

Semiotics Content of the Fields affecting on Graffiti and Decorations of Zand Era with an Emphasis on Folk Art Themes*

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Abstract

Art and architectural works of the Zand period are a unique collection of Iranian architecture before cultural developments of the Qajar period. According to most literatures, they have a simple-oriented structure and borrowed fields of art and ancient architecture (Achaemenid era) and some techniques of Safavid period compared to works before and after them. But the content of the art of this period has not been studied with a deeper analysis of the roots and folk art of the Zand tribe yet. This study aims at decoding and understanding the concepts and semantics metaphors and areas affected by illustrations and images of this period using attitudes and folk art themes of the Zand dynasty with a historical-cultural method and a cultural semiotic strategy as a tool for analysis and interpretation of the affirmative and implicit implications of the phenomena as a system of socio-cultural implication. The results show that tribal art has some degree of creating a non-representational world in which another visual reality independent of any representational and expressive character is raised. Considering this process (items such as simplicity, freestanding, connection with nature, joy, happiness and peace) approves the absence of any absolute functional and conservative look, at the content of art and architecture of the Zand period and clarifies that “Deliberative Functionalism of Ethnic Art” has been effective as the third important theme of folk art in graffiti and internal and external decorations of buildings in this period after the themes: “Naturalism” and “Simplification of Abstract Concepts”. Wide diversity and a strong presence of graffiti with abstract designs and abstracting of Lachak (a small scarf tied tightly to the head), bergamot and framings which are themed with realistic designs of natural elements such as plants and birds in government buildings (castle, courthouse, Haft Tanan and Kolah Farangi mansions) are the best places to publish and represent modern motifs, to emphasize on tendency to abstracted affairs in expression and the reflection of pure concepts abstracted in the nature of folk art as an indicative of the flexible spirit and adaptability of this art with the cultural context and lyrical atmosphere of Shiraz in this course.

Keywords

Ethnic Art, Zand Period, Decorations, Cultural Semiotics.

*. This paper is derived from Taban Ghanbari's Ph. D. thesis, entitled “The role of native-tribal art and culture in the formation of architectural monuments of the Zand era” under the supervision of Dr. Hossain Soltanzadeh, and consultation of Dr. Mohammad Reza NasirSalami and Dr. Hashem Hashemnejad at Azad University, Central Tehran Branch, Tehran, Iran.

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Introduction: statement of the problem

Zand period has accounted for pleasant and quiet times in the social life of the Iranian people and happy memories in the Persian history. It has played an important role in forming the Iranian architectural history prior to the Qajar period since Iranian art and architecture have always been influenced by the environmental phenomena and resources such as climatic factors and vernacular cultural origins. Accordingly, studies on this period as the last period prior to cultural changes, Qajar period, caused by the effect of architecture on the origins and concepts of ethnic vernacular culture in Iran is of great significance. In this regard, the present study aims to understand the effective concepts of tribal art and culture in the Zand period by a semiotic-cultural approach making it possible to use semantics for creating the murals and other decorations of the period based on the cultural indications of creative signs in tribal and ethnic art.

Cultural semiotics as a part of semiotic knowledge is the study of sign processes in terms of cultural and human relations. Moreover, semantic theories exploring the structural relationships hidden in meaning making can help the semantic adaptation of these works (Shoari, 2000: 2).

Semantics of architectural works interpret the shape, form and design of architectural elements as cultural tools. Thus, the nature of signs is achieved and their concepts are understood by studying meaningful architectural concepts on the basis of structuralist attitudes towards fundamental characteristics and aspects of signs (Falahat & Nouhi, 2012: 8). Accordingly, ethnic art themes and its attitude towards the concept of beauty are the main factors forming the body and content of art in Zand period. Therefore, themes and the way of creating forms and concepts in ethnic art are described, and then signs and cultural indications pertaining to the themes are comparatively analyzed.

Research questions and hypotheses

The present study attempts to answer the following

research questions with a view to develop cultural perspectives affecting Zand period decorations:

1. What is the relationship between decorations and wall paintings of Zand monuments and tribal art themes of Zand dynasty?
2. What is the effect of tribal art, themes on the nature and quality definition of art and architecture of the monuments of the Zand period?

It seems that answering the research questions followed by cultural origins and processes of Zand dynasty is recognizable as a part of tribal and ethnic art. Therefore, the study hypothesizes that ethnic art contains cultural themes and a range of vital components and pure aesthetics and most texts adopt a structural- and functional-oriented approach to study it as a constituent of ethnic cultural products such as architecture-dependent arts.

Research background (Literature review)

Texts such as *Tarikh-e Giti Goshā* and *Rostam al-Tavarikh* are considered as valuable works on a fresh approach to the documentation and recognition of hidden cultural identity layers associated with Zand period to study the historiography of Zand dynasty with a new insight into and bold statement about describing cultural-social events, which are searching for a fresh approach to the historiography and recognition of lost layers in socio-cultural life of people in Zand period (Milani, 2004: 107-110). Various studies have already been conducted on the art and architecture of the Zand period by Fars Cultural Heritage Organization (FCHO) and other researchers and

Persianologists, most of which have adopted a descriptive approach to describe the physical and historical characteristics of monuments regardless of a certain variable.

Proceedings of the great congress of Zand period (2008) also contain further information about art and architecture of Zand period and describe socio-cultural and economic events occurred in it, including "Analysis of Intellectual Architecture Foundations in Zand Period" (Aliabadi and

Asadpour), “Architectural Characteristics of Zand Period” (Nemati, Mohammad), “Zandieh Complex in Shiraz” (Hassanpour, Mohammad), “Karim Khan Castle, Bagh-e Nazar, and Kolah Farangi Castle” (Sasanian, Sasan), and the book entitled ‘Divan Khane’ by Maryam Shirvani (2012) resulting from the partial restoration of Divan Khane hallway decorations, none of which has not been semantically analyzed from a cultural semiotic perspective.

Research method and process

Based on the nature of the research purpose and due to the fact that studied samples are dedicated to past, the present study is qualitative, from the perspective of research type, and historical-interpretive, from that of the method. The aforementioned methodology deals with collecting evidence and documentations in terms of important and meaningful cultural interpretations of historical phenomena based on the cultural intentions and purposes, whether of an individual or in groups, and notably, without emphasizing upon a special theoretical pattern.

At the end, grounded on an inference-based interpretive approach, these concepts may present the results obtained through a cultural semiotics strategy considering physical symbols (signs) as meaningful signs containing social-cultural information. Therefore, in this study, cultural themes as the pillars of fundamental structures and universally so-called signified, are considered to be the basis of semantics and an exploration of the existing implications in decorations of Zandieh era. In the collection of written and pictorial evidence, due to the inadequacy of existing documents, the text pictures were used based on the researcher direct observation, documentation, and precise photography.

The basic theoretical concepts of the study

• Semiotics of concepts in the context of architecture

Semiotics as an approach to the text structural analysis tackles with studying the way of meaning formation of the text. From this perspective, a text is

a combination of signs appeared in the form of words, images, sounds, modes and objects, and interpreted with reference to the rules of a semantic system (genre) in a communicative way (Chandler, 2015: 21). believes that “objects and actions within a culture are considered a sign by semiotics, with this way, the latter aims at recognizing the rules and regulations accepted, whether consciously or unconsciously, by the people of that culture by means of which they endow phenomena with meaning” (Caller, 2001: 35). Based on the cultural semiotic theory presented by Eco², these relations could be studied in signifying systems as well as a temporal-spatial position/system, and grounded upon their social and cultural contexts; moreover, “understanding the proper semiotics of a work or text is subject to penetrating into the thought world of the creator of that work to discover the underlying facts of respective work” (Abbaszadeh, 2013). From the perspective of semiotics, culture is a complex system of signs that encompasses all the meaningful behaviors of mankind. Accordingly, the world has been made up of different layers of signs and symbols that are interpreted through society, culture, and ideology. Moreover, these layers study all cultural phenomena as a system of signs and symbols (Sojudi, 2011: 128-129). According to Rappaport³, culture (life style) is the most important criterion of reading a building physic, “culture is assumed to be an area in which life, thought, coordination and social interaction systems enact role, a factor to define patterns and theories, and a mechanism linking people and environment; and architecture as one of the greatest products of man has been highly overshadowed by culture” (Rappaport, 2003: 52). In this regard, Rappaport points for style and suggests that: “from the cultural achievements of a society, what is truly perceived as ‘style’ is merely the output of a systematic options process having been resulted in different styles in architecture during the history (Ibid: 82). In this way, Rappaport tries to attribute the building shape and features to the cultural viewpoints and needs as well. Therefore, architecture semiotic

“could recognize the effective features of instances in the processes of creation, meaning making, and aesthetic experience occurrence with emphasizing upon the space milestones” and studying the signs and their interpretation process as well (Mir Shahzadeh, 2011).

Typology of cultural signs functions in architecture

Semiotic is in many ways associated with meaning creation and its reflection as well. In semiotics, direct (explicit) and implicit implications (as the ways of meaning reflections) establish modes for explaining the relation between signified and signifier, and an analytic distinction between two types of implicit signified and direct one through both of which the meaning is created (Chandler, 2015: 209-210). What is referred to as explicit signification ‘the relation between signified and signifier that can have the same meaning perceived at the very beginning of facing the image’ (Vakili & Javani, 2014), and in most cases, enables the study of implicit or indirect concepts used to refer to sociocultural meanings of the signs (Chandler, 2014: 210). In architecture also, the functions of signs can be studied as two ways of implicit (direct) and implicit (indirect) and based on the first group of semiotic terms presented by Charles Morris. Inspired by Pierce, Morris studied the semiotics in architecture in three main facets of pragmatic, syntactic, and semantic. Later, Eco also studied the architecture in the area of cultural semiotics based on “Triple Sign System”. Juxtaposition of concepts of Morris and Eco in table 1, put shed some light on the fact that in architecture, the concepts rooting and signs implications, commence from the physical elements (explicit) as the signs implied to mean (i.e. codes).

Conceptualization of nomadic art in Zandieh era

In recognizing cultural themes of the Zand dynasty as part of the nomadic-tribal (nomadic-ethnic) art, referring to two formal and content

themes is largely important; for, according to Reed “as all arts are a form of symbolic dialogue, research in terms of formal values is the same as aesthetic or artistic activity with a biological (content) function and nature (Reed, 2008: 234). on this ground, decryption of nomadic art in nature of simplified and abstract mental perceptions with geometric structures, containing cultural themes and a variety of meaningful and pure aesthetics and value components embedded in the nature of ethnic art, can be studied. Accordingly, sign meaning aspect having its root in the principles of aesthetics, identity, and many learned lessons, associations of archetype, etc. manifested in the frame of the icon and sometimes symbol in the body of architectural space, is used in adapting these signs.

Meaning-making signs in the ethnic art (Decoding of ethnic art)

Ethnic art is defined as a symbol or form of communication and a bed for the concrete manifestation of human thoughts and desires, restraining beliefs and cultural values. It is also completely consistent with “Rural art” presented by Reed. Reed believes that “rural art stems from the man desire to endow daily objectives and tools with the color of happiness as well as the man’s wonderful tendency to shift from abstraction to simplification, and it is rarely representative of religious moods and is focused upon the environmental phenomena” (Reed, 1995: 64-67). It also portrays a sort of transcendental existence beyond the art works and genres, and is considered as the foundation of different art experiences (Reed, 2009: 213). Using purified ideas (imagines) with the minimum details of the other signifiers (codes) of the tribal culture is what having a seminal role in reading the semiotic system.

With the emphasis upon the representative principle, this abstractionism in each form includes codes of nature happy imagines with abstract forms, portraying refined forms, and understanding and expression of profound values of nature behaviors

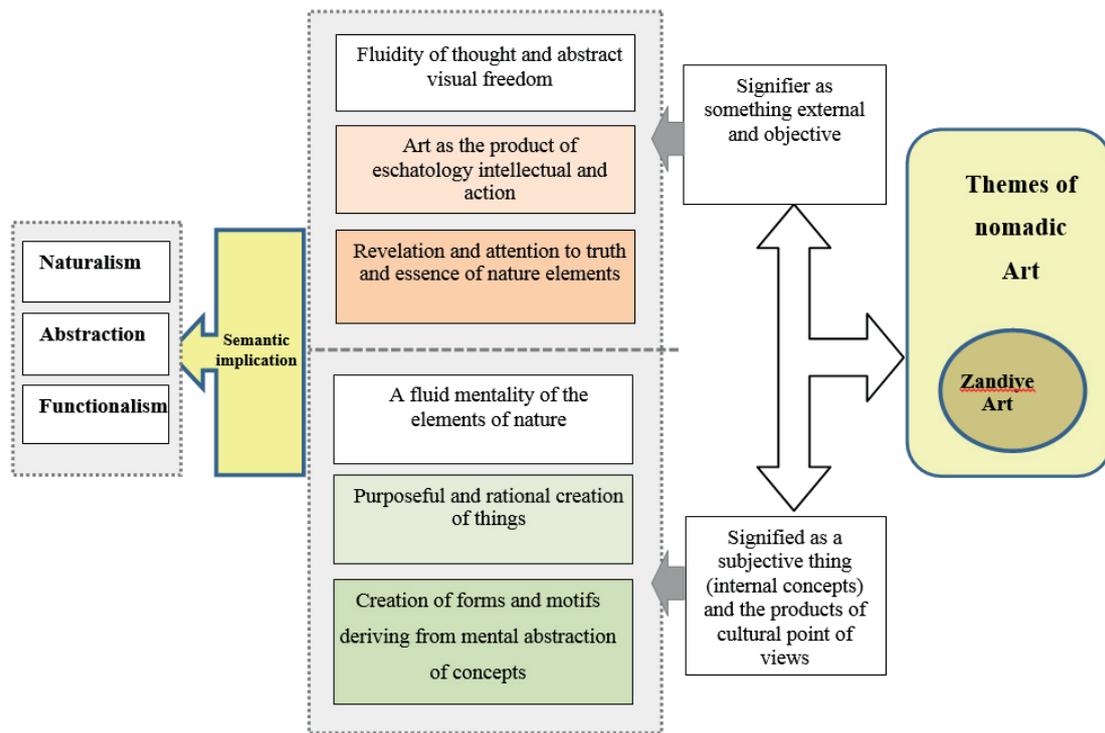


Diagram1. The compatibility of cultural themes and art of Zanduyeh with the creation areas in ethnic art. Source: authors.

Table 1. The facets of signs function in architecture (extracted from the theories of Morris and Eco, Sojoudi, 2003). Source: authors.

	Definition	Classification	Approach	
Formal or subjective signifiers	Emphasis on the root of architecture elements application	Functional	Studying architecture based on the Triple Sign System	Charles Morris
	Content or concrete signifiers	Syntactic		
	It deals with semantic significance of signs in all their meaning modes and its impact upon the behavior of interpreters	Semantics		
Techniques and methods of combining the elements	Pointing to the basic elements of architecture	Technical codes	Studying architecture based on the theory of structural and procedural codes	Umberto Eco
	Pointing to the special logic of technical elements relation and companionship, e.g. rooms, corridor, ...	Syntactic codes		
	The content scheme of man life	Semantic codes, per se, dividing into 4 groups:		
	Basic and functional meaning, e.g. stairs, window, ...			
	Implicit secondary meaning, e.g. windowed, ...			
(semantic) structure signifiers	Internal meaning of biological ideologies including, 3-door, alcove			
	Major social meaning or alluding to the function and typology of building function, e.g. aristocratic houses, government building, market ...			

as well. On this basis, aesthetic components of ethnic art products are focused upon criteria representative of intuitive thoughts and affections of their creators and it is exclusively dedicated to criteria in which each credit and beauty is identifiable through form and color. Therefore, ethnic art with an obstructive subjective structure result from the refined and form-driven, intuitive thoughts and conscious selections in the form of mostly geometric forms and symbols of the natural life environment.

Further symptoms of this art is to transfer the simple archetypes in the framework of stable schemas resulted from perceptions and continuous contact with the nature elements as the bed of individual relation with the world in tribal lifestyle, which are transferred with the reflection of the spirit and collective thoughts during the long years.

This art with a material, function-driven, utility-driven, and realistic approach lacks the border between pure art and function; hence this art fails to be named as “fine art”. In other words, in ethnic products, beauty makes another meaning in an extremely high priority over the necessity and usefulness, and the ultimate goal of creation in these arts with all their varied motifs and arrays, is to reflect the perceived ideas and semantic themes that are focused on form from the perspective of visual beauty. Thus, nomadic art is mostly similar to a “recreation” and purposeful reconstruction of environmental elements and nature in particular that reflects a substantive truth by following the nature behavior and action by creating a visual reality. This semantic content in mental forms of ethnic art may allow expressing the visual and aesthetic values of Zandieh works in line with the essentialism of this art in the mental configurations of ethnic art of this art.

The semiotics of decoration

As it was mentioned earlier, decorations in ethnic art are something more than a mere array and appearance covering, but the arena of reflecting humanistic-cultural symbols and concepts during

the historical trend, which is used to neither showing off nor self-expressing but expressing an internal concept. The minimal existence of decorations in the exterior facade and using simple brick walls in the monuments of the Zandiyeh era (Diagram1), are the structural signs of this attitude in creating a work of art, leading to more emphasis on the interior spaces in the analysis of Zandiyeh decorations. Thenceforth, the analyses are performed separately in three main areas, namely brick work and carving in exterior view and wall drawing in interior spaces.

Brick work

In Zandiyeh era, one of the signs a work is considered earthy and simple is to use brick as the main covering of the buildings. After Seljuk period, brick work as a technique was totally forgotten; however, in Zandiyeh era, it was again taken into account as the dominant material in construction and decorating building facades with varied patterns. The decorating exterior facade of the buildings in this era was simple and harmonious with the brick structure of the building. The most prominent of these motifs is simple and geometric designs in the tower facades of Arg of Karim Khan, including continuous and centripetal rhombic designs considered to be the common abstract geometric and angular motifs in ethnic arts. These motifs are observed in varied combinations in a host of handicrafts and local products (nomadic, and Lor and Tork tribes) such as Gabbeh, Gilim, etc. in center or margins as well. It is also assumed to be a technical sign of being overshadowed by the brickwork of nomadic art, reflected as the abstract motifs in the facades of buildings in this period (Fig. 1).

Carving (Sculpt)

According to historical sources (Rustam-al-Tavarikh and Git Show history), using pieces of stone without mortar, inscriptions and netted and patterned stony plinths carved in different parts of Zandiyeh buildings are the impacts taken from the



Fig. 1.a. Brick framing in the exterior façade of Zandiyeh buildings.
Source: authors.



Fig. 1.b. Brick framing in the exterior façade of Zandiyeh buildings.
Source: authors.

ancient architecture of Achaemenid in terms of strength, stability and appropriate foundation that can be studied. On this ground, using stone in different parts including floor, plinth, pond columns, fountain and some carved reliefs with the maximum use of shapes like square, rectangular and orthorhombic elements with clear and simple geometry is another characteristic of decoration in Zandiyeh era. However, most carved motifs on these inscriptions with the roots of abstract art include Lachak bergamot motifs with codes of ethnic art. Among them, Zandiye popular bergamot as the most widely used motifs in the plinth of buildings in this era is known as “Chahar Mahi Bergamot” (four fish Bergamot) due to its similarity to the fishtail and its repetition in 4 directions (Fig. 4,5), it was also the symbol of water, prosperity, freshness and a symbol of abundance as well, and one of the schemes having its root in carpet weaving of the Khorasan region (Dadvar, et al, 2004: 7).

Wall murals painting (Graffiti)

According to the pictures dedicated to this era, wall mural painting was used as the main part of the decoration in buildings attributed to the state (e.g., Arg, Court House, a Kolah Farangi mansion, summerhouse of Jahan Nama Garden and Haftanan Mansion), main Home porches, interior spaces, halls and rooms, in the body and ceilings, with light cream background and as a regular and recurring framing. Semiotics of these wall murals are divided into four

groups, i.e. geometric motifs, abstract plant images, realistic plant images, and human images with mythical-ancient subjects and two approaches of traditional and authentic Iranian (ethnic) and motifs influenced by European art (table 1-3). Some of the realistic plant images such as flowering pot in some instances like halls of Arg of Karim Khan and tile work of the night prayer hall (Shabestan) of Vakil mosque are among the motifs directly influenced by European art with brilliant colors vermilion and lapis lazuli in combination with gilded motifs on a light cream background, reflecting the tendency towards nature with realistic manner that in integration with local taste of Shirazi artists becomes more delicate and palpable compared to their counterparts in decorations of Qajar era. This way of drawing pots is completely different from ancient motifs as the most fundamental motifs in the Iran visual culture, either as individual or in a group with other motifs, reflecting the endless freshness and flourishing (Espanani and Boroujeni, 2011: 31).

Pot reliefs¹² with arabesque and ivy lines are among the basic combinations in rural art that are observed in different types of nomadic handicrafts (e.g. Lor, Kord, and Tork). seen in different types of nomadic handicrafts (e.g. Lor, Kord, and Tork). In different eras, this motif has been used as one of the main motifs in a variety of decorations of painting and tile work. Pot motifs of Zandiyeh era were used with a simplified and realistic approach

with long neck, and sometimes without arms and necks. Furthermore, the signs of difference in the origin of the motif formation of pot are dedicated to the previous eras and following eras as well. The motif of plot in Safavid decoration is observed to be mostly simple with the minimum plant motifs carved on them; and in Qajar era, nature-driven elements specially roses, lily vine and a variety of fruits with a naturalistic look profoundly influenced by western art and exact implementation of details (Bemanian, et al, 2011); (Fig. 6-9).

Unlike Safavid monuments, human images were only used in the interior spaces of government buildings like Kolah farangi mansion. Moreover, for the sake of harmony with the size of respective shelves, they were used as pointed and arched at the top (Fig. 10). Unlike the Safavid era which mostly focused on dynamic images of war narration, invasion and conquest, these wall murals are mostly used in a tranquil, carefree, and mild space showing people in a calm and quiet condition. The aforementioned image, per se, is representative of tranquility dominant in the prevailing circumstances of Zand rules after the Nader Shah statesmanship.

Among mythical-historical images worked in Haftanan Mansion include images of Joseph and Jacob, Rostam and Sohrab, Sheikh Sanan, and itinerant Sufi that realistically applied with less delicacy and accuracy in detail and coloring. In this period, the most widely used motifs in decoration of interior spaces were dedicated to flowers combined with a variety of chickens¹³. Variation in chicken shape and flower design in combination with the bushes of red roses through using new techniques, e.g. point of view, ways of choosing and combining elements, founded a new meaning in the aforementioned era. Since late 7th century up to Safavid era, images of trees and birds were part of the scenery and the foundation of most book images (Shahdadi, 2005: 75).

By choosing chicken as the soul, and tree as the shelter of chicken, in the 17th century, Abbasi founded the basis of attention to signs and conceptual symbol of the nature. Over time, such application of symbols and signs led to the emergence of visual and palpable shapes of mental and shapeless forms of substantive and mystical concepts (Ibid: 17). Therefore, according to this visual variation, i.e. portraying conceptual chicken as the bird existing in the nature, it seems that in most cases like works of Zandiyeh era, this variation was conscious. Influenced by mystical literature after the 11th century, the aforementioned works were known as "Rose and the Nightingale" (Gol-o-Bolbol) and it was the theme of most mystic works. As, over time nightingale has turned to chicken, and due to the fact that in Zandiyeh era, the chicken semiotics were turned to the conceptual chicken and hundred leaves Red Rose bush was substituted for the tree as the shelter of chicken (Ibid: 75).

In this style, the bird importance has decreased and it was scattered through the plant base. Plant base was also placed in the ground mostly as Red Rose bush and lily plants (Ibid: 244). Combination and juxtaposition of rich, warm and bright colors (red and gold) and light sparkle are characteristics penetrated into the Shiraz school painting in the art of this era and attribute this way of nature drawing to the painting of Zandieh era. In these wall murals, the meaning relation of motif and background is representative of a sort of attention to the contents of images and purposeful application of decorations proportional to the special application of each space, enriched by integrating with mystic art works and symbolic world of codes and symbols evidently spread over the poetic and mythical environment of Shiraz and Isfahan, and also reflected through nature and senses in the mental world of artists and then the buildings of this era.



Fig. 2. Compatibility of brick work in the exterior façade of Karim Khan Arg towers with rhombic design of Lori kilims with rhombic motif of Western Iran (18-19 century). Source: Hall and Barnard, 2000: 50-51.



Fig. 3. Curving of abstract plant motifs in architectural decorations and elements of Zandiyeh era. Lachak bergamot motif and Arabesques inscriptions in plinth of Zandi monuments. One of the important element in the style of Persian painting. Photo: Ghanbari, 2015.



Fig. 4. Zandi bergamot in the plinth of Vakil Mosque entrance porch plinth. Photo: Ghanbari, 2015.

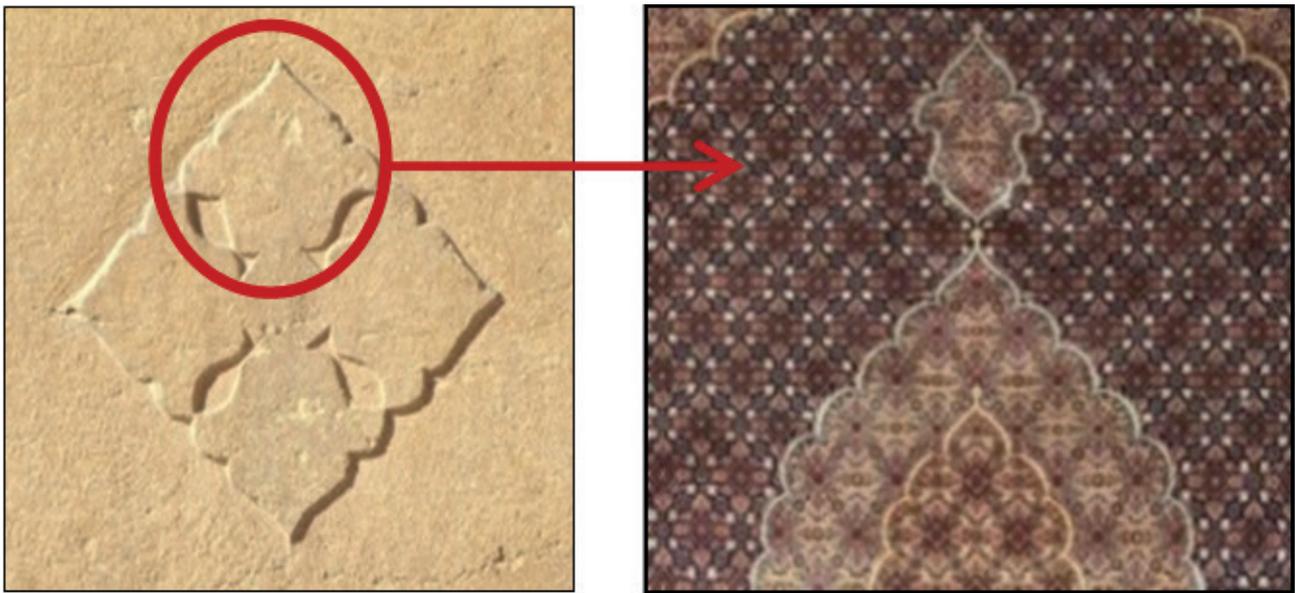


Fig. 5. Compatibility of bergamot motif known as the four fish in plinth of Zandi buildings with fish bergamot motif as the famous ancient Iranian motifs. Photo: Ghanbari, 2015..

Discussion and analysis of findings

Investigating the various features of ornaments in Zand era was aimed to decode how the semantic and structural elements were seen and the grounds that formed them from a structuralism perspective and study the entity and its combination by paying attention to the concepts like implications and interpretations. In this way of finding a network of the semantic implications among artistic elements in this era and using interaction, logistics (as a proportion among signs), the signs were studied and specified in three levels including technical, functional and semantic-ideological ones. Unlike the viewpoints mentioned in the present texts about art in the Zand era, the sign, the more as the cultural signs (semantic ones), were greatly influenced by the Zandiyeh ancient artistic, ethnic-tribal paradigms, concepts, preferences and interests and only self-images under the real influence of Europe and Safavid art were used in parts of mural art and sometimes tiling. Based on these results from the current perspective about the simplicity of absolute functionalism in the face of art and architecture in Zand era and concerning the importance of abstraction and symbolic representative methods of reality, the phenomena found a new definition in the tribal art (in comparison with the results mentioned

in the extant texts). This elite selection of the nature images was based on two basic principles, namely techniques and technical construction restrictions in the emergence and abstraction of the forms and painting the vegetable, animal, and human reliefs. on this base, the technical constructive restrictions were not feasible without having these three valid aspects of thought noted by Aristotle in terms of theoretical, practical, and industrial knowledge and wisdom (Zamiran, 2005, 29). This fact also emphasized the richness of abstraction in the ethnic art. Using ornaments in the external spaces rather than the external ones was assumed as an attempt to simplify sight and glory of buildings. This kind of usage could explain the designation of a clear spatial system and minimalism the hierarchical details in the external spaces culturally.

The royal entity of the buildings appointed to the government could be considered as the best place for emerging the new ideas, forming more and more active images and mural arts that were aimed to illustrate the colorful nature with warm backgrounds. In these kinds of backgrounds, painting flower and bird through mystical symbolic concepts showed that the painters' perspective changed from the human contents towards the nature ones. In fact, this



Fig. 6. Realism in the motif of Lily, daffodii, and Mohammadi flowers, north porch of Vakil mosque. Photo: Ghanbari, 2015.



Fig. 9. Motif of pots i in wall murals and tile works in Zandiyeh Era. Source: authors.



Fig. 7. Motif of pots in tile works of Safavid Era in Seyed mosque in Isfahan. Source: Bemanian, et al, 2011.



Fig. 10. Wall murals of Kolah Farangi mansion. Photo: Ghanbari, 2015.



Fig. 8. Motif of pots in tile works of Qajar Era with the more powerful realism (naturalism) influence of western art and reduction of abstraction in scheme. Source: Bemanian, et al, 2011.



Fig. 11. An example of birds and flower and bush motifs as the main images wall decoration of Zandiyeh era. Photo: Ghanbari, 2015.

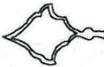
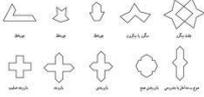
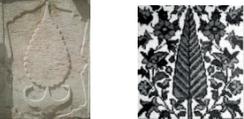
Table 2. Separation of collected motifs of ZandiyeH mansions based on type and technique used in decoration. Source: authors.

				<p>Geometric motifs</p>		
						<p>Plant motifs: natural examples of <u>flowers</u> and <u>buthes</u></p>

has led to the increased application of naturalistic reliefs in the decoration of this era through a slow and evolutionary movement from the end of Safavid era to Zandieh era as the result of understanding the relationship of mystic signs and symbols with

nature and its elements. Courage and temerity in imaging motifs in the gubernatorial territory of Zand originated from the constant high desires for ethnic art in the intricacy and multiplicity of images and normally used backgrounds. This kind

Table 4. Decoding of Nomad motifs used in Zandiyeh decoration. Source: authors.

Image	The content of semiotics	Indicative facet	Motif
	Abstract intuition towards the environmental concepts resulted from structure technical limitations (this feature is among the most important factor in establishing a sort of violence in nomadic art)	Symbol	crenate geometric motifs
	A symbol of water, prosperity, freshness and a symbol of abundance in the art of Iran ancient tribes	Symbol	Fish tail
	Expressing abstract tendencies in the relation of man and environment and concrete-driven perceptions in purifying complicated forms as the simple and repeatable geometric forms in all areas of handicraft	Symbol	Geometric motifs inspired by the objects
	Flower as the symbol of nature linking the nomadic artist mind with the surrounding nature and environment (Living context)	icons	Motif of wild flowers
	The ancient demonstration of the Iranian tribes idea (Sasanian) about generating, Fertility, abundance and blessing	Icons	Life tree
	The unique motif in Zandiyeh wall murals as the main signs of western art penetration into the architectural decorations.	Icons	Pot motif
	The sign of liveliness, verdure, and freshness	Icons	Cedar motif

of curiosity along with the accurate and thoughtful ordering for the regular frame with shiny and sparkling colors on the walls and roof defined the quality of internal spaces (halls and rooms). The lyrical state of naturalism and motif style in Shiraz school used with the new definition under the influence of culturally ethnic-tribal factors in the Zand era in terms of specific lifestyle, beliefs and ethnic interest, along with the simplicity derived from the non-material perspectives and abstraction in tribal art, the carves, derived from the archeologically

unique perspective. In addition, in this perspective, a reference was given to the architectural principles of Achaemenid era and the artistic contexts dependent to the Safavid architecture. In ornaments in Zand era, what made these symbols distinctive was the very difference in the semiotic aspects of motifs, colors and their combination by which the mutually functional and syntactical connections ranging from the functional paradigm of a building to the semantic metaphors of the motifs could be decoded. These distinctions which came in tables 1 and 2 classified

and explained the semiotic elements in images more clearly and made the distinction between signifier and signified possible. The results from analyzing these two tables illustrated that any symbol referred to an information unite whose configuration along with other cognitive-cultural concepts could interpret and

decode each element in ornaments. In this symbolic system, the semantic relation of elements formed the synaptic relation and the general language of motifs and shapes presented a new definition of the conceptual aspects and contents of ornaments and motifs.

Conclusion

The symbolic analyses, as a method in analyzing text based on the semantic relations of Signifier and signified, helped to discover the cultural codes in the historical phenomenon without considering author values. Therefore, by emphasizing the processes of interpretive semiotics, symbols and their Cultural Implications incongruent with the contents (themes) of ethnic art, as an effective factor in recognizing the hidden meanings in art in the Zand era, were determined and specified:

-The ornaments and mural art in Zand era and the contents of tribal art in Zand dynasty were related each other implicit- semantic. Such a relation was formed by the Signifiers, as the cultural signs, that were extracted from an internal factor (the contents of tribal art) and two external factors (artistic context of Shiraz school and the impacts of western art).

-These cultural codes formed the quality of internal spaces in line with the comprehensive principles and existential philosophy of artistic creation and tribal art “by abstracting and summarizing construction and intricacy of the elements” in all functional types especially in the buildings appointed to the government while their uniqueness were maintained. These codes could be observed in three stages of bricking, carving, and mural art with the shared elements, including dynamicity of space, intricacy, unique space creation in terms of style in using images and spatial divisions by using the various relations for images and background. These findings in response to the current perspectives about nonexistence of deep cultural themes and absolute functional approaches in this era presented a new image of art and architecture in the Zand era. It was appeared the valuable symbols of non-revealing entity and abstraction that narrated the tribal art acted as the key features of the works in this era. This feature in architecture and recognition of its entity was referred as the essence or taste of space that made the physical-spatial character and features of these buildings in this era distinctive of the works of its previous and following periods (Safavid-Qajar). Achieving such concepts provided new contexts in studying cultural semiology of other paradigms and structures of buildings in the Zand era in other places rather than Shiraz and even other architectures originated from the ethnic cultures.

Endnote

- 1-Muhammad Hashem Asef is the only historian who mentioned to all cultural, economic, and political affairs occurred at the time Karim Khan was Shah in his book called “Rustam al-Hukama”.
2. Umberto Eco / 3. Semiotics / 4. Amos Rapoport / 5. Technical codes / 6. Syntactic codes / 7. Semantic code
8. Precognition / 9. Essentialism / 10-The title that Sir Herbert Read used in defining the local and ethnic art in the human small communities like tribes had a less detailed structure or was somehow violent and practical.
- 11-His artistic works (as Aristotle believed in imitation in noting the artists’ responsibility) “included the true path to wisdom”. “Art was to make” (as it could be implied from the Greek word poesy)
- 12-Refer to Spenani and Boroujeni (2011) and Bemanian and his colleagues (2011) in order to know more about the background and ancient meanings.
13. Developing the prevalent use of flower and bird in the Iranian oil paintings with great qualities in Qajar era showed the process of goal change that

Table 5. Decoding the triple causes of motifs in ornaments in Zand era. Source: author.

Semiotic ground (context)		Technical	Syntactic	Semantic	The tribal contents of art		
Ornaments in external spaces	Bricking	-the use of the technique of Iranian arcade and arch -congruency between structure and the face of building	-the relation between motif and context -the relation between motif and function -the relation between motif and technique of painting performance	-the abstracted geometric motifs of the constant diamond shape -the ancient tribal motifs (tree, life, fertility...) -the semantic aspect of lack of prevention and interpretation in tribal art	Abstraction	Naturalism	Functionalism
	Carving	-the use of the stone elements in building constituents -stone is considered as a part of structure and ornament of building	-the relation between motif and context -the relation between motif and function -the relation with other adjacent elements	-abstraction in medallion (corner) -naturalism in arabesque motifs - motifs of the Iranian archeological motifs	-	-	-
Internal spaces			-abstraction in painting different vegetable motifs -abstraction of medallion and moth -realism in the vegetable, animal and human motifs -the fundamental motifs of flower and bird -the motif of flower and bush -framework and distinction of levels -the dark, rich and saturated colors	-abstraction in painting images -the minimum mystic contents -naturalism -the stimulation interactions (realism) in motifs -the minimum use of human motifs -historical reference to the ancient paradigms in choosing motifs			
Mural art							-

started with Reza Abbasi, continued to Zand dynasty, and became the beliefs of community of Iranian painters. Its production was the mystic symbols in Shahnameh in which the divine texts changed from spiritual codes, mystic and heroic goals to spiritual ones. After this stage, symbols, and signs like tree, flower, spring, sun, water, and soil replaced the human characters. It was a very change that caused the biggest motivation and deep look to nature and its constituents in a way that had not been implied by the Iranian painters before (refer to Shahdadi, 2005, 29-30 to study in detail on this topic).

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