

Research Article

THE ORIGIN OF THE MOTIFS AND THE FOUR- THOUSAND- YEAR OLD HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE PERSIAN CARPET

Sara Naeemi Hir and Fatemeh Dehghany

Department of Art Research, College of Art and Architecture, Yazd Branch, Islamic Azad University, Yazd, Iran

**Author for Correspondence*

ABSTRACT

Carpet is the mirrors of the Islamic and Iranian art and civilization. It is a priceless heritage remaining from a long time ago and has been approved in the birth certificate of our nation. The motifs are amongst the most important and most effective component used in the rug which have a fundamental role in it and attract any viewer at first glance. Rugs and the patterns of rugs have undergone changes in different eras. The data collection method in this article includes using the library resources the research method was historical- descriptive. As each government came to rule throughout history, it brought along change and upheaval with it and has led to change in social and cultural fields of that society. The rugs and the art of rug weaving are also inseparable parts of Iran's culture which have also undergone this upheaval. Therefore this article has tried to examine the role of the governments in forming rug motifs and the progressing process of this art from the ancient times, the primary periods of Islam and after that up to the present era. Safavid era was the golden peak of carpet and carpet motifs in Iran since the Safavid kings were very interested in this art. So much so that king Tahmasp has drawn the patters for two rugs and one of the important motifs used in that era was named after the king of that era and it is known as "Gol-e Shah Abbasi". Shah Abbas brought silk to Iran and created silk rugs and he himself traded it with other countries. His action had a significant role in the relations of Safavid empire with other countries in the region.

Keywords: *Motifs, Back Ground of Rug, Governments, Pre- Islamic Era*

INTRODUCTION

Colorful rugs which decorate most of the houses of us Iranians have been mostly woven carefully and patiently by the artistic hands of men and women of this land. This great art is a valuable heritage which has been passed down to us from the ancient times and is intertwined with the souls of Iranians. We have tried to classify the eras based on the created governments in Iran and to attend to the upheaval process of rugs and the carpet patterns in the bed of these governments in this article.

Therefore the question posed in this article is that: what has been the role of the governments in the formation of carpet patterns and its progress process? With regard to the research background this article has reflected on "the pattern and the position of myths in the art of Persian rugs" written by Mohammad Hoseyn Sharbatian and has examined the carpet pattern in the field of myths in a symbolic manner.

The article entitled "examining the patterns and their origins in the carpets of the Islamic lands in the paintings of the Renaissance era and after that" authored by Alireza Baharloo and Dr. Abbas Akbari has attended to examining the carpet patterns in the paintings of the Renaissance era and analyzing them and the article "the Islamic era's carpet and its origin" written by Mohammad Afroogh and Azaliya Shahnazari attends to the history of the birth and development of Islamic carpet. The main aim of this article is to study the formation of patterns in the bed of the governments which were born in Iran and the role of these governments in changing the carpet pattern and its progress process.

We have tried to use the available Farsi and Latin resources and utilize the images related to different eras to examine the background of the formation of the patterns and their upheavals in order to answer the research question. The data collection method included using library resources historical method and the descriptive method.

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The Pre- Islamic Era

From the time Hans Wolf wrote:”no field is more important than carpet weaving in the industrial techniques of Iran” in 1966, although we have very little information on the manner of the initial evolution of this technique and we have insignificant new knowledge available till today in fact the evidences and documents on different sorts of textiles is very scattered before Islam in Iran (Shater, 2005). The first discoveries which have signs of carpet weaving art in the bronze era is related to carpet-weaving knife which was discovered by A.N. Khlupin about carpet- weaving instruments such as knives which were discovered in Turkmenistan and north of Iran in the tombs from the bronze era. However the most vivid image of carpet weaving in the Bronze era was discovered by Dr. Ali Hosoori in 1975 who encountered two types of these instruments. These instruments were found by a Ghashghayi man in the northwest of Rahjerd near Kamfirroz, Fars after a flood which revealed a tomb. “ the part shaped like a bayonet and such has a small appendage with a hole in it at the end which is without a doubt the place where a very fragile wooden handle is attached to and since it is very delicate it could not have been used to strike something and it was only useful for the purposes of cutting and in case it was used as a fighting instrument its tip would be damages while only its two lateral sections were indented due to repetitive sharpening this indicates that this was a cutting tool and was without a doubt a knife used for cutting lint” (figure 1) (Zhoole, 2011).



Figure 1: Lint- Cutting knife

If we want to trace back the first roots of the carpet in the rug we must point out the first created fabrics which has its base in the warp and woof which have been woven together and carpet is not an exception. Weaving fibers in order to make fabric in Iran goes back to five thousand years before Christ. Medes’ carpets are amongst the first carpets with lint knots. And Gezenfon points out the Medes carpets in this regard and states that they were specially detailed and the Persian kings used to use them (Shater, 2005).

Achaemenian

Sergei Rudenko, the Russian archeologist succeeded in finding a hand woven piece when exploring the tombs of Scythian tribes in Pazyryk district in the southern skirts of Altai mountains in Siberia this piece suddenly changed the history of carpet weaving the most amazing findings were obtained from the tomb of Pazyryk’s fifth hill which included: an almost square- shaped carpet approximately $189/23 \times 200$ centimeters in size and since a number of instruments and tools have been found along with this carpet such as a chariot, some have proposed special hypotheses regarding this carpet which stated that it was used to cover the chariot surface (Zhoole, 2011) (Figure 2).



Figure 2: The original Pazyryk carpet in the Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg

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The discoverer of the carpet considered the carpet to be Iranian and belonging to the Achaemenian civilization based on the patterns used on it but there are different opinions on it actually being Iranian some consider it Iranian and others reject it. This carpet is in good condition. And the text in it has been divided into 24 sections and each of the squares has Shirvan flowers and bushes in them which have eventually been taken from four- leafed Assyrian samples. The inner and outer borders have a griffin pattern with the head turned to the back in the second border from outside there is a row of horses with braded tails men are riding on some of them and others have men standing next to them the men are wearing hats and the ones who are not riding the horses resemble the gift- bearers in reliefs of the Persepolis. (Figures 3 and 4) and it is actually the motifs which basically makes it look like a Persian rug. The other border includes: spotted animals designs with their heads hanging this design has been recognizes as yellow deer by the carpet’s excavator. Achaemenian motifs (dots and came) have been drawn on the hips of these animals (Shater, 2005) (Figure 5).

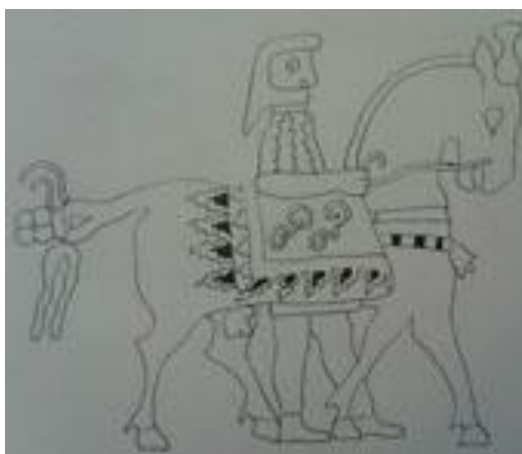


Figure 3: The rider and the horse, an image drawn on the border of the Pazyryk carpet



Figure 4: Scythians (saka- tigrakhauda) from the stone carvings in Persepolis



Figure 5: The pictures on the Pazyryk carpet from the viewpoint of Rudenko

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Parthian Era

Carpet weaving was very common in the Parthian era as well the discovery of a carpet (zilu) in the ancient city of Ghomes related to the eight century AD is a proof of that. The most important piece discovered in Ghomes is a textile piece with curly lint. Regarding the structure and ways of weaving, the Ghomes carpet piece has fluffs which simply surround the warps and this piece of carpet is kept in university of Pennsylvania (figure 6). Another artwork which has been mentioned in art references is the famous Sasanian carpet named Baharestan-e Khosro (Baharestan Carpet) (Afroogh, 2011). “The rug’s text has described the king’s ... in an image and they say that it has gold and silver warp and woof and its theme is decorated with gems and priceless stones (Diamand and mainly, 1920), since the mentioned rug was woven from gold it was torn up into pieces and divided between the Arab army (Farih, 1995).



Figure 6: knotted weaved from Ghomes, Metropolitan Museum, New York 14×9 centimeters

The Motifs After Islam

It is difficult to separate Iran’s carpet history from the rest of the Islamic world and before Mongolia’s raid in 1258 since the remaining works are rare (Shater, 2005). There is no specific sample of carpet from the first centuries of the Islamic era but the authenticity of the available books and writing makes it possible to prove that there were carpets in Iran back in those times.

In a book entitled “Hodoodolalam men almashregh ela almaghreb” from the year 982 Gregorian calendar, an unknown author has spoken about Tabari carpet. He has stated that the Tabari carpet was popular in the first centuries of the lunar calendar and has been protected in the form of fluffy carpets and knotted carpets. The expression “Tabari carpet” can be seen in a number of places throughout Hododolalam. It is worth mentioning that Tabarestan used to make a type of exquisite carpet called Tabari carpet in the first lunar centuries. Professor Pope states that “Tabarestan was considered one of the most important carpet weaving centers of Iran and Tabari carpets were very popular (Razavi, 2013).

Masoodi the great historian of the fourth century also mentions a story related to the time Motamad, the Abbasi caliph ruled and states that Iran’s Soosangerd carpet was even famous in Constantine. And he describes these carpets designs and patterns as a beautiful and flowery garden which openly reminds us of the famous Baharestan Carpet and Golestan patterns which are used in many of the patterns of the Persian rug today (Zhoole, 2011).

The Seljuk Era

Very little has been written so far about the carpets of the Seljuk era especially Iran’s Salajeghe which can definitely prove Iran’s carpet weaving in the time the Seljuk Empire ruled. In Asia Minor carpets belonging to the eighth century have been obtained from famous mosques and tombs especially Alaedin Mosque in Konia a part of this era overlaps with the time Rome’s Salajeghe kings the carpets of this era became famous as Seljuk The feature of Seljuk carpet is having Turkish knot (the same, 15).

The design of Alaedin Mosque’s carpet has been comprised of eight- angled lines and ovular Turanj and a slab in Kufic writing can be seen in its border (figure 7) (Razavi, 2013).

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Figure 7: Seljuk carpet from Konia Alaedin Mosque 12th century, Istanbul, Turkish and Islamic Art Museum

Timurid Era

In his first article in 1940 Briggs has discussed geometrical design carpets in the Timurid era and he attends to Eslimi and flower and bush design carpets in his second article. It has become clear now that not only geometrical design carpets but other designs can also be found in the illustrated writings of Timurid palace workshop these carpets are from different dates throughout the century. This raises doubts regarding this topic and whether classical Timurid carpets have had geometrical designs at all for instance in Roodaki and Amir-e Samani image in a copy of four Aroozii articles which was provided for Bisonghor in 1431 (Gregorian Calendar) two people are sitting on a carpet with flower and bush Eslimi design and across its border has been decorated with vines with semi- Kufic design (figure 8).

In copy of Khamse by Nezami Ganjavi Leyli and Majnoon in School in 1461 (Christian calendar) a carpet is drawn with numerous altars (Shater, 2005) (figure 9). A very important group identifies Iranian designs which are scattered almost all around Iran with the name “Herati” or with a newer name “Mahi Herati”. The expression Herati has been originated from that. This design was very popular in the Timurid era and in Herat and many royal designs were formed with this design in carpets as well as architecture. The basis of Herati design is a type of Mahi Dar- Ham, Do Mahi, and a round flower with usually five petals. In a miniature from the Timuic era we can see two fish on the two sides of a man’s head which indicates that parts of Ayin Mehr’s myths were still alive among people up to this era. And the Iranian artists were most probable familiar with the basis of Herati design in the 9th century.

There are carpets with this same design Herati fish were widely used in the Timurid era on the carpets with other elements such as: Khatayi, Eslimi, Barg-e Badbezani, lotus (Shah Abbas) flower, leaf and bud and have made up Herati carpets of the Timurid era. Unfortunately however only one or two suspicious pieces are left of them it is obvious that the fishes resembled leaves in the Islamic era.

Since the actual design was destroyed on carpets and things like it in the Islamic era so that they would not kowtow to design or the creature on the carpet while praying. Especially the Sunni who do not say prayers on rugs which have a real design of people and animals in fact the floret in the middle of the fish was also a human’s face which had turned into a round flower Teymoori (<http://persiancarpetassociation.com>) a sample of the carpets of Timurid era is kept in Benaki museum in Greece and the experts believe that this piece is from Azerbaijan and Asia Minor the type of the know on this carpet is a symmetrical Turkish one M Y with an angled design and has some things in common with the current carpets of Azerbaijan and even Caucasus (figure 10) of course there are some other old rugs which are remaining in other museums and databases but the thing which is mostly common among these woven things and the carpets left in Timurid miniature paintings is a special design which is a specific topic on ornamental arts.

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Angled lines and partly curves with a special combination, these arrays are known as Kufic writing from Kufic decorative arts nowadays (Zhoole, 2011)



Figure 8: A rug with geometrical theme and border, Herat, 899 lunar year (1494)



figure 9: Leyli and Majnoon in school, Herat school, Timurid era, 1342 Gregorian Calendar, metropolitan museum, New York

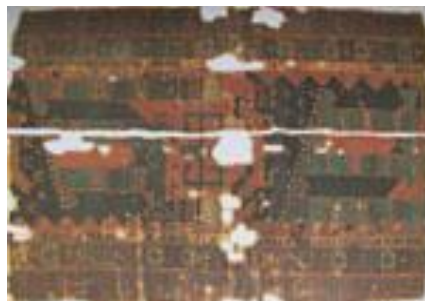


Figure 10: A piece of a Tumarid rug (Iranian), 14th century, fur fluff, Benaki museum

Ilkhanate

Little information has been obtained from the condition of the Persian rug in the Mongolian Ilkhanate ruling era and it is obvious that with regard to the unorganized political conditions of those times there was no opportunity for geographical development of carpet weaving or it flourishing. However it is deduced that due the presence of a traditional- oriented behavior and determined regulations in carpet designing and other industries such as: tiling all the designs and paintings of carpets were affected by the previous era which is the Seljuk art and most probably although Iran's carpet weaving was inactive in the Mongolian era but the factors which could completely eradicate it were never completely provided (Zhoole, 2011)

Safavid

The Safavid era was the peak of Iran's carpet weaving art. In face some of the best carpets of Iran which are the only samples from the greatness of this art belong to the era the Safavid kings ruled. Producing

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carpet was promoted from a rural profession to a national industry in the Safavid era for the first time (Kanabi, 2005). The effects of the art of book decorating and illuminating the copies and architectural arrays were remarkably reflected in the carpet weaving art at the beginning of the Safavid era (Fari, 1995). And these influences, especially from architecture and the decorations of the Safavid era can be seen as we study and try to find the origin of the design of the carpets at the beginning of Timurid era. Signs such as the patters used in architectural tiles of mosques, schools and other buildings in Asia Minor present similar pattern from the carpet weavers of the beginning of the Safavid era (Island, 1995). The great upheavals in the design and patter of carpets were the invention of Gardan Eslimi and Khatayi designs from the late Timurid era and the beginning of the Safavid era and all the urban maps of Iran and even some non- urban maps are affected by them (Hosoori, 1997).

As the Shiite government came to be in Iran and the concepts of Shiite was developed in different aspects, carpet- weaving was also influenced by this culture and a special type of carpets with slab- altar design, candelabrum altar , tree altar, Sajadei and the religious and Quranic concepts patterns and Sols and Kufic writing and pictures became popular (Taghavi, 2010).

1- *Shah Ismail I (1501- 1523)*

He issued a command in 15th of January, 1502 based on the textile industry and Iran's carpet- weaving and rug. Based on that command whatever was in the Sasanian era and had accomplished greatness then must be revived in Iran. He also commanded silk- weaving and elastic- silk workshops to start working again and also named five districts as the most important carpet production centers which included: Tabriz, Kashan, Hamedan, Shooshtar, and Harat (Sivri, 2005) the most popular carpets of this era which are kept in museum include:

1- *Turanji Carpets*: Turanj is an arbitrary design which is very special among carpet themes and is a combination of Shah Abbasi Azine, basically leaves, flowers and Eslimi and is square, lozenge, oval, or round such as the sun or a star and multi- petal flowers which can be seen from the pre- Islamic designs (in bowls from the Seljuk era). The most famous among these carpets are: Turanj Dar Eslimi carpets in the Metropolitan Museum in New York (figure 11) (Heshmati, 2013).

2- *Hunting Grounds Carpet Poldi Pezzoli Museum In Milan*: The oldest dated Safavid carpet which was woven by Ghayatoddin Jaami in 1522 Gregorian calendar has Lachak and Turanj, Gol Khatayi, Eslimi, a rider with an arrow and spear design (Behazin, 1344) (figure 12) the background of the hunting view design shows Tagh- e Bostan and different wild animals griffin, wolf, Siah Goosh, birds. The designs of hunting grounds carpets include: tree hunting grounds, the whole hunting ground, Ghabi Hunting Ground (Razavi, 2013).

3- *The Patterns Of Ghabghalebi Carpet Include*: Bud- bearing trees, animal designs , pheasant, peacock, and Shah Ismail did this based on what was done in the Sasanian Era. This carpet is kept in the handcraft museum in Vienna.

4- *The carpets of Astan Quds Razavi*: Flower and leaf design, Eslimi Gardan, labyrinth leaves, Khatayi flowers (Behazin, 1344).

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Figure 11: Eslimi Turanj Dar carpet, woven in Isfahan (beginning of the 10th century solar calendar)

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**Figure 12: hunting Grounds carpet, woven in Isfahan, Poldi Pezzoli museum in Milan
*Shah Tahmasp (1524- 1576)***

He transfers the capital from Tabriz to Qazvin. Carpet- weaving has reached its peak in his time and he promoted carpet- weaving to the level of an art and ordered for great carpets to be woven and gave them to Soleymaniyeh Mosque in Istanbul as presents and drew a number of carpet designs himself (Zhoole, 2011).

1- “Sheykh Safioddin- e Ardabili’s tomb” carpet which Shah Tahmasp ordered for the purposes of decorating his grandfather’s tomb was woven by Maghsood Kashani and is now being kept in the Victoria and Albert museum in London. It has silk warp and woof, 16- petal Turanj design, Eslimi branches and leaves, snake and dragon Eslimis which belong to 1539 Gregorian calendar (Behazin, 1344) (figure 13)

2- *Kashan’s Silk Carpets:* Were used by the kings as presents they gave to the neighboring countries’ kings. Shah Tahmasp gave 25 pieces of big silk and gold- woven carpet with bird and animal and flower design as presents to the Soltan Salim Ottoman II when he ruled in order to follow the kings’ traditions (Fari, 1374).



Figure 13: The famous carpet of Sheysafioddin- e Ardabili

Shah Abbas the Great (1587- 1628)

He came to Isfahan from Qazvin in 1597 Gregorian calendar and chose it as Iran’s capital. Besides the aspect of carpets being an art and a luxury, their potential in trading was very well recognized in Shah Abbas’ time. The king ordered for many workshops to be established in Shirvan, Gharabagh, Gilan, Kashan, Mashhad, Astarabad, and Isfahan these workshops produced carpet and different types of

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valuable textile. Regarding the location of the king's workshop in Isfahan, Taverniye states: "the king's workshop was located in the south of Alighapoo behind Naghshe- Jahan square in one of the king's yards. Krosinsky the Polish Jesuit priest who lived in Iran from 1763 to 1737 says:"not only do they produce what is needed by the palace and the residents of the palace but they add a lot to the king's treasury since the most expensive textiles and gold- woven and silk- woven silk carpets were send with merchants to be sold in Europe and India" (Behazin, 1344). One of the most importance things Shah Abbas did was trading silk which boomed when silk was imported and silk carpets were woven and were known as the most important commercial good in Iran.

1- *Praying Carpet- Altar Carpets*: A design which is formed from the main pattern of the arch of the mosque altar which is the heart of the mosque and have been decorated with verses of the holy Quran and patterns such as: cedar, capital, cresset, vase, tree, jasmine flower, and some petals with slabs in kufi Naskh, Nastaligh, and Sols writings. The most popular praying carpet related to Safavit era is the praying carpet in Metropolitan, New York with a double which is kept in Astan Quds Razavi (image 14) (Razavi, 1392).



Image 14: praying carpet or altar carpet, woven in Tabriz (the beginning of the 10th century solar calendar), metropolitan museum New York.

2- *Silk Warp and Woof Carpets*: Include central Turanj patters, Chand Turanji, Katibe Dar, Sajadei, altar, and in some cases they are woven from silk or gold the Chelsi carpet is the most popular sample in this group the detailed and enchanting design of animal and plant patterns is influenced by the painting art of this era in the Safavid palace luxury- oriented atmosphere (Fari, 1374) (figure 15).



Figure 15: Chelsi carpet, woven in Kashan (the first part of the 10th century lunar calendar) Victoria and Albert museum in London

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Herat carpets: its art property is large Boteh Jequeh with a 4- part symmetrical shape narrow vines and the tangible used of mythical patterns inspired by animals from far East display the initial style of Herat

1- Polish or Polenzi Carpets: Are considered remarkable and exportable samples which have large Turanj patterns and are woven of gold. A change from linear patterns to patterns, designing delicate vines with tiny paddle-shaped leaves, Boteh Jequeh, and Eslimi are amongst the unique specifications of the Polish exported carpets (Schpohler,2005).



Figure 16: The popularly known to be a polish carpet, the seventeenth century, silk and cotton 2.07×1.26

2- Sea- Wave Carpet (Moj-e Darya): This carpet has been decorated with Turanj Dar Turanj design which is a type of Lachak and Turanj with Shah Abbasi and Khatayi patterns. The central Turanj is inside a larger Turanj and the layers of these Turanj, being inside each other resembles the sea waves. Ships and people wearing European clothes can be seen in the Lachaks of the carpet and the mentioned carpet is kept in the handicrafts museum in Vienna (figure 17) (Razavi, 2013).



Figure 17: sea- wave carpet (falsely known as Portuguese), woven in Kerman (the 11th century solar calendar), the handicrafts museum of Vienna

3- Vase- Patterned Carpets: The main design of these carpets: vases in different sizes with bunches of flowers and simple tiny buds different vase designs and the patterns used in them include: Goldani Band Eslimi, Goldani Khatayi, Shah Abbasi flower, pomegranate flower, almond flower, Gol Hanayi, four- petal and eight- petal Eslimi and Khatayi flowers (figure 18) (same, 196- 197)

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Figure 18: vase carpet, Zhiwar, probably Joshaghan, (the beginning of the 11th century solar calendar), Lugano museum

The process of carpet- weaving becomes slower at the end of the Safavid era and we cannot see such noticeable designs in Shah Safi and Shah Soltan's time what happens in this age is that carpet- weaving becomes westernized. In 1756 Soltan Hoseyn turns over his kingdom to Mahmood Afghan when encountered with the Afghans' raid.

The Afsharids and Zands

It is very difficult to identify the carpet weaving style of this era and this is due to lack of carpet samples of this time and lack or the wrong use of the categorized and historical documents. Two factors caused carpet- weaving to stop in the process of the economics and political process 1- Afghans attacking Iran 2- Nader Shah Afshar's government: it relocated the carpet weavers from Caucasus, the west and center of Fars to new places (Khatib, 2008).

Most of the western researchers hold the belief that carpet production stopped during this era but although carpet production, especially the production of decorative carpets, decreased carpet- weaving never stopped and it was still going on in most of the nomadic tribes and the villages of the country and it was even more common in some points such as the north of Khorasan. Ms. Leyla Diba states with regarding to the references she has collected in Iranica encyclopedia that: "the coronation location of Nader Shah was Moghan Plain in 1735 Gregorian calendar with silk carpets and fur carpets from Kerman covering the place." Also Marvi has says that Nader Shah ordered Kerman district to weave different floorings and used them to cover Imam Ali's (peace be upon him) shrine and the Yerevan (Razavi, 2013).

Havesco also shows an image of a patterned curtain in which Nader is sitting on a carpet and this carpet has been decorated with Turanj patterns and roses and lotuses and patters of flowers inspired by Indian painting and is currently being kept in Victoria and Albert Museum in England he adds that we may not be far from reality if we claim that Nader Shah personally took measures in reviving carpet- weaving in Khorsan and made Mashhad his capital (Fari, 1995).

Khorasan's carpet has been mentioned in a number of places besides the Fars rugs in Karim Khan Zand's time. In 1801, Sir John Malcon, the president of the board of directors of East India Company talked about Iran's import and export and production and stated that Yazd, Kashan, Tabas and the cities of the great Khorasan were considered carpet- weaving centers (Razavi, 2013).

1- Imamzadeh Zeyd's Shrine Carpet: This carpet has a date on it and it was woven in Kerman and it was ordered by TAghi Khan Darani, the ruler of Kerman at the time. Its background can be understood from the poem which is woven in the rug and the carpet border carries the name of the weaver and the date and it says: Master Mohammad Sharif Kermani year 1756 Gregorian calendar (Roohfar, 1995)

2- Altar- Vase (A Thousand Flowers): It was probably woven in Shiraz in the second half of the twelfth century and is similar to the designs of one hundred- toman flowers, chrysanthus, Kerman bush- patterns and is currently in Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

Large and decorative carpets' popularity dramatically decreased during this time but carpet- weaving was still going on in nomadic tribes. Khorasan, Kerman, Yazd, Kashan, Boroojerd, Isfahan, Azerbaijan, and Turkmensahra areas were the main centers of carpet production. The popular carpet designs of the era

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included: flower and bush, hunting grounds, writings and dates in Armenian, vase, interconnected (bandi), repetitive bushes (figure 19) (Razavi, 2013)



Figure 19: Vase- altar carpet (a thousand flowers), the second half of the twelfth century solar calendar in Victoria and Albert Museum

The Qajar Era

Due to the art, social, and cultural conditions of the Qajar era, the designs and themes were taken from the Safavid era especially altar rug, central Turanj, lackak and turanj gridded designs with Eslimi and Shah Abbasi patterns could be found all through this era (Khatib, 2008) the rugs were used for domestic uses and were sold in cities and village centers in addition to following the purpose of continuing the old traditions. They also underwent some changes for instance: Bandi and Ghabi designs could be widely seen in the carpets some of these famous designs include: Golfarang, Mahi dar- ham, bush and also the tendency to draw views and nature was very important in the patterns of the carpets of this era (Sabaghpoor, 2009)

1- Golfarang Design: A combination of Iranian traditional designs with natural flowers especially roses. Different Golfarang designs include: Bijar Golfarang, Daste Goli Golfarang, Golo Bolbol Golfarang, Lachak and Turanj Golfarang, Afshan Golfarang and ... (figure 20)



Figure 20: Birds and Golfarang carpet, woven in Bijar (1301 solar calendar)

Mahi Dar- Ham: Are the oldest most common designs of Persian rug which is in the form of a vagire and the weaver repeats, that same vagire in the length and the width of the carpet. Mahi- Dar- Ham is known in different names in different parts of Iran. The most famous include: Mahi Herati, Mahi Farahan, Zanboori, Mahi Kurdistan, Rize Mahi

2- Botei Design: This group is based on Botej Jequeh and decorated the carpet border in various types the main designs of this group include: Bandi Eslimi, Bandi Kheshti, Bandi Turanj- Dar, Bandi Shiro Shekari, Bandi Shakh Gavazni, Bandi Daste Goli, Bandi Mina Khani (Zhoole, 2011).

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The carpet images and the paintings and miniatures of the beginnings of the thirteenth century welcome small repetitive designs such as Herati, Mina Khani, and Boteh Jequeh in the designs treasure chest. In addition to the mentioned designs, the image themes are inspired by domestic and foreign references.

Regarding their topics, the images of the carpets of the Qajar Era include: images of the kings and the well-known, European contents, literary concepts, ancient designs and special designs. Some of the famous designs will be mentioned here.

The kings and the Famous Figures: Qajar kings tried harder than the other Iranian dynasties to use art to show off their power and their importance to people inside and out of Iran. At the end of the Qajar era the kings made many orders to the weavers to weave carpets with their portrait on them so that they could give them to the foreign authorities as presents when they visited them (Ziai, 1996) the images of kings such as: Hooshang Shah, Khashayar Shah, Shapoor the first, Nader Shah, Fathali Shah, Nasereddin Shah and the most popular, the image of Ahmad Shah Qajar can be seen on these carpets as we study them (Zhoole, 2011) (figure 21).



Figure 21: Carpet with Hooshang Shah's image, Kerman, 1322/ 1904, Iran's Carpet Museum 133× 200

European contents: the development of Iran and Europe's relations and the Iranians becoming familiar with the western civilization led to the popularity of their culture and the European contents and forms entering the Iranian culture and the carpet designers illustrated the views and the daily lives of the Europeans in some of the carpets.

Literary concepts: one of topics which were interesting to the artists, throughout the history of Iran's art, included scenes of Ferdosi's Shahname and Nezami's Khamse (image 22).



Figure 22: "Rostam's fight" carpet, woven in Tabriz (1320 solar calendar), Carpet Museum

Religious And Spiritual Concepts: Are the carpets which show spiritual individuals and dervishes most of them showing the images of Noor Alishah and Sheykh Sanan (Tanavoli, 1989) (figure 23) other

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subjects: Quranic stories and concepts which have been mentioned in Islam, images of Jesus Christ and Moses



Figure 23: Carpet with Noor Alishah's image, Kerman, the late thirteenth/ nineteenth century, Iran's Carpet Museum, 61× 90

Ancient Contents: The emphasis of the Qajar art on customary subjects of the ancient Iranian art was accomplishing the purposes of establishing the Qajar kings' political power with that of Iran's ancient kings and authorizing the ruling government (Azhand, 2006) images from the scenes related to the Persepolis from the Achaemenides era (figure 24).



Figure 24: An image carpet, woven in Tabriz, the middle of the Achaemenides era

Special designs: there are carpets with special and distinguished designs such as: astrolabe design, Iran's map or even Iraq's map

In the Qajar era some multi- national companies were formed in Iran which bought and sold carpet. The most important among them included: the England- Swiss Ziegler Company which was established in 1878 in Tabriz and Arak. The Italian- English Kastly Brothers Company these companies were the main factors in the booming of the Persian carpet in the growing of the international markets which had a share in the popularity of the new and old eastern carpets (Razavi, 2001).

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The multi- national companies ended their work in this period and new centers were established such as Iran's Carpet Institute which was established in 1930, Sanaye- e Mostazrafe School which was established in 1921 with the efforts of Master Mohammad Ghaffari, Sanaye- e Ghadime School managed by Maser Hoseyn Taherzade Behzad the head of the map- making office in 1930, Isfahan's fine arts art school in 1936 managed by Isa Bahadori who is a immanent face in Iran's traditional carpet design and Sahami Farsh-e Iran Company, and Iran's Carpet Museum established in 1977 (same).

In 1971 an Iranian engineer named Mohammad Ebrahim Rajabi designed and made the rug hooking frame. All the carpet patterns were drawn on paper at the beginning of the Pahlavi era and were manually drawn in grids. As the printing industry developed and after the formation of Iran's Carpet Institute, the carpet patterns were designed in printed graph papers.

Issuing an identification card for Persian rugs outside Iran was empowered in 1929 and they were issued from the prime minister to the tax ministry. The words "Made in Persia" was printed on a white piece of cloth or a piece of copper and attached to all carpets and the customs of the country supervised this affair (Razavi, 2013). Iran's Carpet Institute was affiliated to the National Economy Ministry and it held the first carpe pattern designing contest in 1930.

The conditions of the contest included: following the traditional ways of each place and avoiding western shapes and forms and human face and animals.

In the era of the second Pahlavi the machine- made rug factory was added to the group of textile factories which attended to traditional designing (same).

Carpet Samples of Pahlavi Era

Two types of carpets, namely traditional and modern could be seen with each other in the Pahlavi era. On the one hand we can see the traditional designs by masters such as Amoo Oghli (figure 25), Arjmand, Saber, Emad, Sifiyan (image 26), Haghighi and others and on the other hand we can see modernist masters such as.

Rasam Arabzade, Jamshid Amini, and Moosavi Sirat most of their carpets contain faces and images. The coronation hall's carpets were woven in this same era in the workshops of Art and Culture Ministry and Isfahan's Art School under the supervision of Master Gholamali Haghighi and Master Isa Bahadori. Also nomadic tribes' good carpets entered the market which were mostly related to Ghashghayi nomadic tribes in Fars, Afshar Kerman, Turkmen at the east of Mazandaran (Razavi, 2013).

Isa Bahadori: the creator of Shekar-e Charkh, Setareye Daryayi, Turanji Heyvan Dar, the designs he has used in his carpet include: animals, birds, lion, rabbit, dragon, Gole Shah Abbasi, Eslimis (figure 27- 28) Images of women and the tendency to paint can be seen in the carpets of Pahlavi in addition to Qajar pictures (Chitsazian, 2005).



Figure 25: A Mashhad carpet woven by Abdolmohammad Amoo Oghli 4.6× 5.87 meters

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Figure 26: Ghabghab Lachako Turanj Carpet by Master Sirfiyan, woven in Isfahan 1330 solar calendar Niyavaran Museum



Figure 27: Setareye Daryayi Carpet designed by Master Isa Bahadori, woven in Pahlavi I Isfahan Art School



Figure 28: Turanji Heyvan Dar with Master Isa Bahadori's design, woven in Sahdarzade Haghghi workshop, (1350 solar calendar)

Contemporary Carpet

Many decorative silk carpets are presented to the markets nowadays which are different from the other carpets:

1- *Volumed (Hajm Dar) Carpet*: Master Mohammad Khoobanfar succeeded in presenting the world's first Hajmi Carpet he has numerous works regarding carpet weaving including: Kooze, Goldan, Samavar,

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Golabdan, statue (Mojasame) one of the weaving specifications of this type of carpet is the repetitions of numerous Chelles.

2- *Unusual Rizbafte Carpets*: Carpets with more than 60 rows were produced in this period they have even stated that the number of rows has reached 250 such as in “Zamen-e Aahoo” and even stranger to 1000 rows. “Meraj-e Rasool-e Akram” carpet which is 18 in 24 centimeters in size and has silk warps and woofs is one of most fine- spun Tablo Farsh registered in the world (figure 29) (Razavi, 2013)

3- *Relief Patterned Carpet*: Is considered one of the great carpets which is decorative and has different special relief patterns and designs. There are many types of relief patterned carpets: Maftool, gold- weave (Zarbaft) theme, rug theme (Gelim theme), double- sided Gelim- theme, and fluff and silk theme. The simple type of relief patterned carpet, Boostan which was woven by Master Ali Khodadadi in Shahreza is kept in the Carpet Museum (figure 30) (Heydarpoor, 2010).

4- *Three- Dimensional Relief Patterned Carpets*: A carpet which they have woven in Isfahan with the design of the façade of Imam Mosque, this carpet was woven under the supervision of Reza Omrani.

5- *Double- Sided Carpet*: Have two designs each on every side of the carpet two weavers sit in front and at the back of the rug hooking frame and each starts weaving based on their designs simultaneously.

6- *Tableau Rug*: These carpets have either an image of a face of a politician, a religious or a national figure, a scientist, or a mythical figure on them or views and perspectives or a writing in Nastaligh, Shekaste, Sols, and Kufi containing verses of the holy Quran or the words of Imam Ali or a poem from Iran’s poets (Razavi, 2013).

It is common in the modern age to use computers in designing the carpet pattern and to weave curtain carpets with lots of rows (Razavi, 2001)



Figure 29: Meraj 18× 24 centimeters in size, Astan Quds Razavi Museum



Figure 30: Boostan Carpet, or relief- patterned carpet, in Carpet Museum, by Master Ali Khodadadi found in 1356

CONCLUSION

With regard to the information and evidences obtained from the ancient times such as: Pazirik carpet which is an evidence for the carpets of the Achaemenides era. The patterns used in the theme of this rug include: animal and human patterns and animals such as the griffin which indicates the power and

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greatness of the kings of that time or we encounter contents like promenades of the kings in the rug and its clear sample is the Bahar Khosro rug from the Sasanian era. As the first Islamic governments entered the rug underwent changes since simulation was forbidden, patterns which included contents such as humans and the body of creatures with souls were expelled from the carpet theme and geometrical patterns with borders of Kufic writing which were seen in Timurid and Seljuk era entered the rug patterns also patterns of flowers and plants which were symbols of heaven appeared on carpets. As previously mentioned in the article the safavit era was the peak of the art of Iranian carpet patterns which was due to the fact that the kings were interested in this art. As the Shiite Safavit government came to rule some of the patterns with Mehrabi and Sajadei designs and Quranic and religious concepts and Sols and Kufic writings covered the contents of carpet patterns. Shah Ismail revived the Sasanian era's patterns including the animal and hunting patterns in a Ghabghalebi design. Shah Tahmasp was so interested in caroets that he drew some carpet designs as well and promoted carpets to the level of an art. Shah Abbas Safavid brought silk into Iran and created king's workshops and made Persian rug a trading good. We could come to the conclusion that: the role of the Safavit Dynasty's kings was also clear and obvious in the formation of carpet patterns and they caused the progress in this era carpets were not that popular in the Afsharids and Zands' era due to the unorganized political and economic situations. No new patterns were added to the carpets in this era and the government had a hindering rile in the carpet's progress. European designs and illustrated carpets with European contents entered the carpet industry in the Qajar era due to the relationship formed between the Qajar rulers and Europe also the kings ordered the weavers to put their portrait on the rugs to display their greatness and elegance and this entered the content of the carpet patterns in this period. In the Pahlavi era the art of carpet reached a point where some of the masters showed interest in the traditional carpets while others were interested in modernism. These masters had their specific method in patterns and the carpet was considered as an artwork belonging to its creator and it was taught in universities as a major and tendency to paining entered carpet patterns. It could be concluded that: kings and governments had a very important role in the creation of carpet designs and its progress from the ancient times to the Pahlavi era and carpets were a reflection of the power of the kings in the governments of their times so much so that they tried to show the power and greatness and promote their relationships with the neighboring countries through giving these carpets to them as gifts and carpets were considered as a governmental art but this art became distant from the field of power from the Pahlavi era and was considered as the artwork of the artist.

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