Plant pattern semiology of Damavand city, Tehran province

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Abstract

Getting to know the Imamzadeh (shrine) and its features will lead to the recognition of semiology, in semiology, the meaning of explicit and implied is concepts of some facts. The meaning of explicit is described with a phrase such as “definition” <Literal meaning>, <evident meaning> or < the meaning r based on received by common sense>. “Implied meaning” refers to its hidden meaning. The way of making research is based on descriptive and analytical nature and the data collecting is synthetic. The sampling is non-random (selective) and there are seven plant patterns of Damavand city of Tehran province and analysis of information are qualitative. In this study after a review of plant patterns used in the shrine of this city, the amount of these pattern confusion are revealed by semiotic concepts and its explicit and implied meaning are stated. At first the basic articles regarding to semiology and plant patterns are addressed. Discovering the meanings of these patterns necessity requires a deep study about it. This article is for reviewing on plant patterns. The plant motifs in shrines, with Khetai flowers (diagram of tree branches or bushes with flowers, leaves and buds) and meandering Islamic motifs could be known of similes of the word of God to (Shajaratolteyebeh) and description of heaven which their application on a large scale creates a safe mood full of fun and flourishing.

Keywords: Plant motifs, Khetai, motifs, semiology, shrine, Damavand city, Arabesque.

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Introduction:
Persian architectural art, from both Islamic era and before that, has enjoyed from indicators and fixed values which the most important is, the relationship between art and spiritual tradition that is taken from the art. Evolution of art works presents is fixed often in the context of the evolution of artist inner concepts, this figure that preferred ideal into reality and simplicity and summarizing to naturalism, has remained even in the earliest works of architecture and inscriptions. In shrines architecture there are some decoration principles which are basically Islamic and for arabesque carves, geometrical patterns and Girih tiles and pictographs have been emerged.

There are numerous motifs, because any archaeological search led to the discovery of a new set of motifs. Thus, the study of Iranian art designs requires classification. During the archaeological research of some great scholars like including “Arthur Upham Pope” in the book “a survey of Persian art from pre historic times to the present”. R.W Ferrie in the book (Persian arts), Zaki Mohammad Hasani in the book of “Iran’s art in Islamic era” and Drek Hill and Olly Gruber in the book of “Persian architecture and decoration” in order to motifs classification, often four major groups are seen which are related to this research (plant motifs, geometrical motifs, animal motifs and human motifs) that in this paper citing the same thing, shrine motifs of Damavand city are used and divided in four categories (plant motifs, geometric motifs, animal motifs and pictograph motifs) in terms of visual In these four classification because human motifs are not used in shrines.

Iranian artists, had a large and important mission, in the selection of natural forms to making the monuments painted and their aim was to create a link between the physical and spiritual world, thus for their usage, motifs are formed on the basis of specific concepts and is not used only to decorate objects and monuments. (Decoration, which is the main source Iran, is not only for joy of eye or mind pleasure; also it has a deeper meaning. (Pope, 1380, p.2) hence, despite of numerous encounters of Iranian art with other cultures and civilizations during the history, always new features with longstanding commitment to the traditions of Islam are based in a way that the Iranian-Islamic identity clearly emerges in them.

What this research has been to, is the survey of plant pattern semiology of Damavand city. Motifs used in shrines have attracted the attention of artists. Plant motifs, has established various themes for investigation. By considering that, shrines are religious building, Islam spiritual and religious associations in an important element in their architecture and decorations, reveals the close connection between religion and funerary architecture. Artists by using of symbols and Quranic and religious inscriptions, started to prove the Shia legitimacy in this blessed houses and imagined the heaven which righteous human were waiting for.

In fact, these motifs and magnificent and luxurious decorations of shrine introduced as one of the most spiritual, interesting, beautiful and most compelling art in religious places. In the present’s research, we attempt to study plant pattern semiology of Damavand city, and it’s explicit and implied denotation.

An introduction of Semiology
The information era is full of meaning and is empty of that, generally all intellectual currents and cultural branches are all under the semiology umbrella and the study of signs (a subgroup who
use it and other group distinguish between these two words) have gathered and this logical because semiology always had been a part of philosophy, linguistics, the science of sociology, anthropology, communication and all eras of human activities. (Without any doubt there is another group of signs which are the subject of semiology research) by considering the importance of this science it can be said that understanding art and literature without contemporary dominating on aesthetic elements is very difficult. If we want to clear the simple meaning of semiology it can be named a regular and systematic study of all the factors in appearance and interpretation of signs. (1385. Nouri)

Explicit denotation, implied denotation
Each word furthermore its literal meaning (Explicit denotation) could has implied meaning. In semiology Explicit and implied are the meanings of concepts which deal with signifier and signified. (Sojoodi, 1387, p.77) the meaning of Explicit is described by the terms such as “definition” “literary meaning” “obvious meaning” or “the meaning based on common sense”(chandler,2007, p.37).
Chandler wrote about these three stages of implications, first stage (explicit denotation) that basically considered representational. Second stage (implied denotation) that is reflecting of pointer values which is linked to every sight. In the third stage (mythical or ideological) sign is the reflect of changing cultural concepts which is the base of especial worldviews, like masculinity, femininity, freedom, individualism, and etc. (chandler, 2002, p.145)

Plant motifs
Islamic motifs are composed by two elements. Interlaced and plant motifs. Interlaced designs are basically geometric thinking graph. While plant designs are indication of draw weight and because those are composed of spiral and combined forms, perhaps we could say it has got less than an actual plant instead of a purely linear style; arabesque designs by the loos any of its resemblance to nature, simply follows the rules of rhythms and weight. Arabesques, at the same time are logical and harmonious and registered based on mathematical and musical melodies. “In Khetai patterns, mostly, has been inspired from vine leaf or blue buttercups and red rose or pomegranate flower and the overall picture is generally round and oval, but in arabesques all the surfaces is decorated by movement and stillness. The audience view may not stick anywhere, from the sideline into the design and form the inside toward out”. (Hazavi, 1363, p.91)

Khetai motifs
The Khetai meaning is not clear. It could be said that is attributed to Kheta (one of the major projects and contractual Iranian carpets and tiles and gilded decorative arts used and it is a branch of the tree diagram layout) is the city in Persian literature that is often synonymous with Khotan, and Kheta would be a reference to the influence of Chinese art on Persian art. Some carpet designers believed that Kheta is the continuation of error, in which case the word must be written with Ta’ (an article of Persian alphabet), and some others write it Khetai in which means the lines caused by the negligence of error. (Conel, 1364, p.86)
Khetai motifs are such strings which, flowers, buds, leaves and straps placed on it. Khetai motifs have tunable zig zag. Some people believed that such motifs were brought from China in Mogul
period and named Khetai for this reason. But study of the evolution of flower designs in different periods of the Achaemenian era so far shows that, the design was in the works of its period and gradually evolved and the similarity of design was for the political, cultural trade between these two countries.

The rule of drawing Khetai flowers is based on circle and from this circle mixing and blending, different types of Khetai flowers in the forms of bud and full flower or single effects appear. Flowers and leaves in Khetai are Abbasileaf-Shah Abbasi flower (pomegranate) Ivy-buds-lilies-pentagram-flowers gig-vine stem and leaves-brunch of grapes-plant term (paisley)-palm-figs and Khetai components include: leaves, flowers, buds and strap. (www.persiancarptassociation.com)

Arabesques

Arabesque has come from the root of word “Salam” in the means of reconciliation, peace and health. Salam is a praying word that is taken from Arabic in the means of “Abahy” saying hello to someone it means wish to being healthy, safe and also salam is for congratulation and salute, greeting and good and bowing out and venerating. Islam means surrender by its etimology and surrender was mean reconciling.

The word salam In the dictionary of Dehkhoda is the name of a tree which is very therapeutic and has healing fruits and certainly virtuous of that therapeutic tree that has rooted in salam because it was used as another title of holy hazrat Zahra (AS) that is referred to the origin of Tayebeh (holy females). Anyway arabesque is a set of motifs that were borrowed from Manichaeism and Zoroastrians in the Islamic period and was perfected in that time and that attributed in this period to a divine pattern. And achieved its integrity and searched for perfection and path. (Pour Khorami, 1386, p.12)

Arabesque (eslimi)-(Islamic: eslim) 1-could be characterized from its major designs and contract with similarities to the elements of nature. 2-an old line. “In fact, arabesque is a traditional plant decoration which is consist of spiral waves and electroplated complexity(stylized) and fig leaf abstract elements the era located like scroll around the bend motifs” (Khazai, 29) here this is necessary to mention a few points.
Arabesque is a kind of surface decoration in applied arts or crafts and painting and the interviewed forms. Bud and flower and foliage are used which are named paradise plants in the Islamic books. Plant such as palm-grapes-pomegranate has changed shape due to initiative and imagination of several generations of artists during the centuries in different nations and they changed to abstract shapes and this change make their shape like some animals such as fish-eagle-rabbit-duck-bear and fox and or these animals abstract shapes included independently or combination admits the art masons negativities with different atmospheres. (Hazavei, 1363, p.91)

Arabesque will appear on the face and surface like a cypress tree that is submitted in the great chain of being in Islamic collection there are elements which are show the arabesque shows components. 1.paisley (art); 2.the arabesque 3.grip and knots, 4.signe. (Poorkhoramie, 1383, p.12)

1-the pattern of internal wall of the holy Imamzadeh(shrine) Abdolah (AS) Ayinehvarzan,; eight-pointed star(shames: sun like pattern)

Table 1- the pattern of internal wall of the holy Imamzadeh(shrine) Abdolah (AS) Ayinehvarzan,; eight-pointed star; source: Negaranandegan

| ImamzadehAbolah(AS): 70Km east of Tehran,Damavand, Absard Tee cross, second U-turnAynehVarzan, Imam khomeinu=I St, ImamzadehAbdolah(AS) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Forming visual elements: spot, line, surface |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composition</th>
<th>Pattern format</th>
<th>Decorating techniques</th>
<th>Materials kind</th>
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<td>enamel ware</td>
<td>tile</td>
<td>symbolic</td>
<td>geometric</td>
<td>Persian shams</td>
<td>Cobalt blue</td>
<td>Internal wall</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Image 1- the pattern of internal wall of the holy Imamzadeh(shrine) Abdolah (AS)
Explicit denotation survey
This tile is eight-pointed this tile has been made of turning two squares and have Khetai flowering designs which are painted in golden shades. The design is white with cobalt blue background. This non-statue tiles are intended for religious occasions. In the formation of pattern designing symmetry composition is used and the composition of the whole building is horizontal.

Implied denotation survey
Among the decorative arts used in monuments of Iran, Girih tiles is more important as far it considered as Persian tradition that had been the secret sign of sun. also people have long believed that paradise has eight doors which is eight one, repentance is always open. So the major shape of the tile is the sign of Heaven, sun, light, and liberation from darkness and oppression. Khetai motifs with elements like; bud, leaf, flower, rotary stems and branches, covers all around and environment of a composition by their spectacularity and invite human to observe the four worlds like expanded stars in sky.
The complex mind of artists with Islamic and floral patterns, in a symbol and colorful cobalt curtain in the name glaze (dressing) is full of meanings, decoration and secret stile could give meaning to article by its elegance and transparency and finally it can bring out hidden Islamic taught and religious mysticism from the unseen materials by the help of pattern, line and color and makes it easy to find for humankind to a sensation towards heaven.
Image 2. Internal wall pattern of holy Imamzadeh Abdolah (AS) line and color and geometric foundation reconstruction, source: Negaranegdan.

2- Enshrine pattern of holy Imamzadeh Hashem (AS), Damavand, Khetai flower

Table 2- enshrine pattern of holy Imamzadeh Hashem (AS), Damavand, Khetai flower, source; Negaranegdan.

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<tr>
<th>Forming visual elements: line, surface</th>
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<tr>
<td>composition</td>
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<td>vertical</td>
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Explicit denotation survey
These plant patterns have been made of flowers, bud, leaf and stem. All the flower and flower parts are moving toward the spiral moving. In the foundation of designing patterns symmetry composition is used and it is vertical in all enshrine. (Table 2, image 3 & 4)

Implied denotation survey
All the units in Khetai like, leaf stem and bud will find meaning by flower existence and all of them are a sign of flower. Flower is considered as the last manifestation of popular expression from expert’s point of view. Mystic artists are the inventor of gold up motifs. Hence they got the flower in the, position of perfection at all motifs. Flowers has been made from Islamic patterns by its circulation and they effects among Islamic patterns and Khetai’s, all are express hidden like a bud or sometimes blowing and refer to mystical people in this various manifestation. Light is twin of flower and every mystic who are searching for light could be a companion of goals (Ghamari, 1392, p.140-141) the bursting way of the flower such as sun and moon is based on the “circle”. A holly shape which is the perfection of shapes everywhere which is speaks about light leads in a circle container as the sun and the moon. Khetai flowers exhibit a positional of kingdom flower and whatever which got full by light like cup, hence the showing of light wall changes to its image and sign. The flower drawing rule in gilding is based on circle and every kind of Khetai flowers in bud’s shape and perfect flower will be appeared from the incorporation and mixing of circles (Eskandarpoor, 1379, p.19-21)
Image 4. Enshrine pattern of holy Imamzadeh Hasan (AS), Damavand, linier reconstruction and geometric foundation; source: Negaranegan.

3- Enshrine pattern of holy Imamzadeh Bi biZand (AS), Khoram village, Khetai flower. Table 3- Enshrine pattern of holy Imamzadeh Bi biZand (AS), Khoram village, Khetai flower, source: Negaranegan.

| Imamzadeh Bi biZand (AS), Tehran province, Damavand city, Mera town, 11 Km southeast of Khoram village, between the heights of GhareGhach. |
| Forming visual elements: line, surface, spot, volume |
| compositio n | Pattern format | Decorating techniques | Materials kind | Sign kind | Pattern kind | Pattern name | color | Pattern name |
| Cross ed | circle | Wood carving | steel | symb olic | plant | Mirabilis flower | silver | Enshrine |
Enshrine pattern of holy Imamzadeh Bi biZand (AS), Khoram village, source; AtiyehYouzbashi.

Image 6 - Enshrine pattern of holy Imamzadeh Bi biZand (AS), Khoram village, linear reconstruction and geometric foundation; source: Negarandegan.

**Explicit denotation survey**

Mirabilis lalapa (Lalehabbasi flower) is formed from three parts; pomegranate, leaf and flower buds. And its center is mostly for a five-pointed shape or more. In the designing construction symmetry composition was used, and the composition of enshrine is crossover (Table 3. Image 5 & 6)

**Implied denotation survey**

Goljam or Shah abbasi flower is the sign of freshness, and it was acceptable in old ancient in Asia and it was symbol of sun among people. Such Abbasi is one of the flowers that date back to pre-Islamic era. That was also known to pomegranate or panjepalangi flower. This flower was sacred to the ancient Iranians. (www.wikipedia.org)

In the book “Tulip flower flora Khetai” by ParvizEskandarpoor he known such Abbasi inappropriate and false for this flower because these flower pattern existed long before Safavid period and has not any relation with Abbas Safavid king, according to professor Pour Khorami who is a master of designing carpets, tiles and gilding. These flowers original name is “LalehAbbasi (mirabilis japala)” and relates to Hazrat Abolfazl Abbas (AS) the son of Imam Ali (AS) who became a martyr in Karbala. And why this flower is known as a symbol of martyrdom so large similarity of Abbasi flower to Tulip. Persian artist’s named this flower Laleh Abbasi in memory of Hazrat (Imam) Abbas (AS).
4- Internal wall pattern of holy Imamzadeh Abdolah and Abidolah (AS), Damavand city, Arabesque.
Table 4. Internal wall pattern of holy Imamzadeh Abdolah and Abidolah (AS), Damavand city, Arabesque; source: Negarandegan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Holy Imamzadeh Abdolah and Abidolah (AS), Damavand city, Darvish Mahala, beside the Mosque of Darvish Mahala.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>compositio</td>
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<td>spread</td>
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Explicit denotation survey
These arabesques are in a four square in three equal parts. And every of these three parts are in a rectangle (Toranjtond knot) in the color brown and the construction of patterns designing symmetry composition is used and it has been expressed in whole the building. (Table 4, image 6&7)
Implied denotation survey
This arabesque has the idea of centralization in a complete form. Arabesques like spirals in nature are spirals that are complex around a central point and by closing to the center they become narrow. Despite the lack of symmetry in that, for the reason of coordination, helix with a dynamic spirit and move is moving to the center. These synthetic motifs spread in all levels. Geometric motifs are allegory of radiation of divine light. Along the corners of the level, design and presence is done everywhere. Available coordination in various designs, is nothing less than the meaning of the unity of existence and available intensity (Rahnamai, 1387, p.51)
Girih tile is a set of geometric motifs that arranged with harmonies and symmetrical forms. (www.irandesrts.com) and these Islamic motifs represents the discipline of the universe. It shade an Echo of unity in it. Triangle is the base of pyramid. Equilateral triangle is the symbol of Divinity, harmony and proportion.

Image 7. Internal wall pattern of holy ImamzadehAbdolah and Abidolah (AS), Damavand city, linier and color reconstruction of pattern and geometrical basic, source: Negaranegandan.

5- Internal wall pattern of holy ImamzadehTaher (AS) Ahran, arabesque.
Table 5. Internal wall pattern of holy ImamzadehTaher (AS) Ahran, arabesque. Source: Negaranegandan.
Imamzadeh Taher (AS), 1.5 Km to Absard, the southwest of the Ahran village, south of Imamzadeh mosque.

Forming visual elements: line, surface, texture

<table>
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<th>compositional</th>
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<th>Decorating techniques</th>
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<td>wood</td>
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<td>Geometric-plant</td>
<td>arubesque</td>
<td>brown</td>
<td>Holy Taher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Image 8- Internal wall pattern of holy Imamzadeh Taher (AS) Ahran, arabesque. Source: Atiyeh Youzbashi

**Explicit denotation survey**

These spiral patterns, has been made for composition in girih tile on the major (on the Islamic pattern), spiral is the main artery of Khtaei patterns on it. These arcs has not any broken and maintain their circle and carves state (table 5. Image 8&9)

**Implied denotation survey**

Arabesque creates lots of various themes from the concept of “plant growth” and reproduction and birth of natural world”, in arabesque as the endless repetition of insignificant elements make the main design of the concept without being an index, arabesque were formed from the ideal of leafy branches and they found mobility to the perfection in an increasing way, but finally they turned back into unreal curves and weaves from the spiral forms.
Image 9. Internal wall pattern of holy Imamzadeh Taher (AS), linear and color reconstruction of pattern and geometrical basic, source: Negaranegan.

6-pattern of enshrine: tombstone of holy Imamzadeh Shah Motahar (AS), Mashhad, the wheel and arabesque.
Table 6. Pattern of enshrine: tombstone (AS), Mashhad, wheel and arabesque; source: Negaranegan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Holy Imamzadeh Shah Motahar, 40 Km from Tehran-Firoozkooh main road, 15 Km from the village of simindasht and village of Mashhad</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Forming visual elements: spot, line, surface</td>
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<td>decentralization</td>
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Explicit denotation survey
The pattern of circle which is like wheel or sun and there are four spiral curves in it, and in the big circle there is a smaller circle. That three spirals in it. There are four lines around each spirals. (Table 6, image 10)
Implied denotation survey
There are some representations from carrousel image or four blade wheel. The sun was gradually turning to circle and it has been proposed as a symbol of religious arts. Sun imaged at the center of the universe. The human heart is the source of his power. Sun as the heart of universe and eye of the world is shining at the center of world forms which in this pattern is like spiral motion so it is considered as the tree of life. (MonicDobocor, 1376, p.86)
Circle is a Lahooti shape and God’s creation. Galaxies world, spheres frequently motion that based around circle is proof of this claim. Circle is the symbol of mobility, dynamism and life. Using of circular motifs by Muslim artists which is a complete shape and free from any angle, is used frequently in architecture of holy places such as shrines. Circle is the symbol of resistance, durability and mobility so it has been used in most of the holy shrines. Circular motifs in fact get human close to god. Other shapes need several lines to get completed but circle got completed by one line so it has unity and monotheism, with a single point in its center that has a stayer line around itself. Start and the end point on the circle is hidden and this coded phenomenon distinguished the circle from other forms.

![Image 10- Enshrine pattern, holy Imamzadeh Shah Motahar (AS), tombstone Mashhad, linier and color reconstruction of pattern and geometric foundation.](http://www.ijhcs.com/index.php/ijhcs/index)
7-Internal wall pattern of Imamzadeh Motahar (AS), Absard, arabesque fillet.
Table 7- Roof pattern of Imamzadeh Mir Motahar (AS). Absard, arabesque fillet; source: Negarandegan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Imamzadeh Mir Motahar (AS): Damavand, Absard city, Imam Khomeini Blvd, Imam Hosein St, GhaleKohneMahala</th>
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<th>Pattern format</th>
<th>Decorating techniques</th>
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<td>plant</td>
<td>arabesque</td>
<td>white</td>
<td>root</td>
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Image 11. Internal wall pattern of Imamzadeh Mir Motahar (AS), Absard, linier, color and geometric foundation reconstruction of pattern; source: Negarandegan
Explicit denotation survey
Arabesque Sarband is a pattern used for connecting, strength and the symmetry point. Shapes are the experience which has been taken from nature. That by standing on spiral rope has made the arabesque circulation, also both arms of any arabesque follows the form and the model of paisley that with the confluence of two paisley arabesque pattern is created. (Table 7, image 11)

Implied denotation survey
In the composition of arabesque motifs the start point is mostly by a big flower or astick and firm Sarband (is a pattern which is used for connection and strength) and the end of stem is drawn by a small leaf or bud. If could reminds use one of the most important attitudes in our lives. As if the Muslim artists is trying to recounting their religious thinking in a rhythmic and poetic mood by their designing. So the large flower or Sarband could be the symbol and source of knowledge and stability. (Tomson, 1386, p. 114)

Balance, comfort, elegance, dynamism and harmony are all vital values that used for uniting to the material and spiritual components of an artistic theme. (Poorjafar, 1381, p.185). The trait of movement of curved spiral or arabesque is the desire for unity and perfection, so movement is counted as an industry to achieving excellence. And for reaching transcendentalism should follow the truth (Poorjafar, 1381, p.185)

Conclusion:
In all Islamic lands and holy respectful places, were always some positions as an oportunity to improvement and growth of talent for genius and artist Muslims. Religious centers, like holy shrines and Begaa valleys has been became to a wonderful treasury of Islamic art effects. Semiology is trying to answer to those questions that how meanings have been made and how reality is represented. Meaning is not going to send for us also we create that throughout a complicated interaction or with decoding some contracts which we are not aware of their existence. Being aware from such these secrets are charming and make us wisely powerful. Understanding secrets, their relations together and their construction helps us to become a person with specific culture (Chandler, 1387, p.222). By attention to the semiology point of view there are so many capabilities of analyzing designs. Existence of geometric patterns which has designed with basic of circle. When they are used in their abstract form and creation of new compounds which are created for integrated covering the surfaces in order not to pay attention to independent projects and making empty places. Reminds the principle of “unity in diversity” and “diversity in unity”. Since the preservation of cultural values is an important action in country cultural development, these patterns should be kept very well. Discovering these motifs meanings requires depth study. We should examine geometric features, religious roots and symbolic meanings of these motifs.
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