institutional interaction in this period is clearly visible, this is something that can be seen in other states too. Eventually, during the Ahmadinejad era, this lack of institutional interaction peaked. Linguistic, ethnic and cultural diversity was forgotten, and the cultural policy associated with it entered a recession. Although positive developments were made in cultural tourism in this government, it did not succeed in discussing cultural policy. In general, we can say that Khatami's government worked better than the other two governments, the Ahmadinejad government ranks the second, and the Hashemi Rafsanjani government which did nothing due to the reasons mentioned above is the last.

Policy of Cultural Tourism and Macro Strategies

Macro strategies can affect the development of cultural tourism in various ways. If we want to examine the three Hashemi, Rafsanjani, Khatami and Ahmadinejad governments in a comparative way, we must say that the government of Hashemi Rafsanjani is still an exception. Due to post-war policies and the need for economic reconstruction and construction, we cannot comment upon Hashemi's government very logically and coherently. But some believe that the overwhelming attention of Hashemi Rafsanjani's government to indirect industry and agriculture has damaged cultural tourism. One of these people who is an expert on cultural tourism, says:

"Well, we didn't have any tourism policy in Hashemi's government. The issue of industry and agriculture was more important. And the underlying basis of the country was industry and agriculture and now we witness its damages. The problems of rivers, wetlands and so are the consequences of that period."

The macro policies and macro strategies were not desirable in Khatami's government as well. The main problem in this government was the weakness of the law and its anarchy. Indeed, in this government we face a severe weakness of the law and its lack of proper functioning, and virtually the laws cannot act as it should, and this has damaged the development of cultural tourism in this period. One of the experts interviewed in this regard, comments on the weakness of the law and inadequate laws in Khatami's government:

"During Mr. Khatami's period, any kind of function was carried out in this field took on a political hue than being an economic problem due to the law-abiding affairs."



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In Ahmadinejad's government, the situation was worse than Khatami's government. In this period, there are severe disruptions in all aspects of macro strategy and macro policies, and there is practically no stability in the government. This directly and indirectly damaged cultural tourism seriously. One of the people interviewed comments on this issue as:

"Ahmadinejad's government did not show much stable behavior in the field of economics and politics."

"During Ahmadinejad's period, relations between Iran and the West changed, the pressures made a government in Iran that would have a fundamentalist look, so that it could show its resistance more than before, but we have not seen any particular activity in this area. The instability that we witnessed in the Heritage Organization itself at that time shows this. Heads of Heritage Organization changed repeatedly in Ahmadinejad period far more than other governments which indicates that the government has not been concerned about tourism development."

If we want to compare the three governments in this regard, we have to look at the laws passed by these governments in the field of tourism. With the victory of the Iranian Revolution (1357) in 1979, a ministry called the "Ministry of National Guidance" was first formed through the integration of the "Information and Tourism" and "Culture and Art" ministries, which were quickly renamed the "Islamic Guidance Ministry" and all missions related to tourism, pilgrimage were organized in the Ministry of Tourism and Pilgrimage Affairs. In 1991, the last year of Hashemi Rafsanjani's government, the Tourism Development Law was approved, which cultural tourism to a certain degree covers. Article 4 of this law states that "the Iranian customs authorities shall be obliged to establish special facilities for foreign tourists in the manner specified in the Regulations of this Law at the ports of entry and exit Also, article 7 of this law states that "the issuance or renewal of any permit for the establishment of tourism and tourism facilities as well as the suspension or cancellation of such licenses shall be the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance." This law has been approved by the Hashemi Rafsanjani government. The regulations for the establishment, completion and equipping of tourism facilities were also approved and amended during the Hashemi Rafsanjani period. The regulation states that "recognizing the need for different regions of the country to establish tourism facilities and issue licenses to create, modify, complete, equip and use is exclusively within the authority of the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization. The issue that can be understood from this law is that the macro policies of this government during its last months have moved towards policies related to tourism, but they are still far from cultural tourism issue.

The same laws continued with minor amendments in the Khatami government. In Khatami's government, the first formal committee of Iranian tour guides, as a subcategory of Iran tour guide



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association, began their activities with 10 elected guides. In April 2002, the committee decided to establish guilds for tour guides. The first founding board was formed after co-ordination with the office of Tourism Organization and preparation and drafting of the statute.

In December 2002, in the first coordination meeting of guides the decision was made to continue the activity of the guild, and in March, the license was issued by the organization's Legal Bureau for the establishment of a community of guides from Iran, and on August 4, 2003, the Founding Board convened the first assembly to ask for vote of confidence for the statute. 110 guides out of 135 people gave vote of confidence in the statute. With vote of confidence in statute, the funding board held an election for board of directors. In the first election, 9 principal directors and two alternates together with three inspectors were elected. Mr. Rahim pour, the representative of Tourism Association, and Mr. Jamshidi, the representative of Coordination Office, attended in the election and confirmed the formalization of the meeting. Hence, the community of guides started as the main body of guides under the supervision of the Iranian Travel and Tourism Organization which itself was under the supervision of the Ministry of Guidance, and when the Travel and Tourism Affairs Department was transferred to the Travel and Tourism Organization, the Guide community was put also under observation of the old Iranian tour guide organization and the new Organization for Tourism and Heritage. A look at the laws passed in this period indicates that there is a kind of turmoil in it, and some kind of parallelism can be seen. As an example, during this period, the Executive Order approves the manner of establishing and managing areas of tourism sample, which in some cases is the continuation of the same laws of the previous government, and there is no significant change other than emphasis on privatization. In most articles of this Code, emphasis is placed on privatization, but in action, as evidenced by the text of the interviews conducted by experts and cultural tourism experts, there is little change in this field.

On April 16, 2006, at the 100th session of the Supreme Administrative Council of the country, the organization of handicraft of the country was separated from the Ministry of Industries and Mines with all the powers, obligations, facilities, personnel, etc., and added to the Cultural Heritage and Tourism Organization so that it can continue its activities under the title "Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization. In Ahmadinejad's government, this issue continued to some extent too, and a kind of instability in the laws, the parallelism of laws, overlapping and ineffective laws occurred.

In general, if we look at the performance of these three governments in the context of macro policies related to the cultural tourism industry, we can say that Hashemi Rafsanjani government has more policies in the field of economics and economic reconstruction of country after war, but these policies indirectly damaged cultural tourism in the coming years. In Khatami's government, macro policy was a foreign policy and a strike against terrorism. Instability of the law and its inefficiency in the field of cultural tourism damaged this industry and prevented the development



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of cultural tourism. In Ahmadinejad's government, this issue continued to a greater extent and this instability went beyond the law and covered many sections of the government body, which also damaged cultural tourism. Ultimately, it cannot be precisely said which of the above-mentioned governments have succeeded in this, but have each failed to do so. But if we have to choose, based on the coding of interviews with experts in this field, we can say that Khatami's government worked a bit better than the other two governments, next is Ahmadinejad government and, ultimately, the lowest rank belongs to the government of Hashemi Rafsanjani.

Conclusion

In this study, cultural tourism policy was explored using encoding of in-depth interviews with experts in the field of cultural tourism in Isfahan province. Based on this, it was aimed to achieve a specific narrative of cultural tourism policy in three Hashemi governments Rafsanjani, Khatami and Ahmadinejad. If we want to make a final conclusion to the comparison of the three Hashemi-Rafsanjani, Khatami and Ahmadinejad governments in the field of cultural tourism policy, we will have to review the final and general performance of each of these governments in each of the categories classified. Based on the qualitative findings and considering efficient Management, we can say that Hashemi Rafsanjani government was more involved with post-war issues and had little opportunity to manage effective cultural tourism. Khatami's government was also more involved with political issues and political decontamination, and had not worked well in the field of efficient cultural tourism management. Despite serious weaknesses in this regard, Ahmadinejad has worked better than two other governments, although in many cases the success of this government has been engrossed in political slogans and superficial successes. In general, Ahmadinejad's government has been somewhat more successful.

Regarding political interaction and tourism development, we can say that in the Hashemi Rafsanjani government, political interaction began partly with an emphasis on neighboring countries, but this minimal interaction could not contribute to the development of tourism due to the lack of specific programs and the dominance of the economic potential in it. In Khatami's government, the situation completely changed, and political development and political détente with Western countries peaked and slightly contributed to the development of cultural tourism. In the Ahmadinejad government, the issue came back to the initial stage, and the design of political slogans on the international level led to tension, the reduction of political relations, and even the cutting off of political ties, which had damaged the cultural tourism industry. In general, Khatami's government can be considered better in this regard than other governments, Hashemi Rafsanjani's government ranks second and the Ahmadinejad government is the last.

Regarding credit allocation, we can say that the government of Hashemi Rafsanjani was heavily involved in the post-war economic reconstruction of the country, and had virtually no financial



resources to allocate credit to the cultural sector, nor did it take any action in this regard. Although the situation in Khatami's government was a bit better, but in this government, politics and culture overcame the economy and did not see much growth. Although political détente led to the relative development of cultural tourism, the economic weakness of the government and the sharp decline in oil prices effectively prevented this from happening successfully. But in Ahmadinejad's government, the issue varied greatly. The sharp rise in the price of oil provided a lot of financial resources to the government, and the government also sought to allocate more credit to the cultural tourism sector, rebuilt the infrastructure to some extent, worked well in the field of tourism marketing, and as a result had more success than the other two governments. In a final summing up, we can generally say that Ahmadinejad's government was more successful than Hashemi Rafsanjani's and Khatami's in allocating credits to cultural tourism. Khatami's government ranks the second and eventually Hashemi Rafsanjani's government has the lowest rank.

With regard to cultural policy making, we can say that the Hashemi Rafsanjani government had little success in this regard for the reasons outlined above. Because it was involved with economic issues, the construction and reconstruction of the post-war society, and the economic dimension dominated the cultural policy. In Khatami's government, the issue has changed, and the main attention has turned to politics and culture. In this period, we are faced with the expansion of civil society and attention to the linguistic, ethnic and cultural diversity that played a fundamental role in the development of tourism. Although the lack of institutional interaction in this period is clearly visible, this is something that can be seen in other states too. Eventually, during the Ahmadinejad period, this lack of institutional interaction peaked. Linguistic, ethnic and cultural diversity was forgotten, and the cultural policy associated with it entered a recession. Although positive developments were made in cultural tourism in this government, it did not succeed in discussing cultural policy. In general, we can say that Khatami's government worked better than the other two governments, the Ahmadinejad government ranks the second, and the Hashemi Rafsanjani government which did nothing due to the reasons mentioned above is the last.

In general, if we look at the performance of these three governments in the context of macro policies related to the cultural tourism industry, we can say that Hashemi Rafsanjani government has more policies in the field of economics and economic reconstruction of country after war, but these policies indirectly damaged cultural tourism in the coming years. In Khatami's government, macro policy was a foreign policy and a strike against terrorism. Instability of the law and its inefficiency in the field of cultural tourism damaged this industry and prevented the development of cultural tourism. In Ahmadinejad's government, this issue continued to a greater extent and this instability went beyond the law and covered many sections of the government body, which also damaged cultural tourism. Ultimately, it cannot be precisely said which of the above-mentioned governments have succeeded in this, but have each failed to do so. But if we have to choose, based on the coding of interviews with experts in this field, we can say that Khatami's government



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worked a bit better than the other two governments, next is Ahmadinejad government and, ultimately, the lowest rank belongs to the government of Hashemi Rafsanjani.

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