Refinding Hidden Messages of Cultural Heritage by Design Thinking in A Case Study: Stationery Design of The Iranian Constitutional Revolution

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Abstract

This research is devoted to the exploration of Iranian cultural values within the historical context of the Constitutional Revolution (1905–1911). It aims to discern how these values can be conveyed through artifacts as a medium. The fundamental premise is rooted in socio-cultural awareness, asserting that products can serve as a conduit for consciousness rather than alienation. The impetus for this research lies in the need to address the potential misinterpretation or mistranslation of values, counter anonymity and anti-values, and foster cultural preservation. The study approaches this historical period from a cultural perspective with the help of design thinking, employing library studies and historical interpretations to devise a method that aligns designers with the cultural essence of that era. The outcome is a method that underwent evaluation by the authors and a focus group, demonstrating its viability and designers' eagerness to employ this approach in culture-based projects to create meaningful and successful products.

Keywords

Cultural Affordance, Cultural Heritage, Design and Culture.

Introduction

This article aligns with a broader body of research focusing on cultural affordance, contextualizing the impact of related studies within the realm of design principles. Cultural values serve as the cornerstone for individual interpretation of artifacts, offering a transformative perspective in product design. However, the lack of a systematic approach to understanding and implementing these values can lead to simplistic or inadequate designs. Drawing upon the historical context of the Iranian Renaissance period, specifically the constitutional era, this study explores the profound determination of Iranians to transcend societal constraints. This era not only provides a rich source of values with significant design potential but also represents a pivotal juncture for addressing anti-values such as anonymity and reviving neglected ideals in contemporary society.

Problem Statement

According to German psychologist Geert Hofstede, a nation's values are a pivotal aspect of its culture. Iran has long been a repository of diverse cultural and spiritual values, notably exemplified in Iranian art, a prominent conduit for these values. However, the transmission of these principles, found in items like calligraphy and embellishments in books, has experienced a decline. Many fundamental ideas, such as freedom, commitment, and fairness, have either diminished in importance or been altered. Objects, once carriers of profound cultural ideals, now remain unnoticed, disconnected from Iranian cultural standards, prohibitions, and ways of living. This situation is particularly prominent among The juvenile demographic within the present generation of Iran, poses difficulties in effective communication, leading to feelings of opposition towards one's own culture and identity dilemmas for students in transition.

Research Objectives and Methodology

The research objective has two parts: First of all to devise a technique for the transmission of cultural values from the constitutional era to the present, while the second aim is to assist students in grappling with the issue of anonymity and combating anti-values. In this research, a diverse range of methodologies have been employed. These encompass the meticulous examination of textual resources, along with a comprehensive analysis of historical and cultural interpretations. Observations and analytical techniques have also been integrated to enrich the depth of this investigation. Every accessible source has been thoroughly scrutinized to ensure a comprehensive and rigorous exploration.

A Brief History of Cultural Affordance

It might be interesting to mention the history of Affordance Theory and How the proposal of Cultural Affordance can enrich the hidden discussion in the community of designers. To the authors, the concept of Cultural affordance emerged out of a huge but unseen discussion between interactionists and representationists. In order to open up discussion, first we will start with a history of affordance theory, then we will try to narrate the origin of internal discussion and finally introduce how the concept of cultural affordance can help us bypass the theoretical dead-end and in which way it can be helpful. We need to apologize beforehand if the narrative presented is very concise and we do understand that there might be many critics about what we narrate and how we narrate, however, we invite the readers to; *As the origin of affordance theory*, it was introduced first by psychologist James Jerome Gibson. He was employed by the U.S. Army in order to solve the problem of Young Pilots (Pick et al., 1982). The main problem was that the U.S. had employed a lot of not very professional pilots in order to cover the forces needed. However, those young pilots who were not practically and professionally educated were confronted by severe accidents and were killed painfully. Gibson was expected to improve the behavior of those young newly arrived pilots. During his research, he unexpectedly reached a strange phenomenon, namely intuition. He found out that professional pilots do not guide the planes based on instructions, they do it intuitively.

This phenomenon of intuition was not something which could be analyzed by the scientific equipment and theories of that time, it was rather referred to the domain of art and not everyday things (using Donald Norman's (2014) Terminology regarding his publication Design of Everyday Things).

In the continuum, Gibson found out (and even claimed) that a new branch of scientific research needs to be shaped, something we mention today as psycho-mathematics (with the modern name of cognitive science) and psycho-physics (which is very near to current design manifestations under terms like Experience, User Interface and Form Studies). In his last publication – an ecological approach to visual perception– he gifted the scientific community the affordance, as a complementary term for Gestalt and Gestalt Psychology (Gibson, 1979) to narrate quickly while promoters of Gestalt principles claimed that our understanding follows universal principles – the same as Newton Principles of matter– and while Whole is beyond some of the parts- Affordance theory adds two more axioms: First of all, there is – at least levels– of meaning which does not need to be analyzed, it can be achieved immediately, the same as the act of tuning in Radio (using metaphor of wave for meaning). The second meaning is not subjective or objective, it emerges from INTERACTION, in this case metaphor of interaction and INTERACTIVITY becomes an important part of understanding the world. (Readers can compare this term with the term Das-Sein (the way used by Martin Heidegger), Thrown into the World and Confrontation to see how this term can be helpful for designers and design researchers); *As a narrative of Challenges of affordance and design*: After the publication of Gibson, two researchers with near-simultaneous timelines introduced this term to the design community: Donald Norman and Gerda Smets. Norman introduced this term in order to solve the problem of daily interaction with highly technical objects surrounding us (Norman, 2014), and Gerda Smets defended this term as a scientific basis of Industrial Design Engineering, namely as a base for Knowledge Design (Smitsman, 1995). While teachings of Prof. Smets, together with her students such as the Late Professor Cornelis Johannes Overbeeke, Prof. Dr. Pieter Jan Stappers and Prof. Dr. Paul Hekkert reached the founding of Studio lab in the Faculty of Industrial Design Engineering at TU Delft, which is a very respected and inspirational research studio for Designers and design researchers, we follow the discussions about this term by Donald Norman. Norman after introducing the term in his book Design of Everyday Things, tried to keep his distance from Gibson's affordance. He claimed he cannot accept that meaning is in the environment, it should be made by the brain or mind of the user and he cannot accept if a designer would say, I put an affordance here or there, in order to keep the distance from Gibson, he invented the term perceived affordance to correct his narrative from. Later on, he not only agreed that the term affordance might have a physical manifestation, which is beyond the term convention, but he claimed that signifiers would be more helpful for designers, rather than affordance, in other words, semiotics is more helpful for designers than affordance theory or psycho-physics (Norman, 2008).

To interpret how cultural affordance can help us, With all respect to Donald Norman and his valuable contribution to the design community, at least for the term affordance and many other contributions, we would rather try to interpret why such a discussion has emerged and how the term cultural affordance could help. According to Norman, it is meaningless if we say information is picked up, or tuned, by the receiver. Of course, it is meaningless, because if we acknowledge that, so we should claim there is a sender who put information in the environment. Are we talking about God? Fine, so we should continue this discussion in the Faculty of Theology and not the Faculty of Design!! This discussion is well-opened by Mark Bickhard and his investigation between interactionists and representationalists (Bickhard & Richie, 1983). Not to make it longer, we do not need to believe in a Supreme Being in order to accept the concept of affordance, we just need to believe in the existence of Alterity or Otherness, with whom we need to interact and who has encoded many messages in our built environment – at least– in order to be decoded and used for further promotion and evolution. This last sentence gives a valuable ground for cultural affordance, culturally enriched affordance theory and cultural dimension and cultural embedment of affordance proposal (this latter is very discussable) There can be some referable manifestations of the term cultural affordance, such as skeumorphs, examples from critical design-talking about hidden dialectics in products and services Dunne (2008) and even our global cultural heritage.

We shall conclude this part with a painful comment by Prof. Kees Overebeeke who reminded painfully that: *We cannot talk about globalism while we have forgotten what we have to offer to the world*, meaning that we should remind ourselves, we should awaken ourselves. In this case, history is a valuable reminder, while introducing and transferring historical experience is very precious as well, which is a goal for this paper.

Research Background

While this study stands as a pioneering effort, it is imperative to contextualize it within two overarching categories of preceding research, we will first try to see how the concept of culture has influenced the Iranian Research community (Internal Research) and then we will have a rough review on the western context as well. The reason we insist on the Iranian definition of culture is to prove that the impact of the concept of culture in non-Western societies would be as important as Western definitions of culture as well. In the initiation of internal research, it is imperative to commence by delving into the intricacies of culture in its fundamental essence. During this initial phase, a comprehensive analysis of Dariush Ashoori is warranted. Referencing the work *Definitions and Concept of Culture*, Darius categorizes cultural definitions into six distinct categories, providing a comprehensive overview. Furthermore, he scrutinizes the role of anthropology and culture, drawing upon Taylor's definition from the year 1781 (Ashoori, 2002). Edward Taylor's dynamic view of culture as a battleground where individuals balance religious duties and secular influences. Taylor emphasizes the importance of a robust cultural foundation rooted in religious principles to withstand worldly trials (Tylor, 1871). Akbaraian adopts Taylor's definition, asserting that culture is acquired and ingrained in society (Akbarian et al., 2014).

Subsequently, attention is directed towards the scholarly contributions of Genghis Pahlavan. In his publication *Culturology: Discourses on Culture and Civilization*, Pahlavan conducts an exhaustive examination of culture. The second chapter of this treatise meticulously dissects Taylor's theories, offering comparative insights with other cultural theorists such as Borats and Émile Durkheim. And finally, he talks about Bronisław Malinowski, in his discourse on culture, adopts a distinctive functional perspective, diverging from the viewpoints of Taylor and Borats. Unlike his counterparts, Malinowski scrutinizes culture by examining its functional role. To elucidate this perspective, he introduces the theory of needs, conceptualizing culture as a response to the essential requirements of humans. The ensuing exploration involves an examination of the institutional responses crafted to fulfill these imperative human needs (Pahlavan, 1998).

In culture-centric design projects, Marcelo Nizzoli's perspective, as cited by Nina Branson Haltman in her 1994 book on Italian design, underscores a direct correlation between design and sociology. Nizzoli contends that a well-designed object should harmonize with the culture, lifestyle, and thought patterns of its users. Negar ZarrinMoo extends this notion, suggesting that culture-based design can be explored through both design and sociology, using Nizzoli's definition as a basis. She posits that the crucial distinction in modern approaches lies in the method category, incorporating intellectual elements rooted in human and cultural aspects throughout the design process. ZarrinMoo advocates for adaptable strategies, steering clear of rigid, prescriptive, and simplistic methodologies.

Referencing Bryan Lawson's 2005 book *How Designers Think*, where he suggests that design methodologies should not merely enhance the stability of the man-made world but instead modify elements in line with progress and development (Lawson, 2005), ZarrinMoo argues for a focus on adjusting aspects guided by natural evolution rather than reinforcing artificial environment stability (ZarrinMoo et al., 2018). Exploring approaches like localization, she underscores culture as the central theme, emphasizing user-centric design and sustainable cultural development. Historically, limited research has delved into a design reminiscent of the constitutional period, but studies on the entire Qajar era, such as Zahra Gharavi's examination of Qajar glassmaking's cultural influences, provide valuable insights. Pegah Ghafel Mobarakeh's work analyzes Qajar jewelry, considering cultural aspects in product design through the examination of its essence and visual representations (Ghafel Mobarakeh et al., 2013)

Scholarly discourse on cultural factors' influence on product design is prominent, revealing a substantial body of research. Studies explore cultural elements' impact on design, emphasizing the need to consider cultural dimensions in design deliberations and their effects on consumer behavior. The literature, spanning diverse design disciplines, reflects sustained academic interest. Noteworthy citation activity surrounding this literature indicates enduring relevance and influence on subsequent research, establishing a robust foundation. In summary, the extensive and diverse literature, coupled with significant citation activity, underscores the enduring scholarly interest in understanding how cultural factors shape both product design and consumer behavior, offering ample opportunities for further exploration and scholarly contributions.

Key Themes Emerging from the International Literature Review

1. *Cultural Influences on Product Design*
This theme explores how cultural factors impact product design, focusing on the integration of cultural values and challenges in crafting products for diverse backgrounds. Key papers include Hofstede (1980), presenting a comprehensive framework for understanding cultural distinctions in product design, and Usunier and Lee (2009), emphasizing cultural sensitivity and localization strategies. Sheth and Sisodia (2006) advocate for a customer-centric perspective, promoting customization in product design.

2. *Cross-Cultural Design Adaptation*
Centred on adapting product designs to diverse cultural contexts, this theme highlights Norman's (2014) seminal work, emphasizing the psychology behind culturally aligned product designs. The Chen Hao project (Hao et al., 2017) introduces the *Cultura* toolkit, enhancing cross-cultural understanding and resonant product creation. Annemiek van Boeijen's (2014) thesis proposes a socio-cultural framework, addressing cultural barriers in design. Kim and Moon (1998) explore emotional aspects in cyber-banking interfaces, emphasizing cultural adaptation for trust and appeal.

3. *Cultural Aesthetics and Symbolism in Product Design*
This theme delves into cultural influences on the aesthetic and symbolic aspects of product design. Chen and Xie (2008) explore the impact of online consumer reviews on product design, emphasizing the influence of cultural factors on consumer perceptions.

4. *Cultural Usability and User Experience*
Focusing on culture's impact on usability and user experience, this theme highlights Norman's (1999) study on affordance and its cultural role in design. The paper illustrates how cultural conventions shape design decisions, addressing challenges in designing culturally inclusive user interfaces.

Moreover, Kim and Moon (1998) focus on emotional aspects of usability in cyber-banking, examining how cultural factors influence users' emotional responses and trust in interface design, providing insights into elements conducive to emotional usability.

5. *Cultural Psychology and Meaningful Design*
Dhadphale (2017) emphasizes understanding cultural connotations in product design and identifying determinants of cultural values. Yan-bo (2006) explores the psychological factors influencing product design, emphasizing the importance of integrating cultural elements with consumers' sensibilities. Moalosi (2009) emphasizes considering users' cultural backgrounds and values to create meaningful products. Chao (2006) emphasizes the need for cultural strategies in contemporary product design, aiming to infuse products with qualities appealing to consumers' cultural preferences. These studies highlight the importance of cultural understanding in product design.

Introducing Cultural Affordance

Cultural affordance is a concept highlighting the significance of understanding the cultural values inherent in artifacts and systems. It suggests that cultural context shapes the affordances of objects, influencing how people interact with them. In design, cultural affordance is a framework for detecting and understanding the embedded meanings and values in cultural artifacts. Recognizing these values beyond functionality allows designers to reinterpret them for contemporary society. This approach facilitates a deeper understanding of the cultural significance of artifacts and their meaningful integration into modern contexts. Cultural affordance also helps liberate the semantics of artifacts, ensuring that their cultural values are recognized and appreciated in the modern world. In summary, cultural affordance provides a valuable framework for designers to engage with and reinterpret cultural values, fostering a more meaningful and contextually relevant approach to design (Sicklinger & Ajdari, 2024).

What Is the Significance of Cultural Affordance and the Necessity of Cultural Narrative and Reading with the Concept of Affordance?

The importance of cultural affordance and the imperative of cultural narrative and reading for the concept of affordance stem from the recognition that affordances are culturally embedded and discernible through culture, within culture, and as an integral part of culture. Cultural associations and interpretations enhance scholarly endeavors towards a designer-oriented mode of thinking within the framework of affordance theory. Presenting scientific terms narratively in a cultural context facilitates a more profound comprehension and aids in developing a more comprehensive conceptualization. Consequently, considerations of culture are paramount for understanding and applying the concept of affordance theory across diverse design communities. It is crucial to acknowledge the role of culture as a mediator, rather than viewing culture as a convention, thereby providing designers with inspirational values for their creative pursuits (Bahramipanah et al., 2021).

Why Should We Use a Culture-Centered Design Approach?

Using a culture-centered design approach for a study based on a specific historical era can be beneficial for several reasons. Here are some of them;

- Cultural Adaptation: A culture-centered design approach can help designers create products that are adapted to the cultural context of the historical era they are studying. This can improve the user experience and functional performance of the product (Munasinghe, 2017).
- Understanding Cultural Connections: By studying the culture of a specific historical era, designers can gain a better understanding of the connections between people and the things around them. This knowledge can help them create better products and services.
- Negotiating Cultural Differences: A culture-centered design approach can help designers negotiate cultural differences between themselves and the users of the product they are designing. By being sensitive to the user's culture and viewing the interface through the user's cultural filter plane, designers can create products that are more effective and better suited to the needs of the users (Munasinghe, 2017).
- Observing Cultural Dynamics: Implementing the design solution inside the defined culture and observing it can help designers identify areas for improvement and make necessary changes. This iterative process can help designers create products that are more effective and better suited to the needs of users.

Overall, a culture-centred design approach can help designers create products that are better adapted to the cultural context of a specific historical era, more effective, and better suited to the needs of the users.

Why Is Iran's Constitutional Movement Significant?

The significance of Iran's constitutional movement lies in the striking parallels it shares with prominent global revolutions, notably the French Revolution of 1789.

Analogous to the transformative impact of the French Revolution, the Iranian Constitutional Revolution of 1906 was profoundly shaped by the adaptation of Islamic and Iranian Values with ideas coming from the West, representing a departure from traditional governance structures. A primary shared objective was the establishment of constitutional governance, a pioneering initiative in the Middle East context (Farzaneh, 2015).

Central to both movements was the shared aspiration for political and social change, leading to a redefinition of the prevailing political landscape. While the Iranian Revolution aimed to institute a constitutional monarchy, mirroring the French Revolution's pursuit of dismantling absolute monarchy, both witnessed the emergence of novel political ideologies and the empowerment of an expanding middle class advocating for enhanced representation and rights. These parallels underscore the universal nature of the struggle for political reform and the enduring impact of these revolutions in reshaping their respective societies.

However, it is imperative to acknowledge the nuanced distinctions that shaped the Iranian movement. Unlike a direct emulation of the French Revolution, the Iranian Revolution responded to a complex interplay of domestic and international dynamics, driven by a diverse array of reformist visions (Chehabi & Martin, 2010). Notably, the Iranian movement intricately integrated the influence and backing of Shi'ite clerics, a regional uniqueness (Farzaneh, 2015). This intricate amalgamation of influences and factors distinguishes the Iranian Constitutional Revolution as a multifaceted response to the socio-political challenges of its time.

Additionally, the Iranian Constitutional Revolution exhibited commonalities with contemporaneous constitutional movements, including the Young Turk Revolution and the Russian Revolution, all sharing the constitutional revolutionary paradigm. These movements collectively aimed to counter despotism and imperialism, emphasising a unified struggle against autocratic rule (Sohrabi, 1995; Atamaz, 2019).

In summary, while the Iranian Constitutional Revolution draws parallels with iconic revolutions like the French Revolution, its uniqueness lies in being a distinct and intricate response to the specific circumstances of its time.

Why Is the Constitutional Period a Justifiable Epoch for this Study?

The constitutional period stands as a rational choice for this study for several reasons;
1. The sanguine perspective held by Iranian intellectuals during this era instilled progressive ideals into Iranian culture — an occurrence not replicated in numerous other countries of the time—.
2. The instrumental role undertaken by students of Dar-al-Fonun School and graduates from European institutions in providing the public and other advocates of freedom with multiple autonomous platforms

However, the main reason for the significance of this study is to show the challenges we (whether Iranians or readers of Western culture) have in order to transfer the values from previous generations to contemporary generations.
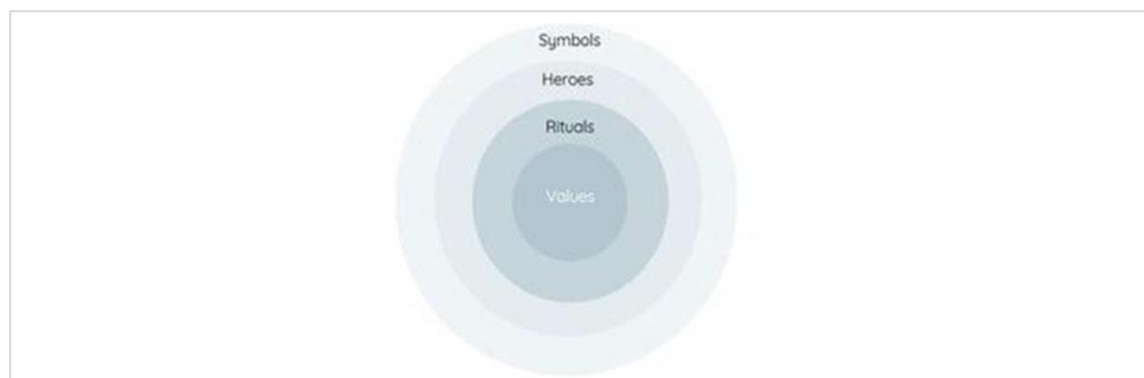

Figure 1: *1 hofstede model (The Culture factor group, 2023).*

Why Should We Employ the Hoefstede Model for Cultural Analysis?

Among various extant models for cultural analysis, Geert Hofstede's Cultural Onion model emerges as the most helpful This model, comprising five stages ranging from symbols to values, aligns harmoniously with the study's focus on heroes, symbols, and rituals, thus making it a superior option compared to alternatives such as Edgar Schein's model, which places significant emphasis on underlying assumptions and values.

The Phases of the Process

0. The Present State: An examination will be conducted on the products accessible to the intended users.

1. Initial Examination: An in-depth investigation into the specific user demographic of the study will be undertaken.

2. Historical Synopsis: A concise review will be conducted of the designated historical period.

3. Investigation of Cultural Affordance Resources: The resources utilised for cultural affordance will be scrutinised in this section.

4. Development of the preliminary method: Following data collection, the primary methodology will be formulated.

5. Validation of the method through an Author-Initiated Ideation Session: The authors initially validated the devised method.

6. Method Evaluation in a Designer Focus Group: The formulated method is slated for testing during a meeting attended by designers.

7. Comparative Analysis of Findings: The outcomes derived from the two experiments will be subjected to analysis.

The Present State

When assessing the current situation, it was not possible to find a product that could effectively communicate the values of a historical period. However, in scrutinising extant products through the lens of semiotics, samples can be categorised for examination under three distinct rubrics.

First Category: Culturally Neutral Stationary

Commencing the examination of samples, one of the prevailing avenues for product acquisition that was alluded to pertains to Instagram stores.

Figure 2: *Examples of the first category (Source: Internet stores on Instagram).*

These examples aim to boost sales primarily through the use of aesthetic elements and market-oriented strategies. They do not convey any specific messages; instead, they emphasise other functions.

Second Category: Culturally Implicit Stationary

The second category can be found in the markets of countries surrounding Iran. Due to their proximity, these products have a high likelihood of entering the Iranian market to indirectly convey messages from these countries. An example of such a product is shown below.
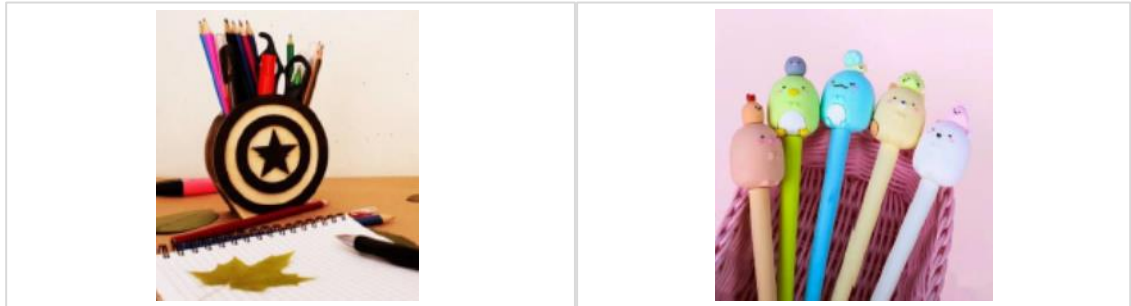
Figure 3: *Second category examples (Source: www.amazon.com).*

Third Category: Culturally Explicit Stationary

This category encompasses products that incorporate the symbols of a nation or country, such as the national flag. They do this to directly communicate messages and values to their users. An example of this can be seen below.
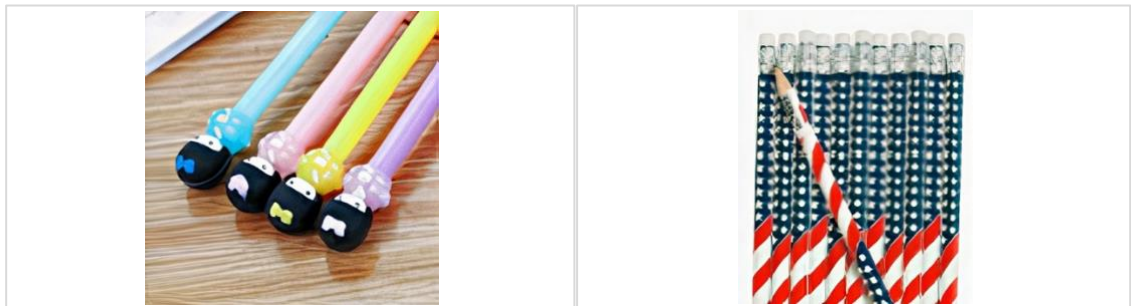

Figure 4: *Third category examples (Source: www.amazon.com).*

How Are the Examples Categorised in Terms of Message Conveyance?

By utilising semiotics in products, the products examined in the previous section can be classified into three categories;
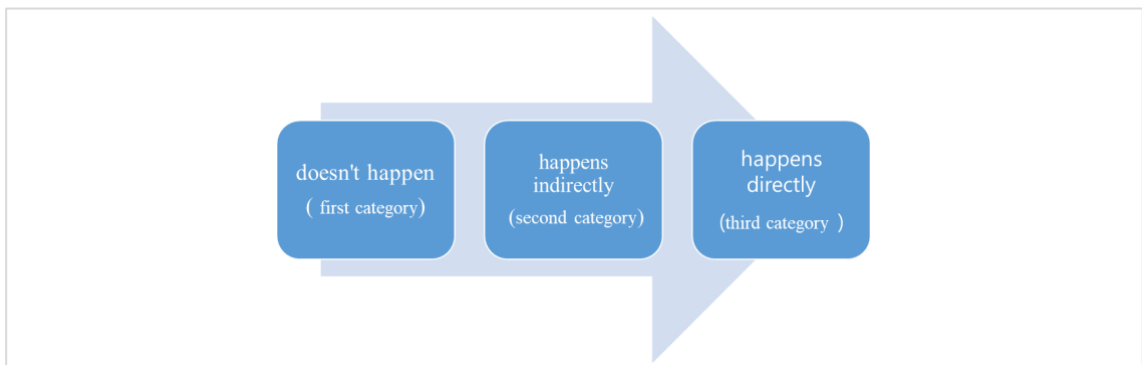
Figure 5: *Samples classification.*

The majority of products available in the Iranian market fall within the first and second categories. This implies that the transfer of value or form either does not occur or happens indirectly.

▪ Initial Examination: In light of the ongoing COVID-19 crisis in Iran and the necessity of adhering to social distancing measures, it became imperative to devise alternative methodologies. Consequently, an online experiment emulating cultural probing was executed through various social media platforms. This experiment was structured across three distinct stages, culminating in the acquisition of valuable insights regarding the importance of objects, metaphors, and emotional dynamics within the interactions of the designated community.

- Historical Synopsis: The Persian Constitutional Revolution, also known as the Iranian Constitutional Revolution, transpired from 1905 to 1911. Under the Qajar monarchy, this pivotal event ushered in a parliamentary system, instigating extensive societal transformations. This exposition delves into the genesis of the constitutional movement, initial protests, and subsequent political evolutions that culminated in the revolution's triumph.
- Iranian Awakening: Historian Ahmad Kasravi (1940) terms the constitution's inception as the *Iranian Awakening*, symbolizing the public's realization of their nation's underdevelopment and resistance against autocratic rule.
- Protests Emerge (1905): Agitation in 1905, sparked by Persian tariffs imposed to repay a Russian loan, led to protests forcibly dispersed by authorities. Merchants sought refuge at the British embassy, initially demanding an independent judicial body.
- Transition to a Parliamentary System: Influenced by Dar-al-Fonon students, demands evolved towards a parliament to limit the Shah's power. In 1906, Mozaffar ad-Din Shah agreed to establish a parliament, leading to inaugural elections. Deputies crafted the constitution, veiling certain principles in ambiguity, resulting in conflicts with the monarch.
- Sheikh Fazlullah Nouri's Opposition: Sheikh Fazlullah Nouri opposed the constitutional amendment, asserting Sharia law violations. An article was added, granting a council authority to veto resolutions based on Islamic law, intensifying conflict between the king and parliament.
- Topkhaneh Square Incident (Dec 1907): The schism widened with an assault on parliament by Sheikh Fazlullah Nouri, leading to Shah's reconciliation and allegiance to the constitution. Amid negotiations, Mohammad Ali Shah attacked the parliament in 1908, resulting in casualties and martial law imposition.
- The Coup and Aftermath: Mohammad Ali Shah's assault on the parliament led to his deposition and exile to Russia. The revolution's triumph dissolved the National Assembly, imposing martial law in Tehran, and persecuting and confining advocates.
- Conclusion: Despite Shiite scholars' support, Mohammad Ali Shah's anti-Islamic claims led to his deposition, marking the revolution's success. This resulted in martial law, persecution, torture, and confinement of its advocates.

Value of the Persian Constitutional Revolution

Awakening and National Pride (1905–1906)
- Value: Empowerment
- Description: The revolution ignited a spark of self-realization among Iranians, who recognized their nation's lag in development and influence. This newfound awareness inspired them to rise against autocratic rule, forging a path toward a more empowered and self-determined future.

Courageous Protests and Unity (1905)
- Value: Courage and Unity
- Description: The protests against unjust tariffs showcased the courage of the Iranian people. Their resilience in the face of authority's suppression and their unity, seeking refuge at the British embassy, demonstrated the strength of their collective spirit in pursuit of justice.

Struggle for Democratic Governance (1906)
- Value: Democracy and Representation
- Description: The establishment of a parliament marked a significant step towards democratic governance. The people's demand for a voice in their affairs and their pursuit of representation in the form of a majlis exemplify the enduring value of democratic ideals.

Championing Islamic Values (1906–1907)

- Value: Faith and Morality
- Description: The opposition led by Sheikh Fazlullah Nouri underscored the importance of Islamic values in the face of modernization. This struggle for the preservation of Sharia law within the constitutional framework reflects a deep commitment to faith and moral principles.

Defiance and Sacrifice (1907–1908)

- Value: Resilience and Sacrifice
- Description: The Topkhaneh Square incident and subsequent assault on the parliament were met with fierce resolve. The sacrifices made by leaders like Malak-ol-motelakemin, Mirza Jahangir Khan, Soresrafil, and Ghazi Ardaghi stand as a testament to their unwavering dedication to the cause of liberty and freedom of speech.

Triumph of Democracy (1909)

- Value: Freedom and Justice
- Description: The deposition of Mohammad Ali Shah and his exile symbolized the victory of democratic ideals over autocracy. This momentous triumph reinforced the enduring values of freedom and justice, solidifying the revolution's legacy.

Legacy of Perseverance (Aftermath)

- Value: Perseverance and Hope
- Description: Despite the dissolution of the National Assembly and the imposition of martial law, the advocates of the revolution persevered. Their resilience in the face of persecution and confinement carries forward the value of unwavering hope for a better future.

The Persian Constitutional Revolution, with its values of empowerment, courage, democracy, faith, resilience, freedom, and perseverance, stands as a beacon of inspiration for generations to come, reminding us of the enduring strength of the human spirit in the pursuit of justice and self-determination.

Cultural Affordance Resource Investigation

This study navigated cultural affordances through artistic expressions, periodicals, and textual sources. Additionally, historical accounts and local narratives were pivotal in sourcing vital information.

Historical Review Findings

In the course of our historical review, profound artistic insights and fundamental values were discerned. These can be classified into the following categories:

- Values: Equality, fraternity, peaceful coexistence, self-sacrifice for the promotion of freedom of expression, the pursuit of equal rights for women, the quest for knowledge, and the scientific outreach to nations worldwide.
- Heroes: Within this classification, luminaries such as Sattar Khan, Baqer Khan, Sardar Asad, Bibi Maryam, Yapram Khan, and Howard Conklin Baskerville were identified. Additionally, intellectual figures like Dehkhoda, Mirza Jahangir Khan Surasrafil, Mirza Sayyed Mohammad Tabatabai, Seyyed Abdollah Behbahani, Sayyid Jamal al-Din Va'iz Malak-ol-motekalemin, and Seyed Mohammad Reza Mosavat were notable.
- Symbols: The artworks of this era, the visual repertoire of the poets from this period, the visual oeuvre of artists in this era, and the extant works such as (Adl Mozaffar) can be designated as emblematic of this epoch.
- Rituals: In this category of rituals, the sacred endeavour of the Tabriz Rescue Regiment to breach the city's besiegement was met with failure due to the withdrawal of numerous group members. The selfless acts of individuals like Jahangir Khan Surasrafil in safeguarding freedom of expression, as well as the endeavours of intellectuals like Ayatollah Seyyed Mohammad Tabatabai, who championed peaceful coexistence among all factions despite his religious authority, stand as notable examples.

Designed Model

The findings have led to the development of a method based on the Van Boeijen, A.G.C. model, specifically tailored for the design process rooted in core values. The conceptual model of this method is presented below;
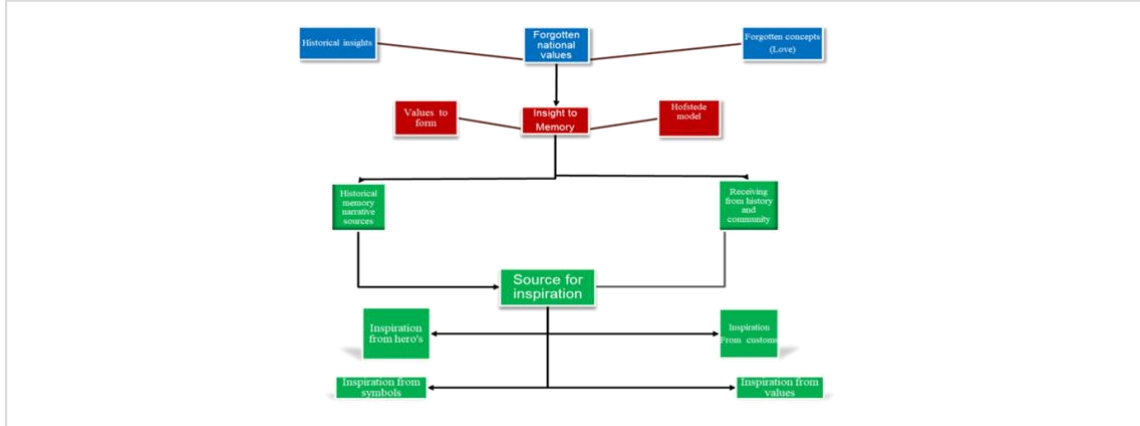

Figure 6: *Conceptual model of the method.*

Methodology

The methodology is predicated upon the accessibility of three discernible foundations for elucidating the provenance that aligns with the primary objectives of the research. These sources proffer two pivotal constituents: historical memory, history, and community. The synthesis of these dual founts culminates in the derivation of four fundamental propositions:

- Inspiration from Heroes
- Inspiration from Symbols
- Inspiration from Customs
- Inspiration from Values

In the context of a design undertaking, a designer is poised to integrate these propositions into their design process, thereby facilitating a more nuanced and contextually grounded approach.

Designed Cards

Utilising Van Boeijen's study, a set of 13 cards was created. Following the alignment of these two studies, they underwent examination through the following steps: The cards were categorised into *eye-openers*, *insights*, and *actions*. Below, three examples of these cards are provided.

Figure 7: *Example of eye-opener cards.*

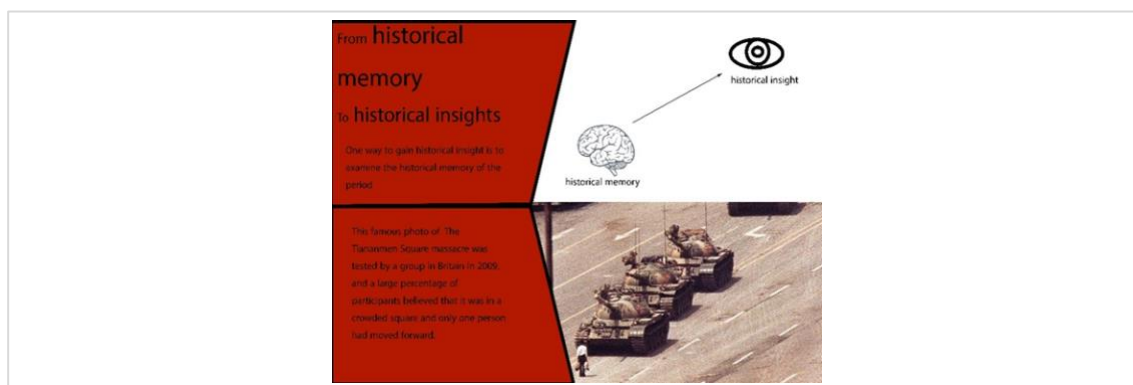**Figure 8:** *Example of activities cards.*

Figure 9: *Example of insight cards.*

What's the Difference between Our Study and Van Boeijen's Study?

In distinguishing the current investigation from Van Boeijen's study, a notable disparity manifests in the augmented scope of our research. This expansion entails a thorough exploration of the historical context, wherein historical inquiry assumes a complementary role in the pursuit of cultural values.

Validation of the Method

Following the method's design, the authors conducted primary testing to assess its capability and usability. They applied the method in an idea-generation session, resulting in the generation of several ideas. Below, two examples of these ideas are presented.
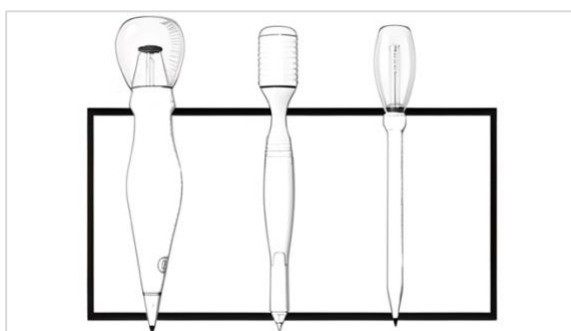

Figure 10: *Three pens that light up when moving on the paper (First sketch from the author).*
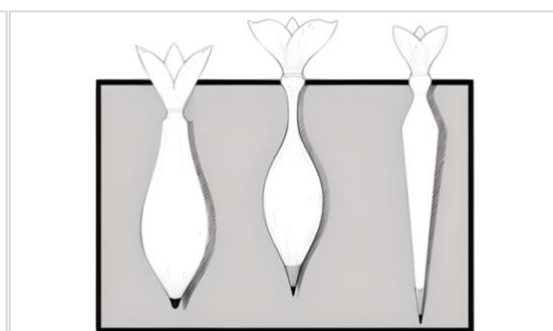
Figure 11: *Three pencils inspired by the form of tulips (Second sketch from the author).*

Method Evaluation in a Designer Focus Group

Following the initial testing by the authors, the method was deemed ready for a public trial. Two crucial prerequisites needed to be met:
1. Involving the largest possible number of participants.
2. Establishing a secure environment where participants could express their views candidly.

However, due to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis in Iran, it was not feasible to create these conditions in a real-world setting. Consequently, social media platforms were chosen as the testing ground. A random group was selected, and they were added to a WhatsApp group, one of the most accessible social media platforms in Iran.

The selection was made among individuals who had expressed their willingness to participate. This group served as a focus group for testing the method. The method was presented comprehensively, section by section, and participants' feedback was collected. Subsequently, the participants were requested to employ this method to design stationery within a 24-hour timeframe to evaluate its effectiveness. Below, two examples of the stationery sketches produced during this test are presented.
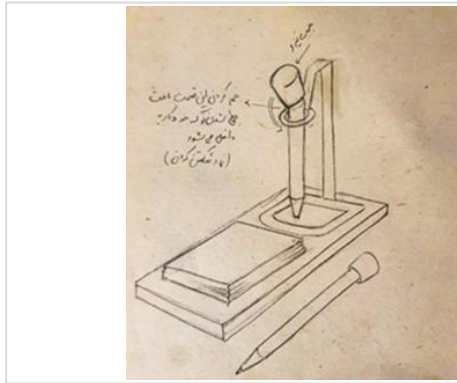
Figure 12: *Sketch from participant 1*
(The Persian text: Bending this part makes the tip of the pen go inside).
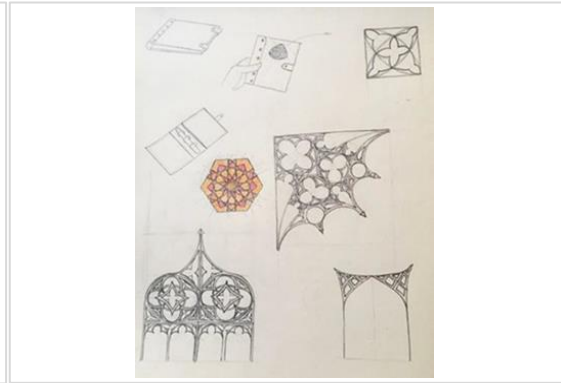

Figure 13: *Sketch from Participant 2.*

This sketch draws inspiration from the notion of sacrificing for freedom of speech. It metaphorically conveys the idea of *taking away* the concept of eradicating knowledge if one ceases to document their thoughts.

Another participant designed and shared a binder, drawing inspiration from the patterns of the constitutional period.

Statistical Classification of Participants

The comprehensive data regarding participants, classified based on various characteristics, is presented as follows;
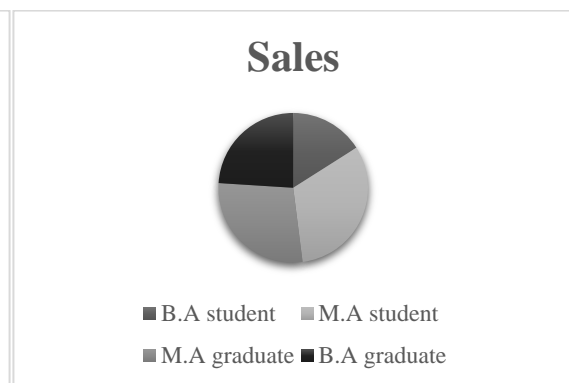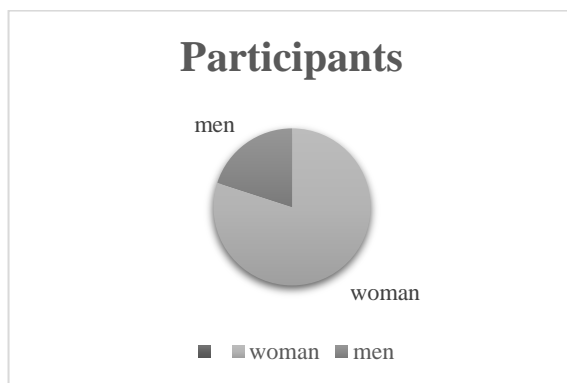

Figure 14: *Gender distribution among test participants (Source: Authors).*

Figure 15: *participants based on educational status (Source: Authors).*
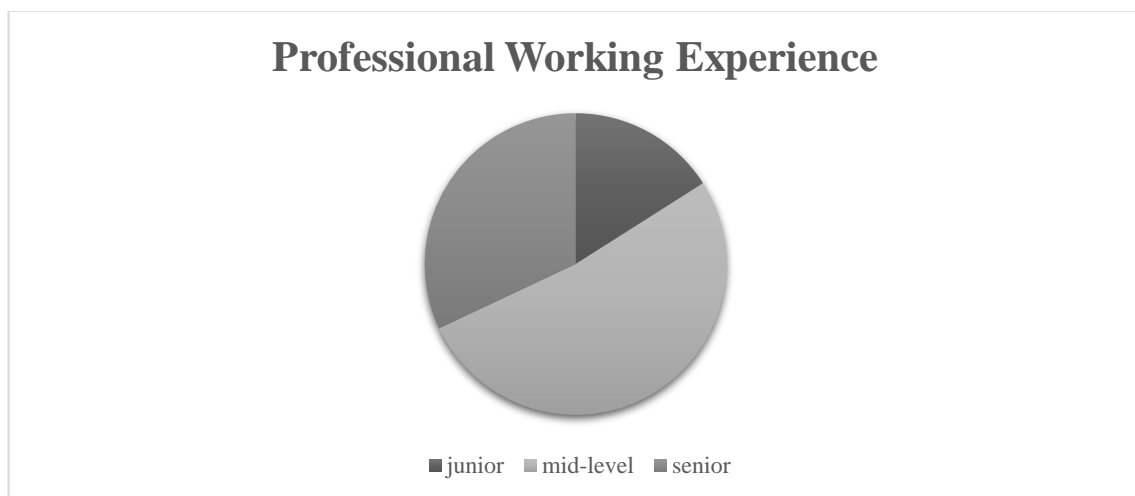

Figure 16: *Categorisation of test participants according to their professional work experience (Source: Authors).*

Overall Results of the Public Test

In consideration of the findings derived from this investigation, a significant portion of participants exhibited a pronounced inclination. The majority of these individuals were female participants who had graduated in industrial design or were engaged in postgraduate studies within the same field, possessing a moderate level of work experience. The discernible interest conveyed underscores the potential efficacy and viability of assimilating this methodology into their respective design pursuits within the realm of design projects.

Comparative Analysis of Findings

The comprehensive array of ideas introduced by the authors, combined with the notable degree of satisfaction expressed by the participating designers, provides compelling evidence for the efficacy of this method. The diversity and depth of creative solutions generated through this approach demonstrate its robustness and adaptability across a spectrum of design projects. This positive response from the participants further affirms the method's potential to inspire innovative and meaningful design outcomes, cementing its position as a valuable tool in the designer's toolkit.

Results and Recommendations

After several military defeats and the loss of various sections of Iran, Iranians recognized their nation's corruptive situation and attempted to change their destiny. The countrys first attempt to modernize and compensate for its backwardness was the Iranian Constitutional Revolution. The Daralfonon pupils established a transfer with several driving engines. Publications of works of art and literary materials are among the most significant impulses of this movement. Stationery, or *means of freedom of thinking*, (as translated in Persian) has been an important instrument in creating these stimuli. Many sources were investigated, including textual texts, art forms, and intellectual periodicals. The Hofstede model was then chosen from two cultural models and utilized for the study. This model's outcomes were reviewed independently in each layer, and the results were used separately. Constitutional protection has been obtained. The van Boeijen model was chosen from the available study models. We may use this strategy to translate values into forms and progress toward cultural values. Historical memory can be employed to gain a historical perspective on the project. The written sources of this research can be used to access historical memory. Historical insights that can be applied to similar projects. Following the experiment, based on the results of the approach's preliminary test and focus group test, it can be determined that the suggested method is valid, intelligible, and appealing to many designers and may aid in using Iranian cultural values throughout the constitutional period. Furthermore, this strategy may be used in similar projects with constitutional movement cultural characteristics.

Regarding Mentioned above these Can be Recommended

1. Despite focusing on the Iranian student community within Iran, the lack of available information on Iranian students overseas hindered comprehensive research. It is recommended to conduct similar studies to explore their identity and make this method more comprehensive.

2. While efforts have been made to develop a design method rooted in saving and transferring cultural values (in this case values of constitutional movement), conducting comparable studies on other historical eras, like the first or second Pahlavi period, and integrating them with the proposed method can further enhance its efficacy.

3. This investigation highlighted weaknesses in the drawing skills of design students and novice designers, as well as a limited familiarity with Iranian culture. This calls for more in-depth and foundational research than what was conducted in this study.

4. In addition to historical insights, incorporating sources such as local songs and urban legends can enrich more detailed examinations of the historical memory of this period.

5. It is recommended to undertake secondary studies to assess the success of products designed and manufactured using this method. This will provide valuable insights into the method's overall effectiveness.

Limitations and Future Prospects

Given the constraints of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, in-person testing was unfeasible. Future research should incorporate in-person sessions for a more comprehensive evaluation. Additionally, the method's applicability to other historical periods and cultures warrants exploration.

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