

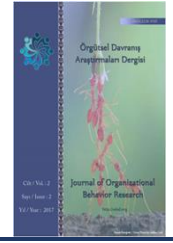


2528-9705

Örgütsel Davranış Araştırmaları Dergisi

Journal Of Organizational Behavior Research

Cilt / Vol.: 8, Sayı / Is.: S, Yıl/Year: 2023, Kod/ID: 23SO-1008



## USING ANIMATED GRAPHIC DESIGN TO INTRODUCE MYTHICAL SYMBOLS AND ICONS OF THE HARVEST FESTIVAL IN NORTHERN IRAN

Pooneh REZASEFAT<sup>1</sup>, Roja ALIZADEH<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Master Of Arts (Graphic Design), Department Visual Communication central Tehran branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department Visual Communication central Tehran branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

**\*Corresponding Author**

**Email:**

rezasefat11@gmail.com

r.alizadeh@iauctb.ac.ir

### ABSTRACT

*The world today is expanding and demands new skills and knowledge. When education processes are combined with technology, they can be highly innovative. The use of animated graphics in modern media is a dynamic, impactful, and essential factor. The presence of motion in these media is primarily a response to the physical and bodily immobility of humans in the confined spaces of the modern era. The proliferation and development of technology and its impact on people's lives are undeniable. Nowadays, all aspects of life are intertwined with technology or are evolving to align with it. Education and learning are no exceptions to this rule. Animated graphics are one of the emerging technologies used in political, economic, and cultural sectors, and its popularity is due to its excellent ability to capture attention and guide the audience's minds toward the designer's objectives. The Harvest Festival, also known as the Thanksgiving ritual, was celebrated in various forms across different regions, from China, Greece, and Egypt to Iran, with different customs and names. Unfortunately, today, it is symbolically celebrated with less vibrancy, mostly in northern Iran, particularly in the provinces of Gilan and Mazandaran. In this study, the introduction of traditional and mythical symbols in today's world, considering the globalization of cultures, the blurring of boundaries, and the issue of the global village (which is very prominent today), has been of great importance. This study aims to explore the visual symbols in a proper and up-to-date manner, with a focus on the rich culture of northern Iran, using motion graphics techniques.*

**Keywords:** *Animated graphic design, Mythical symbols and icons, Harvest Festival*

### INTRODUCTION

The realm of animated graphics primarily focuses on captivating the audience's attention, whereas in print media, this aspect takes a backseat. In the realm of print media, it's not easy to gauge the level of audience engagement and its impact. The duration of audience attention is a key element in effective communication. Animated graphics, by using this element, aim to maximize audience engagement and facilitate the information transmission process. Visual effects and graphic environments employed in animated graphics, without the proper use of suitable sounds and their expert combination, have a lesser impact on the audience. Music and sound can aid in information conveyance and effectively express emotions. Both images and

sounds are linked to the core emotions of humans, which are perceived through the two senses of vision and hearing. Animated graphic designers strive to influence the audience using these two sensory channels; therefore, the level of audience engagement through visual and auditory sensations relies on the artistic skill and graphic design expertise.

The images present in any animated graphic can either enhance the quality of the work and increase its popularity with the audience or, conversely, diminish its value. The easier and faster the audience can establish a connection with the work, the quicker the designer can achieve their goal. These visual images and attractions must be designed in accordance with the ideas, desires, and criteria of the audience to effectively convey visual messages. Many designers are unaware of these critical factors and their impact on audience engagement, leading them to neglect images, graphics, and visual messages in their animated graphic design. This lack of attention can hinder effective communication and pose challenges in reaching the intended goal.

Today's world is expanding, demanding new skills and knowledge. When educational processes are integrated with technology, they become highly innovative. The use of animated graphics in modern media is a dynamic, influential, and, indeed, a necessary factor.

The presence of motion in these media is essentially a response to the physical and bodily immobility of humans in the confined spaces of the modern era. The proliferation and development of technology and its impact on people's lives are undeniable. Today, all aspects of life are either intertwined with technology or are evolving to align with it. Education and learning are no exceptions to this rule. Animated graphics are one of the emerging technologies used in political, economic, and cultural sectors, and its popularity is due to its excellent ability to capture attention and guide the audience's minds toward the designer's objectives.

The Harvest Festival, as a local celebration, has its roots in the customs and traditions of the people of Iran, which have been passed down through the ages and are still celebrated in various parts of the country. This festival symbolizes gratitude and cooperation among the people, expressing thanksgiving for God's blessings and a prosperous year at the end of the month of Shahrivar, coinciding with the end of the harvest season. The Harvest Festival was officially registered as a cultural heritage of Iran in 2012 under registration number 1010. Therefore, the writer's goal is to study the symbols and mythical representations of the Harvest Festival in northern Iran and enhance them through the presentation of attention-grabbing motion graphics in different cultures.

### *The Harvest Festival*

The Harvest Festival is an annual agricultural and ritual celebration with the purpose of giving thanks during the harvest and the threshing of the grain. The word "Jashn" in Persian is derived from the Avestan word "Yasna," meaning praise and worship (Bayat, 2005: 615). The term "kharman" signifies an accumulation of a specific crop that has been stacked together. It is primarily used concerning grains such as wheat and barley, which form the basis of the people's diet. The process of sowing seeds marks the first step in producing abundance. Caring for these seeds, harvesting, and threshing them signify the attainment of the crop, which necessitates the collaboration of humans, animals, the land, and rainfall. This cooperative effort demands a sense of celebration and gratitude for the divine blessings. In addition to their deep respect for the



bread made from these grains, the people even swear by it. During the harvest, as a tradition, those involved in threshing give a joyful greeting to any passerby. They extend a handful of wheat to the passerby, with the intention that this gesture will bring good fortune to the traveler on their journey. In return, the recipient prays to God for the prosperity of the farmers and sometimes offers money to buy sweets so they can share in the joy. (Mirshokraei, 2019: 1) The farmers, no matter how little they have, after the harvest, threshing, winnowing, and separating the grain from the straw, do not prevent birds from pecking at the remaining grain. They also give an amount of wheat equal to a felt hat to any poor or wanderer who comes to their threshing floor. (Ibid) The Harvest Festival begins with this spiritual joy. Some signs suggest that the history of the Harvest Festival dates back to prehistoric times. Perhaps the images on some ancient pottery artifacts found in the National Museum of Iran provide glimpses of the harvest, dances, and ritual behaviors associated with this festival from that era. (Mirshokraei, 1995: 24) The earliest reference to this celebration in the Avesta mentions it in connection with festivals or celebrations. Here is the translation: One of those festivals is Pati Shahim/Patiye Shahim Gahanbar, which means "grain-bearing" or "grain gathering" and was held when wheat ripened and the harvest came in. In the past, this Gahanbar used to be celebrated for 5 days from 21st to 25th of Shahrivar (August-September). They used to hold it from 21st to 25th of Shahrivar (Doustkhah, 1387: 2 - 955; Orang, 1370: 120, 181; Bozorgzad, 1350: 35). For this reason, the Shahrivaragan festival, especially for farmers because of the harvest and providing the harvest pile, was the best festival and celebration (Orang, 1370: 120).

Farahvashi also considered the time of Patiye Shahim celebration - which according to him was called the Harvest Festival - to be the thirtieth of Shahrivar, meaning 180 days passing of the year. But the Achaemenids used to celebrate the grand Mehragan festival in Mehr month, meaning at harvest time, with great splendor in Persepolis (ibid, 81-82). In the Lesser Avesta as well, the beneficial harvest pile is praised. The third Gahanbar which is the festival of crops and harvest, is among the 6 ancient Gahanbars which are said to be founded by Jamshid. Observing these 6 Gahanbars is considered a great reward and abandoning them a grave sin, so people used to hold grand celebrations spending Gahanbar funds, in which both rich and poor participated (Orang, 1370: 182).

The Mehragan festival is dedicated to Mehr, the deity of vast pastures, and is mentioned in Avesta as Mehrisht. It was held on "Mehr day", meaning the sixteenth day of the seventh month of the year. Since it coincided with the harvest season, it is considered an agricultural festival. According to scholars, farmers cherish this day because of the end of harvesting and crop collection, and hold the Harvest Festival. The Harvest Festival is intertwined with Mehragan. In the past, Mehragan used to be celebrated for the emergence and birth of Mashy and Mashyane on this day, breathing soul into the human body, the day of agriculture and farmers and harvest, coronation of Ardashir Babakan, separation of Iran from Turkestan and return of Iranian cows from Turkestan, and finally for Kaveh's victory over Zahhak and appointing Fereydun on the throne (Gardizī, 1363 520; Parto, 1385: 188- 189).

In Gilan and Mazandaran, the Almavachini ceremony is intertwined with the Harvest Festival and Mehragan festival. According to the Gilanian calendar, which is only partly preserved among the mountain-dwelling tribes in the northern regions of the Alborz Mountains, the delivery of



the Gilanian New Year occurs on the night of the 15th of Mordad, which is "Nowruz-Ma," the first month of Deylami. On this night, a tall fire, similar to a century fire, is ignited, which they call "Nowruz-Bol" (the tall and blazing fire of Nowruz). "Nowruz-Ma" marks the arrival of the wheat and other grains. This festival starts on the 17th of Mordad, about four and a half months ahead of the official calendar, signifying the start of the harvest season. Therefore, in most of the eastern foothills of Gilan, the Harvest Festival is accompanied by the Nowruz-Bol ceremony (Pourhadi, 2009: 12).

In the thanksgiving ceremony for the Harvest Festival and wheat harvesting in the Fuman region, a dance is performed to the tune of a sorna (a traditional wind instrument) (Kazemi, 2009: 82). Farmers in the highland regions of Amlash, Siahkal, and Rahimabad, after harvesting wheat, dedicate one of the Fridays to hold the Harvest Festival ceremony, including the Almavachin celebration, at the county level in Amlash and the regions of Deylaman and Ashkurat (Delkash, 2010: 171). Until recent years, in the Gil and Deylaman regions, the celebration of gratitude and worship, parallel to the Mehregan festival, was held for 4 to 10 days. After the harvest, they would set fire to the huts and cottages made of straw and wood, and people would dance around them. Men would express their gratitude by giving gifts to the women who had been working alongside them (Miraboulghasemi, 1971: 146). Gilemardi wrestling, which used to be performed in various ceremonies in the past, also had its place in the Harvest Festival (Boruni, 2010: 110).

In the shrines of northern Iran, from Astara to Astrabad, the Alambandi ceremony is held on the first day of Muharram for religious rituals of the month of Muharram, and on the 13th of Muharram (3rd of Imam Hussein (AS) or 28th of Safar, the passing of the Prophet (PBUH) and the martyrdom of Imam Hasan (AS)) they hold the Alamvachini ceremony. But in some shrines, they mix the two Alamvachini religious and national Harvest Festival customs, and keep the flag in the same way until harvest time, so that along with the crop harvest celebration, the Alamvachini ceremony is also held. Probably in the past, harvest celebrations were common in these areas at this time. (Sotoudeh, 1374: 11-12).

### *Types of Motion Graphics*

- 1. Network Branding:** A typical supermarket carries thousands of product lines. To attract our interest in a specific product, the product owner must capture our attention before we enter the supermarket. Similarly, in today's multi-channel world, branding is often the best option for a network to compete with its rivals. Television companies increasingly use visuals, investing significant time in enhancing their on-screen imagery. The competition for increasing viewership demands an enhancement of graphics concurrent with broadcasting.
- 2. Bumpers (Bumps, Show):** These are brief segments shown between programs or during advertising breaks. They typically last from 2 to 5 seconds and often display the name or logo of the show along with some accompanying visuals. Educational bumpers are usually created to engage the audience more with popular culture. For example, during an episode of "Late Night with Conan O'Brien," they created a genie-like version of Conan during Christmas.



3. **Network Packages:** Similar to program packages, a comprehensive video information system that includes advertising elements, network branding, bumpers, subtitles, and morris (graphics) for enhancing the viewing experience
4. **Network Identities:** Network identity is a signature introduction to a live broadcast. Due to the high number of signals available, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in the United States mandates that all radio and television stations introduce themselves at the beginning and end of every hour.
5. **Morris (Full Screen Graphics):** These are full-screen graphics that frame a live program and are often used in combination with subtitles. In many television competitions, morris graphics are used to introduce newly discovered talents.
6. **Subtitles:** Subtitles are typically a combination of graphics and text displayed at the bottom of the screen to provide explanations or information about the person or program being broadcast. They are especially used in news programs and sometimes in documentaries.
7. **Show Openers:** Similar to the cover of a magazine or the initial title of a film, a "show opener" prepares the scene for the program about to be aired. Imaginative show openers help in branding and set the tone for the content, potentially capturing the audience's interest and prompting them to switch channels. Show openers usually last between 15 to 30 seconds.
8. **Interstices:** These are short programs, usually lasting from 30 to 60 seconds, broadcast between films or other programs, each serving a specific purpose. For example, some interstices aim to highlight key concepts, individuals, or events to underscore a show's concept. As an example, FreeStyle Collective created a new animated character named "Squidley" for use on the Cartoon Network.
9. **TV Program Listings:** "Upfront" is an advertising scheme used to promote television programs. "Upfronts" also unveil the "TV Program Listings" for the next season to give viewers an overview of what shows will continue, what shows have ended, and what new series are scheduled to air. In the design of upfronts and bumpers, more details are incorporated to create more eye-catching animated graphics due to the increasing demand for visibility.
10. **Modern Technologies:** Digital technologies play a significant role in shaping our visual experiences. Video projections that throw images onto walls without sacrificing image clarity, as seen on monitor screens, have opened up new possibilities in various areas such as large shopping malls, communication lobbies, exhibition halls, nightclubs, retail stores, restaurants, and sports stadiums.
11. **Tags:** A "tag" is a brief 3 to 4-second display shown at the beginning or end of a short advertisement, urgent news on a news network, or network promotions. A network may produce a substantial number of tags to promote a specific brand of a product, explain the product's purpose, and inform viewers where to find more information by displaying a phone number or website address.



**12. Animated Graphics on the Web:** Web animation has evolved significantly technologically over the years, and designers have had to adapt to the constraints of internet connection speed and bandwidth. The lack of a standard format for web animation is also notable. Some animations require a browser plug-in, while others can be executed independently. Despite these limitations, animators and graphic designers continue to engage in creative work, eagerly awaiting further advancements in internet technology.

#### *Categorization of Ritual Dances in the Harvest Festival of Northern Iran*

In the past, various rituals were organized to revere certain natural phenomena, express gratitude to God, or acknowledge the hard work and the results of human labor. These rituals typically involved symbolic movements and forms representing the essence of the phenomena. Inspiration was drawn from the movements of animals and birds, and these gave rise to expressive dances. In essence, these dances are a collection of movements that reflect the behaviors of natural beings, combining creativity, human thought, and imagination (Gherimi, 2009). The people of Mazandaran have created their unique dance called "Sema," which draws inspiration from the natural movements of the region. Sema can take various forms, each symbolizing different aspects of work, effort, natural movements, ceremonies, customs, and more. The execution of these Mazandarani Semas demonstrates the profound connection between the region's culture and its environment. The rhythm, melody, shape, and form of these dances are all influenced by the environment and nature of the region, shaping the local culture.

One of the most prominent dances in the folklore of Gilan, which originates from Eastern Gilan, is the Qasemabadi dance. Its significance lies in portraying the various stages of women's participation in local economies and wealth creation. Qasemabadi dance actively features women, highlighting the value of their roles and emphasizing their societal contributions. In this performance, the power of women in labor, production, reproduction, literary arts, music, and dance is displayed, while men play the role of observers and listeners. The Qasemabadi dance, also known as Tuman-Pirhani (the rice cycle) dance, embodies the phases of rice cultivation, maintenance, and harvest. Women perform this dance with graceful and symbolic movements, embodying the cultivation process, from planting to carrying the harvested rice. Through this display, the dance becomes a symbolic representation of the processes of sowing, growth, harvesting, and giving thanks to God. Over time, these movements have transitioned from the fields into wedding ceremonies, highlighting the enduring influence of agricultural practices on local culture.

**Table 1.** Common foundations of ceremonial rituals (Mousavi, 2007)

Roots in Common	Explanation
<b>Elevation</b>	The primary goal of every ritual and ceremonial performance is to elevate and release the audience's spirits. The intent is not for the audience to merely watch but to participate actively, becoming one with the performance. Such performances guide the audience toward psychological security and offer them peace of mind.
<b>Holiness</b>	Ceremonial or ritual performances are not meant to convey fixed or promotional ideas. Instead, they embody transcendental values, aiming to free the audience from their

	constraints and limited awareness. Therefore, the realm of their actions is beyond the material, societal, and everyday world that surrounds us.
<b>Special Time</b>	These ceremonies and ritual performances cannot be conducted at any given time. Often, they coincide with specific seasons, such as planting or harvesting, typically in spring and summer. Rituals and performances related to agricultural seasons often have associations with life, death, or controlling the uncontrollable forces of nature.
<b>Special Place</b>	Performing ritual or ceremonial acts necessitates a specific location. In Greece, this place was often near the sacred temples of Dionysus. In Iran, Ta'zieh performances take place in prayer halls, mosques, or near blessed tombs, and the environment is typically adorned with symbols and inscriptions. In Southeast Asia, performances are often held near sacred temples and places. The New Theatre in Japan primarily resembles a temple more than a traditional theater.
<b>Adoration of the Past</b>	One significant characteristic of rituals and ceremonial performances, in addition to the worship of a deity or deities, is paying respect to saints and the spirits of the past. Hence, the gaze of rituals is always directed at honoring the past and affirming its achievements.
<b>Symbolism</b>	In many ritual performances, every form of movement, color, shape, and sound is symbolically meaningful. This symbolism is achieved through various means, such as the symbolism of colors, movements, or stage conventions in Japanese theater, Ima, and hand gestures and facial expressions in the ancient Indian theater. Symbolism serves to enhance the concentration of meaning and articulate deep spiritual images and interpretations. In ceremonial performances, dance, music, and stories in presentation are transformed into a language different from reality, creating strong connections with our unconscious minds or the world of the subconscious.



### *Movements in Qasemabadi Dance*

According to Hosein Esmaeilpour, Qasemabadi dance consists of an initial invocation to God, followed by three phases symbolizing the planting, growing, and harvesting of rice. The dance begins with an invocation to God, emphasizing prayer and gratitude to the Almighty, as they've been given the opportunity by God to engage in cultivation and agriculture. Following the invocation, the planting phase commences, characterized by rapid movements and circular rotations. The growing phase, the second phase, is marked by slower rotations. Finally, the harvesting phase, where the separation of rice grains from the stalks and husks is depicted, is carried out in smaller circles, with participants almost stationary. According to the ethnographer, Qasemabadi dance is performed in three concentric circles, with the first circle being the largest, involving rapid rotations. The second circle, associated with the growing phase, becomes smaller, and ultimately, the third circle is the smallest. These circles continue to grow throughout the dance, culminating in the stage of invoking and thanking God.

### *Costume Specifications for Qasemabadi Dance*

**1. Headscarf:** The headscarf is made through crocheting using useful silk thread. It's known as "tor dasmal" and features patterns called "fekri," which include 12-petal flowers. Examples of which are found on pottery and Marlik metal cups, are used along with motifs called Halva

Burusi, which are lozenge shapes that women sometimes make when cutting and dividing a type of hard local halva while cooking.

**2. Blouse:** There are various types of blouses that are worn over long skirts. These blouses may include:

- Parbazar Pirhan: A blouse adorned with decorative pieces of various colorful fabrics.
- Pulbazar Pirhan: A blouse with coins sewn to its waistline for decoration.
- Cin Bazar Pirhan: A blouse with more pleats around the waist than usual.
- Maghz Bazar Pirhan: In this type, the fabric is sewn with horizontal lines, typically consisting of three or four different fabric types. It's essential to note that all blouses share this characteristic, but in this particular type, these horizontal lines consist of three or four different fabric types.

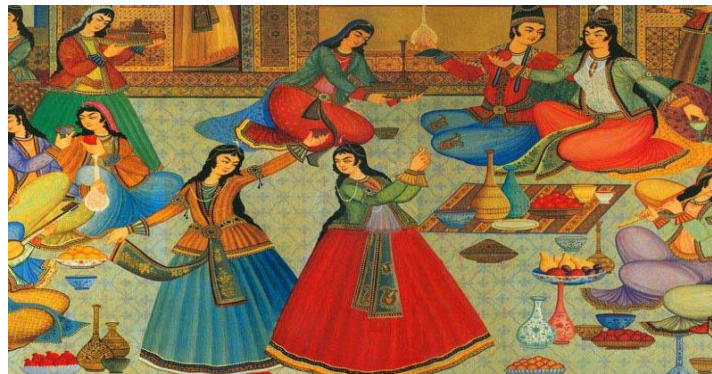
During the cold seasons, women in Gilan would also wear a black or black velvet coat over their blouse. However, in the warm seasons, the jacket and the so-called "nimtaneh" were omitted.

As for footwear, various types of "chamoosh" shoes, "resin golosh," and, in later times, leather shoes with wooden soles known as "lanj-dar" were commonly used by Gilani women.

A "tuman" is a long, pleated skirt, typically made using 15, 20, 25, or even 30 meters of fabric.

Based on field observations conducted in this research, along with interviews and ethnographic reports by researchers such as Safarali Ramezani and Roghieh Mohammadi Vajargah, as well as library studies, we have come across various aspects that are discussed and compared below.

In the images obtained from library sources, which narrate the feast of the kings, we can observe ceremonial and ritualistic movements. These movements are also present in the celebration of the harvest and ritual ceremonies in the villages of Gilan and Mazandaran under the name "Qasemabadi Dance" (Sema & Drum Drum). This indicates that the harvest festival, the associated movements, attire, and symbols have ancient roots and encompass various mythological movements.





**Figure 1.** The banquet of Shah Abbas the Great and his hospitality towards Vali Muhammad Khan, king of Turkestan. Source: (ames.cam.ac.uk)



**Figure 2.** The banquet of Shah Abbas the Great and his hospitality towards Humayun, king of India. Source: (ames.cam.ac.uk)



**Figure 3.** The banquet of Shah Abbas the Great and his hospitality towards Vali Nader Muhammad Khan, king of Turkestan. Source: (ames.cam.ac.uk)

The authentic clothes that are accurately depicted in these paintings (daraztooman) which are either monochrome or patterned, are very close to the genuine, ancient attire (mostly mountainous regions) of northern Iran from Khorasan to Gilan and beyond. The movements are exactly related to the music of Gilan.:

1. Hands on Hips: This is a static pose unique to Gilaki dance and music.



2. Hands Up and Down: This gesture signifies drawing energy from the universe.
3. One Hand Up and One Hand Down: This movement represents transferring blessings and abundance from the sky to the earth, symbolizing the movement of goodness and blessings from above.
4. Stomping Feet on the Ground: This action symbolizes awakening the earth and acquiring energy from the heavens.
5. Quadruple Movements: These symbolize the stages of planting, nurturing, harvesting, and giving thanks.
6. Direct Movements and Half-Rotation with Feet Half-Turned Downward: A symbol of carving white clay, often used for decorating walls during celebrations.
7. Standing Movement and Raising and Lowering Hands: Symbolizes dispersing life energy and vitality to the surrounding world.
8. Standing Movement, Separating Soil from Rice Grains in a Special Wicker Tray Called "Mojma": Represents the process of germination.
9. Sitting on the Ground, Spreading the Skirt in a Circular Fashion and Pointing to the Ground: Symbolizes circling.
10. Sitting on the ground and opening the skirt while the hands (one hand clenched and the other hand bent inwards at the wrist) pass each other rapidly at the sides. The right hand symbolizes the sickle and the left hand symbolizes gathering rice bundles.
11. Sitting Movement with the Skirt Open and Raising and Lowering Fingers: Symbolizes displaying power after several symbolic movements that represent spinning around an axis and pulling the skirt up.
12. Forward Movement While a Mojma Filled with Sweets and Fruits is Placed Over Women's Heads: This is a symbol of divine gifts.
13. Women Who Balance a Cup Between Their Fingers: This symbolizes life and homemaking by women.







**Figure 4.** Harvest festival, Qasemabadi dance. Source: Mohammadi Vajargah, 2007.



## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After the arrival of Islam in Iran and based on religious teachings that discouraged naturalistic representation, symbolism, and abstract art continued in the visual arts, extending the artistic traditions from the pre-Islamic era. During this period, the arts in Iran were known as Islamic Iranian arts because they continuously preserved ancient traditions while striving to promote Islamic culture and spiritual expression. Therefore, it can be said that the rich cultural foundations, including religious and national legends and rituals, have ensured the continuity and development of the essential unity of Iranian art, namely symbolism, abstract art, and ornamentation.

*1- Toranj (Toranj Film Title Sequence, Amir Mehran, <http://amirmehran.com> ):*

Based on the description of the story behind the making of this motion graphic, it relates to the introduction of a film with the theme of Iranian carpets and a carpet designer who is a master miniaturist. This motion graphic introduces the symbols of miniatures and Iranian carpets, which we will analyze further.

In these designs, the flower and the bird are in a romantic dialogue, symbolizing the lover and the beloved. Here, the bird represents the lover, while the flower, in a state of ecstasy, is detaching itself from the material world and ascending towards the non-material realm. The coloring of these characters and, in general, Iranian painting, is not realistic, and the artist has considerable freedom in selecting colors. The elements of this art are inspired by nature, incorporating elements such as flowers, trees, various birds like nightingales and peacocks, often accompanied by insects such as butterflies. These paintings were used for decorating various items, such as book covers, mirrors, pen holders, jewelry boxes, textiles, and tile work (Farahvashi,1985). During the Islamic period, influenced by Islamic teachings against naturalistic representations, these patterns evolved and diversified further (see Image 5).



**Figure 5.** Introduction of the flower and bird symbol and the arabesque motif in Persian painting: Source: Motion graphic Toranj, 2012

*2. Iranian Miniaturist Playing Music:*

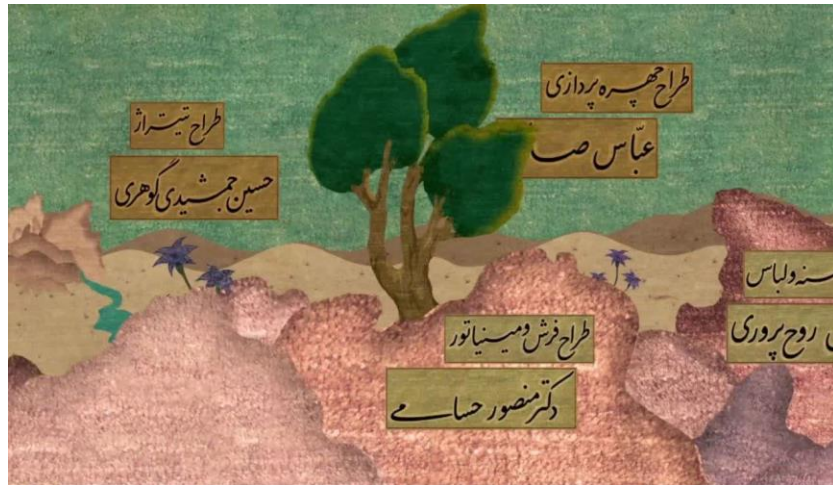
In Iranian painting, just as angels lack shadows, humans also lack shadows. Everything is in the light; the depiction of the human figure is a pure, ethereal, and celestial reality, devoid of the mundane burdens of heaviness and volume. This allegory, found throughout history as the 'Amsha Spenta' in Zoroastrian thought and the verses of Persian poetry, represents one of the most evident facets of the Iranian spirit in literature and painting.



Figure 6. Introduction of the human face symbol in Persian painting, Source: Motion graphic Toranj, 2012

### 3- Iranian tree

Like other evergreen trees, it is a symbol of eternity, that is, life after death, and that is why it is found next to graves in ancient Greece, Italy, the Middle East and China (Jung, 2006, 193). The cypress has long been used in various Iranian arts including painting, handicrafts and architecture. In Persian painting and miniature, the cypress has a symbolic constant presence, and in most cases by being placed on the margin of the frame, it brings the image closer to the garden space and is drawn out of the frame, which may evoke the concept of the cypress's loftiness in the viewer's mind.



**Figure 7.** Introduction of the cypress tree symbol in Persian painting, Source: Motion graphic Toranj, 2012

*2. Adl-e Mzaffar (Milad Shahjani, Vimeo.com/miladshahjani):*

This motion graphic narrates the rise of the Constitutional Revolution during the reign of Muzaffar al-Din Shah, highlighting the tumultuous events that unfolded, including the closing of the parliament by Mohammad Ali Shah. It draws upon elements of the Constitutional era and the narratives of the Qajar period.



**Figure 8.** Introduction of Symbols and Signatures of Political Figures in the Qajar Era and the Emergence of the Constitutional Movement, Source for Adl-e Muzaffar Motion Graphic, 2019.

*3. Documentary Motions*

Considering that this motion graphic was commissioned by the Documentary Network and referenced historical narratives, it features contemporary historical elements, such as soldiers from the Pahlavi era, the use of carriages during the Qajar period, typewriters, etc.





Figure 9. Introduction of Symbols and Signs from the Qajar and Contemporary Era Source: Bumper Documentary Motions, 2019

#### 4. Motion Graphics of Ancient Illustrations (Selected Work: Centennial Celebration)

This motion graphic refers to the "Centennial Celebration" based on an illustration from the Shahnameh (Book of Kings). It provides a detailed explanation of this illustration and its mythological and visual symbols.

The "Centennial Celebration" illustration in Shahnameh by Shah Tahmasb is one of the prominent examples of the art of painting. The composition of the work, the central presence of the king and the fire, the presence of circular and curvilinear movements, numerous human figures and nature surrounding the fire, blooming flowers, vibrant and warm colors used throughout the artwork, depict a lively and exuberant life. This illustration is truly a unique masterpiece.





**Figure 10.** "Centennial Celebration" Illustration

Source: Shahnameh (The Book of Kings) by Shah Tahmasb

The "Centennial Celebration" is one of the works attributed to Sultan Muhammad, and his artistic influence is clearly visible in this piece. The dynamic composition with the central figure of the king and the fire, the surrounding people and nature engulfed by the flames, the blossoming flowers, the lively and warm colors, and the vibrant depiction of joyous life, all complemented by the curving lines throughout the artwork, make this illustration a unique and exceptional masterpiece.



## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to use animated graphic design to introduce the mythological symbols and signs of the Harvest Festival in northern Iran. In response to the research question of how motion graphics and kinetic design can be used as a special and unique visual language to present the symbolic and mythological signs of the Harvest Festival in northern Iran, it can be stated that the art of graphic design has always been responsive to the evolving needs of society and has adapted to new technologies. Motion graphics are a subset of graphic design that is intriguing for the audience and, in today's fast-paced world, can enhance engagement and memory. By employing specific rules and techniques for rapid message delivery, the use of motion graphics and animated depictions of mythological symbols and signs can have a more significant impact on modern audiences.

Based on the field observations conducted in this research, along with interviews and ethnographic reports by Safarali Ramezani, as well as library studies in this area, we have found certain elements. In the images obtained from library sources and the narratives of royal banquets, we can observe performative and ritual movements. These movements are seen in the Harvest Festival and ritual ceremonies in the villages of Gilan and Mazandaran, often referred to as "Ghasemabadi" dance (Drum Drum and Sema) or Ghasemabadi Dance. This indicates that

the Harvest Festival, its movements, costumes, and symbols have ancient roots and encompass all the mythological actions.

The following results are obtained from the analysis of the observed symbols in the available images:

1. Hands on Hips: This is a static pose unique to Gilaki dance and music.
2. Hands Up and Down: This gesture signifies drawing energy from the universe.
3. One Hand Up and One Hand Down: This movement represents transferring blessings and abundance from the sky to the earth, symbolizing the movement of goodness and blessings from above.
4. Stomping Feet on the Ground: This action symbolizes awakening the earth and acquiring energy from the heavens.
5. Quadruple Movements: These symbolize the stages of planting, nurturing, harvesting, and giving thanks.
6. Direct Movements and Half-Rotation with Feet Half-Turned Downward: A symbol of carving white clay, often used for decorating walls during celebrations.
7. Standing Movement and Raising and Lowering Hands: Symbolizes dispersing life energy and vitality to the surrounding world.
8. Standing Movement, Separating Soil from Rice Grains in a Special Wicker Tray Called "Mojma": Represents the process of germination.
9. Sitting on the Ground, Spreading the Skirt in a Circular Fashion and Pointing to the Ground: Symbolizes circling.
10. Sitting on the ground and opening the skirt while the hands (one hand clenched and the other hand bent inwards at the wrist) pass each other rapidly at the sides. The right hand symbolizes the sickle and the left hand symbolizes gathering rice bundles.
11. Sitting Movement with the Skirt Open and Raising and Lowering Fingers: Symbolizes displaying power after several symbolic movements that represent spinning around an axis and pulling the skirt up.
12. Forward Movement While a Mojma Filled with Sweets and Fruits is Placed Over Women's Heads: This is a symbol of divine gifts.
13. Women Who Balance a Cup Between Their Fingers: This symbolizes life and homemaking by women.

Regarding how a designer can globalize their cultural symbols, it can be said that a cultural symbol can be an image, a symbol, an emblem, a name, a face, a personality, a building, or various other things that easily stand out and represent a broad cultural concept to a larger cultural group. Presenting an object or personality can be significant because it has a unique place in expressing and representing a specific time, historical period, or a particular group of people, or because a specific group of people cherish or value it. In the media, there is an



---

increasing trend to describe well-known facets of a culture as an "icon." A designer, drawing upon creativity and innovations in visual presentation, can use these visual symbols in the form of motion graphics to introduce their culture. By utilizing the available communication tools, a designer can make this cultural symbol global.

Regarding the importance of preserving these symbols and signs, it can be emphasized that preserving the native culture of any region equates to maintaining the identity and individuality of that area. It is only natural that neglecting or dismissing its significance is equivalent to altering the space, place, and symbols of that region, including customs, attire, and even its culinary traditions, among many other aspects. Architecture, art, literature, sports, games, rituals, and local celebrations are all characteristics of each region, and it's natural that blending and mixing these elements with the characteristics of other regions, which, in some cases, may be more general and universal, can lead to the dilution and even the loss of the distinct culture of that area. By documenting these symbols and signs as a form of artistic expression, particularly considering advancements in technology and digital media, it's possible to make an effort to preserve these cultural elements and their importance.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:**

Ladies:

Dr. Roja Alizadeh

Dr. Reyhaneh Zandi

Rossa Kazemifar

Gentlemen:

Dr. Mehrdad Rayani Makhsous

Mohammad Hadi Danesh

Sadegh Hossein Pour

Bahman Sadegh Hosseini

Amir Mehran

Milad Shahjani

Specially Thanks to:



Mrs. Zeynab Dadras, My lovely grandmother who made me a lover by Gilan Province's culture with her beautiful old songs and memories!

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** Department Visual Communication central Tehran branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

**FINANCIAL SUPPORT:** None

**ETHICS STATEMENT:** None

### References

- Orang, M. (1956). Ancient Iranian celebrations. Tehran.
- Boruni, A. (2010). Rituals and customs of Gilehmardi wrestling in Iranian culture. *Iranian folk culture*, 22-23. Tehran.
- Bozorgzad, H. (1971). National and religious holidays in pre-Islamic Iran. Esfahan.
- Bayat, M. (2005). Religious ceremonies and Iranian holidays. In M.J. Sāhebi (Ed.), *Relations between religion and culture in Iranian society* (pp. xx-xx). Tehran.
- Porto, A. (2006). Mehrgan. *Gift from Gilan*, 4(7), xx-xx. Rasht.
- Pourhadi, M. (2009). *Gilani calendar*. Rasht.
- Delkash, I. (2010). *Amlash, Paradise of Iran*. Rasht.
- Doustkhah, J. (n.d.). Appendix on Avesta (H.M).
- Sotoudeh, M. (1970). *From Astara to Astrabad*. Tehran.
- Farahvashi, B. (1985). *The world's Farvahar*. Tehran.
- Kazemi, B. (2010). *Music of Talysh people*. Tehran.
- Karimi Foroutagheh, M. (2009). Ritual music in Foroutagheh Kashmar. *Voice of culture*, 4(11), xx-xx. Tehran.
- Gardizi, A. (1963). *Zeynol Akhbar* (A. Habibi, Ed.). Tehran.
- Mousavi, H. et al. (2007). *Traditional plays and games of Gilan* (M. Taleghani, Ed.). Rasht.
- Mirabolghasemi, M.T. (1971). *Land and people of Gilan and Daylam*. Rasht.
- Mirshokraie, M. (1995). Anthropology and folklore. In E. Eslah Arabani (Ed.), *Book of Gilan* (Vol. 3, pp. xx-xx). Tehran.
- Jung, C.G. (2006). *Collected works* (Vol. 8). Tehran: Elmi va Farhangi.



