

Animal Motifs and Mythical Myth: The Myth Association to the Identity of the Ancient People

Al-Thamari Faeza¹, Al Zidjali Zahra²

¹Art Education, College of Education, Doha, Qatar

²Art Education, College of Education, Muscat, Oman

Email: Althamari.fa@qu.edu.qa, zahrz@squ.edu.om

How to cite this paper: Faeza, A.-T. and Zahra, A.Z. (2024). Animal Motifs and Mythical Myth: The Myth Association to the Identity of the Ancient People. *Art and Design Review*, 12, 165-190.

<https://doi.org/10.4236/adr.2024.122012>

Received: March 22, 2024

Accepted: May 28, 2024

Published: May 31, 2024

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Abstract

The current study aims to uncover the symbolic meanings of animal motifs and analyze the superstitious myth that is generated by the symbols of animals. The descriptive analysis is taken as a method for analyzing the symbols of mythical animals that have been immortalized in many ancient cultures to confirm the aspects of identity, as well as the various cultures of people for revealing self-identity when using such symbolic drawings. From this standpoint, the study seeks to delve into the role of animal motifs and superstitious myths in revealing the identity and intellectual ideology of the ethnic classifications of many ancient societies. The methodology of the current study lies in the descriptive analysis and making comparisons between a number of symbolic animal figures that were found and linked in their places of presence to the identity and cultures of the ancient societies belonging to them, and then they were collected to know the indications and beliefs prevailing at them in an old period and to know the nature of living practices and the way of peoples' life, intellectual ideology, and religious beliefs. It reveals what other ancient civilizations took from intellectual and mixed civilizations in order to fuse them in other forms and meanings by adding psychological and personal expressions that were independent in their sanctity from the origin of the civilizations that were taken from them. The study proved the existence of a tremendous cultural mixture embodied in the ancient individual's tendency to instinctively dive into a number of myths, especially those that appeared in the civilizations of the Near and Far East in general, but these symbols were reformulated with all their connotations implicitly in order to take the mold of decorative and symbolic arts.

Keywords

Animal Motifs, Symbol, Mythical Animals, Ancient Civilizations, Intellectual Ideology

1. Introduction

Many studies focused on the importance of the symbol due to the complexities of the meaning extracted from the symbolic images (Green, 2003; Beatrice, 2022). Humans left these images as part of their attempts to perceive and sense all the manifestations of nature around them, as man became with his simple primitive mind seeking by various means to imitate all the manifestations of nature and interpret them in a symbolic semantic language with often vague meanings. With developments and environmental changes, man has resorted to the language of symbols as a means or merely an expression of a social need that confirms his connection and integration with society. He has also used it as a means to express all manifestations of religious rituals. In the midst of developments, we find that man did not hesitate to use his semantic language as a symbolic language. This language brought him to advanced stages of maturity based mainly on imagination and creativity, so many of them have a language that distinguishes them in a specific craft and forms a special character from it (Saeed, 2011). What cannot be ignored is that the formulation of artistic crafts based exclusively on the language of symbols has adopted a purely social approach through which it reveals many of the origins, traditions and systematic ideological rules that have been contemporary with man at different times and in a way that is consistent with his capabilities and self-abilities.

Where it is likely that the symbolic arts are the fertile crucible and incubator for a large part of the human life practices, in which the person expresses the thought of the group instinctively and automatically, and emphasizes the originality through the unity of expression and the unity of form. This type of art is considered one of the oldest inherited and sustainable arts, generation after generation. This type of art derives its artistic values from the customs, traditions and myths that emanate from the spirit of the group. This art is characterized by much complexity of meaning and its doctrinal streak.” (Munro, 1963).

Drawing of animal motifs in the symbolic arts and the role of the myth had its impact on the cultures of the primitive peoples in the pre-Islamic period (Collon, 1995; Tubb, 1998). It was moving away from imitation or approaching it according to the different circumstances and influencing factors, but it did not target the literal simulation that appeared evident in Greek and Roman art. However, primitive artists have found here the main difference in the social purpose of art. As we can see when the ancient civilizations arose, they were similar to other civilizations that worked on deriving their symbols from artistic features that had the characteristics and characteristics of other civilizations, and with the formation of the features of the artistic personality, this worked on its influence and overlap with other civilizations. And the fairy tale was very well received because it was consistent in its formation in being far from nature and with the abstraction that we know in the primitive arts, that the artists when they took these animal and fairy motifs, added to their symbolic meanings abstract

and symbolic decorative drawings. Depiction of fabulous animals became one of the features of the decorative arts in ancient civilizations such as the Egyptian, Iraqi, Greek, Parthian and Coptic civilizations. However, Sasanian art also played a major role in the transfer of these elements to many other arts, when the country of Iran was defined as an Islamic country and its ancient culture mixed with some other countries (Al Dein, 2022).

The artists were mainly directed by an unbridled desire to use animal symbols, either as decorative units or as individual animal forms, as these symbols were rarely intended for themselves, but most of the time they took various geometric subjects for individual, facing, or interdependent symbolic animal forms. There is no doubt that one of the most important motives underlying animal drawing in ancient and even Islamic arts is the hatred of emptiness and the desire to cover surfaces and spaces with decorations. With the mixing and overlapping of cultures, the artist excelled in transforming the symbolic shape of animals, so that they took the form of composite, mythical animal forms, as a result of his influence on the arts of the Far East, which is the tributary through which the Muslim artist learned about types of decorations, including animal decoration. Within this system, we find the emergence of two types of symbolic animals: a) drawings whose decorative elements are based on some familiar animals, b) and other drawings that took the forms of mythical and unfamiliar animals. Examples of these motifs, which were popularized in symbolic and mythological drawings, were the drawing of a horse with a human face, just as the Muslim artist drew small birds with a human face, snakes, snakes, animals, and winged birds (Brend, 1991).

This research intends to link the semantic meanings of animal symbols, which spread in their appearance in various ancient civilizations. Such semantic meanings are used to reveal the metaphors for the meanings of those imaginary and mythical forms. These were embodied in many of the works and drawings of artists in many places, whether in the field of architecture, such as the horizontal or vertical stripes of pillars and entrances to palaces, shrines and tombs or in ornamental inscriptions and ornamental inscriptions in traditional and heritage costumes (Hammouda, 1990) The artist often used symbolic drawings in places of worship, religious architecture, religious places, or in special places in the gates of palaces.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Decorative Animal Drawings and Their Implications

A symbol is the implicit and mutated expression of an intangible idea, and it is usually formed by merging between conscience (what the artist contains ideas and beliefs) and images of tangible material things (the forms of symbols) and their implicit meanings (the symbol for him). The value of the symbol appears in the emotional, social, cultural and aesthetic meanings it contains.

Al-Subaihawi confirms the value of the symbol in his study. He indicated the

promotion of aesthetic values in the symbolic image. As well, he clarified the relationship between the symbol and motifs and between beliefs and thought in terms of the sustainability of the symbol and its transformation in other forms or its rejection and the creation of other symbols of a religious and societal nature. Through his studies, he sought to find a definition of human art based on symbolic concepts. Moreover, the symbol is the tool of art that drives the forces of creativity and the manifestation of beauty (Hinnells, 2005).

Emphasizing depictions of animals, and exaggerating their forms, or getting out from the ordinary, summarizes the goal of shaping the symbolic patterns, in which the artist resorted, to creating animal compositions merged into one body. As if, for example, installing an animal head on a human body or vice versa or creating fierce animal bodies with a bird's head or winged animals. All of these symbols carried philosophical dimensions and purely religious thought. We find most of the drawings discovered in the nineteenth century in the Saharan Atlas region, which extends over the desert strip of the Maghreb countries, where animals were represented in some scenes with a strong dynamic movement to highlight the vital energy, whether in the forms of free animals or those static, but in different positions. Most likely, the artist's goal here was not to embody the abstract language of beauty as much as he sought to load these animal symbols with all symbolic and ideological connotations. The idea of hunting, in which a person practices all hunting rituals, was usually the first idea in which the artist deliberately created many semantic symbols. In many hunting scenes, the artist deliberately fabricated different stories that create a dynamic of dialogue in the connection between the prey and the hunter, or the human struggle with animals. From here, he resorted to exaggerating the forms of animals to invoke the enemy's strength and the unity of the struggle, or sometimes he used to photograph hunting tools after each battle in which he overcame the enemy. Fierce animals are an affirmation of strength and victory (Searight-Martinet & Soleilhavoup, 2014). Religious connotations were embodied in the hunting scenes, in which the human being was represented naked, emphasizing the fact that man is stripped of material and his connection to the land in a constant struggle, and the belief in approaching nature in stripping away material or everything related to the outside world. The belief in the struggle for survival between humans and animals has acquired a symbolic nature, and the world that surrounds them represents the arena of conflict and serves as the factor in which they participate, which is in a state of permanent and continuous change.

With regard to the dragon symbol, we find that dragon drawings were embodied abundantly in the arts extending from the Middle East and East Asia and its civilizations such as China, Iran, Turkey and Iraq, which constituted the true origin of its development and spread. It appeared abundantly in the margins of columns, voids in bricks, wall spaces, or pieces of ceramics and marble. Samar's study indicated that the emergence of the movement of evolution and transformation of the forms of symbolic animals coincided with the emergence of civili-

zations. The dragon symbol is considered one of the mythical symbols, which included the meanings of the king in the civilizations of China, and was transmitted to the rest of the civilizations through the mixing of civilizations through trade routes, which played a prominent role in the spread of these mythical symbols and their synchronization in many civilizations (Samar, 2013).

The use of symbols usually took the form of artistic formation, which often took either animal patterns or the transformation of these animal patterns into other units with geometric or plant compositions through changing transformations of the forms of symbols and letters, especially when starting to learn the types of calligraphy. And in which man began to accept the symbol as a means of communication, merging, and reference, the content of all implicit expressions as expressive messages, which took the form of letters, symbols, or signs, whether Nabataean signs, cuneiform, or even hieroglyphs. In the analysis of the parts of consistency in the written line, we find that the symbol is considered one of the most important components of the written texts, which arose from the collection of these symbols and the compilation of drawn elements. The art of writing and drawing has been considered essential parts of the rules of drawing since ancient times (Gardner et al. 1974). With regard to the identity of the animal symbols that were found in the decorative units; we find the most accurate definition of the animal ornament lies in the multiplicity of types of animal symbols, their uses and the most widespread places for them, the disclosure of the basic goals of creating animal decorations. The most important goal is to know the reasons behind the demand for this type of animal motifs. Kirch (1980) also proved in his study that the prevalence and use of animal symbolic motifs was less than that of geometric and plant motifs. However, its presence was more widespread in plaster, wood, copper and other works. Among the decorative symbols, the motifs emphasized in manuscripts or written texts appeared in the form of mosaics and murals. The pattern of animal symbolic motifs usually came in the form of sparrows or imaginary creatures of a fictional, imaginary nature, which were divided into two patterns, either domestic or superstitious. Most of these patterns of symbolic motifs spread in Iran, India and Turkey (Barakat, 1993).

2.2. Varieties of Mythical Or Animal Motifs and Their Significance

Among the mythical animals that were found in many decorative drawings are the animals that appeared in the form of compound shapes. These animals were most widespread in the Ayyubid era. The history of the emergence of these animals usually reveals what they are, their origin, and the mutations or developments that occurred to them, and among these composite animals are forms of birds such as phoenixes, or birds with human heads, or forms of punishment birds. Among the forms of animals are deer, lions, and snakes, which are usually mounted on animal heads or humane. The change in the forms of compound animals was summarized by the occurrence of environmental, geographical and cultural ideological effects on the mind and beliefs of man, and the places of

their spread were linked to the changes introduced in their forms (Afzaltousi & Jalalianfard, 2015). Indications of the association of symbolic and mythical animals were classified in a study according to their types into three categories (animal, plant, and human). The study focused on pivoting these animal symbols to abstract decorative forms, and what increased their popularity is the tone of the Islamic character by the Muslim artist in the Islamic eras. The results of his study highlighted the deep relationship between the connotations of animal and human symbols, religious beliefs, the artist's view, his impression of emptiness, and the perception of animal positions according to negative and positive space relationships. This was proven by the interest in depicting symbols within the scriptural texts, manuscripts and decorations, through which the Muslim artist moved away from the free simulation of decorative units, especially those found in the facades and corridors of mosques, and this is an affirmation of the values and rulings of the Islamic religion. The appearance of this style of drawings was also confirmed in another study (Wagoner, 2009), which focused extensively on the employment of animal shapes in the art pieces attributed to Andalusia. Animal shapes were allocated in this type of symbol to show aspects of social, religious and artistic life in Andalusia, through the diversification of animal symbols working on pottery vessels and ceramic pieces in particular. The results of their study concluded that the dominance of animal shapes on Andalusian Islamic ceramics in the productions of Andalusian ceramics and the use of artistic styles and forms of a special nature.

In the study (Svoboda & Frouz, 2007), which focused on the classification and depiction of living animal decorations and the work of stereoscopic statues, which express the duality of shape and the mixing and composition of elements to give the illusion of mythical and mythical shapes. With the spread of the emergence of animal symbols and fairy-tale drawings, we find that Turkey, Iran and India are among the most incubating countries for this type of art, in addition to the association of the popularity of these symbolic drawings with the civilization of each country. We see animal drawings on Persian art products or those that appeared on Egyptian products in the Fatimid period. The results of this study led to the trend towards decoration or stuffing it with living organisms devoid of live photography or accurate simulation. The nature and concept of those symbols and decorative formulations were linked to their places of existence, for example, the association of decorations with the corridors and furniture of mosques, the forms of the Qur'an, and the abstention from drawings of animals and living creatures in those places. The genius of the Muslim artist in that era excelled in structuring architecture and designing manuscripts.

2.3. Objectives of Creating Animal and Fairy Motifs

In a study conducted by (Abeddoust, 2021) on the exploration of the nature and objectives of animal and fairy decorations in the Pharaonic era and the acquisition of symbolic and religious meanings. This study sought to clarify the meanings of animal motifs in the Pharaonic civilization and to employ the vocabulary

of animal motifs produced by artists in the Pharaonic era as works of art such as designing popular or masquerade costumes. One of the most important results of this study is the in-depth study of the elements of animal motifs in relation to the products of the pharaonic artist and their appearance in abundance among the designs borrowed from the symbolic animal motifs of the Pharaonic era in general. Among those symbols, which were often repeated in the drawings and works of artists in that era, such as the statues of the rabbit or the symbol of the cow and others such as the ram, deer, wolf and giraffe as the most important animal symbols that were very popular in that era.

In a study presented by (Aldiabat & Navenec, 2011) on animal ornamentation, the importance of his study was embodied in clarifying the uses and goals of crafting animal and mythical ornaments, which resulted in many changes and summarizing all those meanings in decorative and calligraphic inscriptions, mosaics works and wall drawings in the fields of architecture or in literary texts. The study focused on the type of materials most commonly used and their uses such as motifs and symbols such as motifs carved on plaster, wood, copper, textiles, crystal and ceramics. Emphasis on drawings of birds, such as sparrows, and exaggeration in giving the character of a mythical and imaginary symbol. The researcher has also dealt with the abbreviation of these symbols in the study of the religious dimension and its impact on the spread or transformation of these symbols and their reduction in other symbols such as the transformation of animal symbols and their simulations and pet drawings to the form of symbolic and mythical animals.

In addition to the study (Blair & Bloom, 2003), which focused on the study of animal motifs in Mamluk ceramics, animal motifs appeared in the forms of snakes, deer, peacocks, lion symbols, the symbol of the fish and the rabbit, which were associated in their forms with the Islamic faith and ancient religious beliefs. The study aimed to achieve a development in the meanings and forms of animal motifs and to preserve the content of their meanings while preserving the ancient traditions. This is evidence that the development and treatment of animal graphic designs enhanced the artist's skill, in which artists stand out at their levels in terms of accuracy and skill in depicting animal shapes, portraying them, and decorating patterns in drawing nature's vocabulary and elements such as birds and animals, and then moving on to imitating and simulating nature.

2.4. Expressive Meanings of Ancient Symbols

The definition of the expressive meaning is to reveal the nature of the symbol and the language used to express the origin of the symbols. This has occurred by studying and analyzing the parts of shapes, colors, proportions and sizes of those symbols, the relationship of form with meaning, as well as the relationship of shadow and light in expressing the essential meanings of the symbolic elements. These expressions usually take different expressive forms in which the artist drops all his beliefs and ideas (Viladesau, 1999).

Culture is reflected in the expressive meaning of the symbols used, and

through them, the individual's relationship with society can be understood. In general, the expression of the origin of cultural beliefs and the philosophy that these works carry, and those symbolic elements represent the real human element that lies at the heart of the work. When striving to reveal the expressions and meanings of these symbols, we find that researchers often focus on the emotional connotations through direct intuitive association (Gombrich, 1965).

Tabbaa (2011) provided a special clarification with regard to the meanings of symbolic expressions in that these symbolic forms are mainly based on natural forms and are transformed into geometric shapes. The life embodied in the artwork strongly expresses the primitive belief upon which the artist relied and in which he resorted to transforming the natural form and his preference for conveying his ideas with reference and symbol rather than direct declaration, and that became his language to mainly express the goals of society. The artist sought, through the connotations of meanings in the forms of animals, to make visible everything that he believes in and is invisible, through an effort to realize the forces of nature around him and to protect himself from the invisible unseen forces. From here, we find that the powers of expression and the connotations of symbols are what distinguish the work and make the symbol perpetuity and are associated in their meanings with the civilizations of other peoples when seeking to link the expressive form and content (Shaw, 2019).

3. Research Problem

- The research problem centered on the lack of previous research in their results from solutions provided in this field in particular. For this, we find some studies focused on reviewing the idea of research and elaborated on the historical narrative, while other studies intensified their focus on the analytical side and were unable to link the basis of the problem and the descriptive analytical part of the research. This research is complementary to all these gaps and confirms the artistic value in animal and mythical symbols and the transformations of symbolic forms through ancient civilizations, the development of these symbols according to the changes of thought and belief of the productive artist. The research included parts that are not addressed in similar research, which is the inclusion of the features and characteristics of those symbols through shape changes and their association with the expressive content, and the distinction of these symbolic forms over works of abstraction and abstract installation (Thagard, 2014).
- The applied side was derived through activities, exercises, and works of art presented by the work of students in courses in the field of arts, such as applications of the foundations of design, the course of the aesthetics of Arabic calligraphy, and contemporary arts. Many of the artistic activities in these mentioned courses contributed to revealing previous research gaps and the dilemma of lack of sufficient awareness in analyzing the mythical animal symbols circulated through the ages and consumed in many artistic products.

It also played a prominent role in raising the levels of design skills among students of art education and awareness about the origin of these symbols and their philosophies. All of these contributions radically affected the use of accurate analytical language and considered it the real indicator that helped uncover the roots of this phenomenon. Thus, it paved the way for revealing the most important training problems that the student faces in the activities of his classroom activities for many of the previously mentioned and related courses. This research contributes to raising the problems of linking the flow of human thought and the environmental elements surrounding it. The research problem was identified in revealing the most important indicators of deficiencies in the deductive analysis, which strives to explain the connotations and meanings of mythical animal symbols and shape developments according to religious beliefs and societal legacies. For this, we find the most important determinants of the research problem lie in presenting a clear concept about the types and expressive connotations of mythical symbols and knowing their environmental and spatial connection to the deepening of meaning (Ahmed, 2008).

- The research problem is summarized in the following questions: 1. Is the formal composition of the mythical symbols alone sufficient to derive the meanings and symbols of these figures? 2. To what extent are expressive connotations, their meanings, and environmental and societal influences related to the forms of mythical symbols?

4. Research Hypotheses

1- Assuming a relationship between the forms of symbols and their expressive connotations through the statistically significant differences between the results of the control and experimental groups.

2- Assuming a relationship between environmental genesis and the formulation of imaginary symbolic forms through the clear differences between the results of the two experimental and control groups.

3- Assuming a relationship between the perceptual knowledge of the emergence of imaginary and mythical symbols and the formulation of shapes through the differences resulting from the control and experimental groups.

5. Research Objectives

The research aims to achieve the following:

- Demonstrating the cultural background of the mythical and imaginary symbols of animal shapes and their interpretation and semantic meanings
- Highlighting the relationship between the forms of symbols and their expressive connotations and confirming the existence of the relationship between them
- Clarifying the relationship between the effects of the environment and religious and cultural beliefs on the formulation of fictional and mythical animal

symbols

- Refine students' skills in creating mythical symbolic compositions based on the origin, and philosophy of these symbols.

6. The Importance of Research

The importance of the research lies in the real value that it can add to many of the studies presented in this field, in clarifying the nature of symbols, the historical or cultural origins of imaginary and mythical symbols, and the association of meaning with form. From this point of view, the following points can be considered as the most important strengths of the research, which distinguishes it from similar research presented.

In general, the importance of the current research appears in the following points:

1. Provide a clear definition of animal and mythical motifs and the easy-to-read objectives of their formulation.
2. The research seeks to reveal the philosophical and mysterious side of symbolic and mythical animal motifs in different civilizations.
3. Creating a link between the expressive meanings of the mythical and mythical symbols with the formal composition of those symbols.
4. The research is interested in creating a link between environmental and cultural influences and the formal formulation of mythical or mythical animal symbols.
5. Emphasizing the role of the symbol in consolidating the cultural heritage and deepening the religious belief.
6. Highlighting the aesthetic value and deepening the aesthetic and ideological origins in the symbolic use of mythical animal forms.

7. Research Borders

The research will be defined within its theoretical framework and the analytical statistical framework as follows:

Theoretical analysis is based on a classification of some mythical symbols, or those that take a mythical form. Such analyses are derived from the structures of societal customs and traditions or religious thought and belief, or those derived from regional and environmental influences, so that the link is made between the expressive connotations of these animal symbols and the apparent formation formula; In addition to the study of the ability to change shapes or permanence. In this context, the following can be considered:

- 1) Addressing the expressive connotations that are related to the symbolic language of the mythical or imaginary animal forms of ancient civilizations and their impact on the outputs of modern art.
- 2) Creating art experiments within the classroom activities for art students of the Department of Art Education, Qatar University, and choosing random samples in terms of gender, age groups, and educational stages.

3) Creating different artistic formulas in each experiment to which the selected groups are subjected, so that the most appropriate one is chosen.

Statistical analysis based on creating participant groups between experimental and control groups with the presence of variables that affect the results of the experimental group and give the possibilities of proving or not proving the research hypotheses and examining the control groups from which the variables of the experimental groups can be derived. In which the following is taken into account:

- 1) Determining the number and type of groups subject to technical experiments.
- 2) Each group is prepared with the time and tools they need to start production in the digital experiment sequence.
- 3) That the members of the selected category in the experiment possess distinguished artistic and creative ethics.

8. Research Methodology

The research is based on the experimental and the descriptive approach. This research follows the descriptive analysis method for all semantic symbols as selected models with connotations and meanings that were strongly associated with the forms of symbols in many of the selected models as feedback to the two control groups and the experimental group to adjust the results and verify the credibility of the hypotheses. In this regard, the research included the theoretical framework based on analyzing a group of selected models and observing the motives and interpretations of the selected groups and the equivalent of the experiments carried out by the categories of the experimental groups. The experimental group is twenty students, and then the results are reset and their credibility is verified by measuring the results on the motives of the selected groups from the control group, which also numbered twenty students. Theoretical framework analysis is based on four applied practical experiments in which students are provided in each experiment with feedback through various sources, in which students are prepared with sufficient information about the types of symbols and myths associated with their meanings, and then implement their artistic projects that reflect their interaction and emotions on the topic of the experiment. They are going to participate in it.

In the analytical statistical framework, the results were analyzed using the SPSS program to calculate the average ranks and level of significance, to also calculate the percentage of performance improvement for the experimental and control groups. In this context, it is possible to achieve accuracy in the expected results and measure the extent to which research hypotheses are achieved by entering statistical data and the number of repetitions of the experiment from each individual participating in it.

8.1. Research Tools

The research tends to equip the following tools:

- 1- Student interaction and participation in approved educational platforms

(QU-E-learning), which the researcher uses as means of linking performance to content and measuring interaction.

2- Formulating experiments as a class activity but limited only by the number of individuals participating in each experiment.

3- Benefit from most of the tools available on the educational platform that achieve quality in collecting data from the participating samples.

4- Subjecting the samples to a simple pre-test to verify the availability of the basic criterion for participation, which is the possession of creativity.

8.2. Basic Constants in Research Experiments

The samples are subject to some criteria to control the control of the experiments concerned with the research, including the determination of the following constants:

1. The samples should be divided into two main groups: the control group and the experimental group.

2. Each group has a number of participants, not less than twenty students.

3. Participants are not bound by differences in gender, age, or specializations in the field of art.

4. Availability of creative and technical capabilities to participate in research experiments.

5. The samples are bound by the controls of time and place, provided that a certain amount of the capabilities of the educational platform is utilized from the available means, and confirmation of interaction and participation when reading the instructions and taking the necessary information to start the experiment.

8.3. Research Experiments

Experiment Samples, Time, and Place

Ten students were allocated—without specifying gender—to carry out each of the four research experiments as an experimental group and a control group, and then, start making integrated designs that bear signs and symbols of those well-studied symbolic expressions. In order to motivate the students participating in the formation of the mental perception of symbolic expressions, a certain time is allocated to meet each participating student, who discussed about the main axes that have been studied in depth at the start of the experiment. So then, give the student four hours as time to design the vocabulary of semantics and present the results at the end of the interview time or extend it when needed. The meeting place for discussion and mental stimulation is linked to e-learning platform and virtual interaction with the use of external tools such as applications specialized in 3D design.

8.4. The Main Scopes of the Research Experiments

8.4.1. The First Scope

Stimulation sessions to draw inspiration from the connotations and meanings associated with symbolic forms and the study of artistic and aesthetic values in

the arts of ancient inherited civilizations.

8.4.2. The Second Scope

Transforming the symbols and expressive connotations of works of art as an art project integrated into the teaching plan for any of the selected courses.

8.4.3. The Third Scope

Taking advantage of mutual discussion and interaction in motivational sessions to translate all these ideas and issues related to designs of symbolic animal shapes to produce innovative designs.

8.5. First, the Theoretical Framework

8.5.1. Analysis and Discussion

By going deeper into the theoretical studies that we have reached, a completed theoretical analysis will be presented on the four experiments that were adopted in the analysis part.

8.5.2. Results of the First Experiment

The artwork, in “**Figure 1**”, represents an abstract design of the pigeon bird symbol, one of the most important symbols used in ancient times to express the connections of the universe. In the past, the symbol of the pigeon bird was associated with optimism and good tidings after man fought battles with the forces of nature and changes in natural phenomena. By seeing the pigeon bird, man rejoiced at the arrival of good in the form of cosmic messages, and from this standpoint, man often considered it one of the important symbols for sending and receiving messages between merchants or between kings. The shapes of birds were generally associated with symbols representing the spirit with wings and a metaphor for the spiritual world, which is the opposite of the material world. The dove symbol has been associated in many dogmatic religions with the sacred spirit. Daniel pointed out in this regard, “First, the dove in most of its use symbolizes the presence of the Holy Spirit, as it is found in icons and images of the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary and pictures of the baptism of the Lord Christ. Secondly, the dove symbolizes the virtues of believers, such as the gifts of the Holy Spirit, especially peace, meekness, and purity.” (Smith, 1990) In this regard, the term dove has often been associated with the spirit and lives of saints as explained by George Ferguson in his saying, “Saint Benedict saw the spirit of his deceased sister ascending to heaven in the form of a white dove” (Steffler, 1964).

In contrast to the artwork produced in a symbolic way, there was a group of designs in “**Figure 2**” for the same symbol, but the design was based on imagination in deviating from the ordinary. At the present time, the pigeon bird is the clearest expression of the symbol of peace and tranquility, and the association of this symbol with the light and human spirit reflected in the artwork in its symbolic form and related to the Bedouin environment. Weft and colored cotton threads. The hand-woven fabric inspired its colors in shades of red, black and white (Gombrich, 1965).



Figure 1. Dove bird in decorative tapestry.



Figure 2. A mythical figure of a phoenix and a seagull.

8.5.3. The Results of the Second Experiment

The result of the second experiment resulted in a distinguished achievement by the students participating in the completion of this project. The artwork in “**Figure 3**” Consists of two pieces. The upper part of the work contains the symbol of a laurel leaf, which is woven with different textures, including Al-Mabrad and the plain technique. As for the lower part of the work, it is woven in a hexagonal shape that represents the beehive, it is woven in a plain weave texture, and the orange color is used in it. A number of hexagonal shapes, woven using the crochet technique, were fixed to express beehives. A number of bees were also formed using crochet, they were placed on different areas of the work, and one of them was placed on the tree branch that connects the two works to give a kind of visual balance to the artwork. Designs “**Figure 4**” were presented that are similar in meaning, but take the characteristic of myth and legend to be parallel to the first design. As for the symbolic and expressive connotations behind the shape of the laurel leaf in “**Figure 3**”, its character was derived from the idea of immortality and perpetuity of life, as the laurel plant is considered one of the plants that are distinguished by every greenness and do not wither. This is why artists often expressed it as a symbol of immortality and the return to life through the forms of wreaths or crowns of saints or The martyrs or the deceased, who believe through this symbol that they are about to cross into another life that is very similar to the previous life that they lived. (Haywood, 2013) Its symbolism was also associated with the idea of purity, and this belief was



Figure 3. Bay leaf-shaped bird in tapestry.



Figure 4. Mythical and symbolic forms of two owls and a hawk of prey.

confirmed by George Ferguston, “that the laurel plant was associated with the idea of purity, and that the idea was taken from pagan traditions because the laurel was used for virgins who maintained chastity and faith” (Nasr, 2006). It is often expressed through this symbol of victory, and pure eternal life, that the artist crowns the warriors after the end of their battles. These symbols such as if they were victorious and defeated by death (Kienzle, 1969).

8.5.4. The Results of the Third Experiment

In the third experiment “**Figure 5**”, the results revealed a prominent symbol associated with many meanings with rich connotations in meaning. The weave design pattern is inspired by the outer skin of a wild ass and can be applied to a lamb. The artwork was woven by the team participating in the experiment, using the plain weave texture extending from the weft, and using cotton threads with black and white overlaps and black and white colors that have a strong indication and confirmation of the symbol of purification from sin and victory, or it can carry the meaning of holiness. The mixing of white with black represents sin and purification, and then the holiness that appears after the stage of purification. The mixture of black and white also has a strong indication of the desire for redemption and purification. Elizabeth Pullman says, “The symbol of redemption and the sacrifice made for the sins of the world because it is the slain lamb. When the wounded horse is drawn, it is a symbol of purification and raising the banner of victory” (Olderr, 2012). In some cases, the head is surrounded by a

halo (as one of the sacred symbols) as an indication that it is not only a sacrifice, but also associated with the idea of purification and salvation from sin.

Within the framework of the ancient belief, we find that all types of mules in “**Figure 6**” have a reference to the symbol of fertility, as it symbolized Amun in the form of a ram/or a horse distinguished from other sacred horses. Here, Manfred Lorker points out, “The description of mules/horses as Mendes, as (Ba), that is, the spirit of the god Osiris. It was considered at the same time (the life of Ra, Shu, and Jub), and in which he was an embodiment of the cosmic quadruple, and from here his image was the image of a four-headed deity on one’s neck)” (Lorker, 2000).

8.5.5. Results of the Fourth Experiment

The work team participating in this experiment completed an artwork in which there is a clear statement of symbols expressing the energy of giving. The artwork consists of three frames in hexagonal shapes consisting of beehives. Within them are woven geometric designs woven in Al-Mabrad and plain weave textures, using cotton threads, and in postmodern urban colors. A model of a number of bees, which was carved using wood, acrylic strips and metal wires,



Figure 5. The shape of a wild zebra animal with a decorative form expressive of contrasting surfaces.



Figure 6. An expressive and symbolic animal figure of a wild deer and a lamb in a way that releases the artist's symbolic inventory.

was installed. Bees are flying insects that are distinguished from others by innovation, activity and hard work. All of these meanings were associated in the past with the symbol of the bee itself, which was considered in many cultures based on ancient civilizations such as the civilization of China, as they considered it a symbol of happiness, virtue and intelligence (Samar & Jabbar, 2017). What distinguishes bees as symbols is that they are high-flying insects that feed on flowers and fragrant plants such as citrus, frankincense, and sweet-smelling plants. The symbol of the bee is similar to it in many ancient civilizations, with its semantic meanings that are not devoid of the meaning of faith, perseverance, eternity, and rebirth after death, and renewal (Samar, 2013).

The symbol of the bee in many cultures is one of the sublime symbols that reflect the reality of life, but it carries symbols that reflect an image beyond reality, in which many ideas and the world of symbols are stored. Through these symbols, it is possible to deepen and expand the third dimension and deepen artistic concepts as well. Transforming ideas and beliefs into symbolic forms is an inevitable result of mental cultural juices, extracting these ideas and depicting them in an appropriate manner, in which visible signs of something invisible appear through which phenomena or ideas and sometimes attributes of some personalities can be expressed (Samar, 2011). Abd al-Rahman al-Nashar explained in an expression about the aesthetics of the following symbol, "The symbol includes a meaning associated with sensations and conscience, provided that the meaning is realized in a form or form to become an independent reality extracted from the idea, reality, or the unknown, in a concentrated summary of ideas." (Allen & Armitage, 2017) The models in "Figure 8" express the symbolism of the figure and deepen the meaning of the myth with its connotations, which express the mythical beings, and which reflected the mental stock of the artist.

8.6. Statistical Analysis of Research Results and Discussion

In this part of the research, the researcher reviews the results derived statistically from the activities of the groups participating in the research experiments and the interviews with the previously selected research groups. In the other part of the analytical description, the results will be discussed after linking them to some of the results achieved in previous studies and validating the hypotheses to support the theoretical framework of the study. Among the statistical programs, which have been used in statistical analysis, specialized in literary and social studies and the personal computer, are the following set of programs:

Statistical Package of Social Sciences and Personal Computer (SPSS & PC)

At this stage, a questionnaire was drafted in addition to the arbitrators' evaluation form for the items of the previous form, which aims to approve the items and through which the artworks falling under each of the research experiments are judged. The evaluation process for the last questionnaire in which the arbitrators review the items of the questionnaire, correct, and test their suitability with the outputs of the research experiments. To certify the items of the questionnaire,



Figure 7. A histological composition of beehive components and different textured surfaces.



Figure 8. Mythical, fairy-tale shapes that possess the peculiarity and symbolism of shapes mutated from the idea of bees, but updates to formulas that are out of the ordinary.

survey samples were taken from the two groups (control and experimental), determining the number of arbitrators, $n =$ four arbitrators, and the category of the survey sample amounted to 20 students selected from the two groups, and then calculating the average and standard deviation. When conducting the ocular smear, two types of test (Mann-Whitney Test) were used to calculate the significant differences between the two groups and to calculate the percentage of measuring the performance improvement index and the extent of response to the formulated items.

In the previous table, (see **Table 1**), an explanation of the degree percentages of the four arbitrators' responses to the items of the questionnaire. This to evaluate the artworks for the two categories of research samples (the control and experimental groups) in the research experiments, and calculating the arithmetic

Table 1. Shows the difference in the response rates of the two groups (control and experimental), and the evaluation of the four arbitrators for the items of the questionnaire evaluating the artworks of the selected samples, calculating the mean and the standard deviation.

Category of performance improvement	Percentages of performance improvement	Semantic level	(Z) value Mannen Whitney	Rank mean	Arithmetic mean	Group
Experimental	24.75%	0.0007	2.99	12.42	7.3	Control
				28.17	9.22	Experimental

mean and standard deviation to determine the percentage of performance improvement.

To clarify the statistical values of the differences between the control and experimental groups, as well to calculate the performance improvement index between the two groups according to the items of the questionnaire, they will be evaluated as follows:

It is clear from the previous table (see **Table 2**) that there are clear differences between the average sum of the scores of the control and experimental groups in the value of the arithmetic mean, the mean of the ranks, the Z-value (Mann Whitney), and the semantic level (0.0007). With regard to the first item of the evaluation form (student's comprehension of the vocabulary of symbols and their meanings when implementing and modifying the image the mentality of innovative design formulas) and the percentages of deviation in the improvement of performance shows the high percentage in the experimental group.

It is clear from the previous table (see **Table 3**) that there are statistical differences between the sum of the scores of the control and experimental groups in the value of the arithmetic mean, the mean of the ranks, the appearance of the value in (Z - Mann Whitney), and the function at the semantic level (0.0007). With regard to the second item of the evaluation form (deepening in the interpretation of the meanings and indications of the elements symbolism and linking it to the meanings of culture and heritage and what it means of different symbolic meanings) and that all values achieved a significant increase in the scores of the experimental group.

It is clear from the previous table (see **Table 4**) that there are differences between the mean of the sum of the scores of the control and experimental groups through the following values, the arithmetic mean, the mean of the ranks, the value of (Z - Mann Whitney), and the function at the semantic level (0.0007). With regard to the third item (the extent of openness and the acquisition of intellectual stock about other cultures and the ability to employ symbols in innovative design modifications,) all values indicated a high percentage of performance improvement in the experimental group.

It is clear from the previous table (see **Table 5**) that there are differences between the sum of the scores of the control and experimental groups in the value of the arithmetic mean, the mean of the ranks, and the value of (Z - Mann Whitney), as a function at the level of significance (0.0007). For the fourth item

Table 2. Shows the statistical differences between the control and experimental groups to realize the difference in the proportions in the student's understanding of the elements and semantics of symbols in design formulations executed in an abstract symbolic way.

statistical differences	the sum of the scores		the arithmetic mean		the standard deviation	
	Control	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control	Experimental
The student's understanding of the vocabulary of symbols and their meanings when implementing and transforming the mental image of innovative design formulas.	530	328	7.5	7.815	3.171	1.-23
Deepening the interpretation of the meanings and connotations of the symbolic elements and linking them to the connotations of culture and heritage and the various symbolic connotations they mean.	581	802	6.342	7	3.542	-0.845
The extent of openness and acquisition of intellectual stock about other cultures and the ability to employ symbols in innovative design transformations.	528	680	6.311	7	3.223	1.-53
Enhancing the visual sense and the ability to abstract concepts into symbolic design formulations and link them sensory to cultural concepts.	523	276	6.275	8.711	3.221	-0.814
Diversifying symbols according to the diversity of concepts and the diversity of innovative design symbolic formulations.	555	476	6.432	7.641	3.341	-0.821
Linking the basics of design and visual formulations of symbolic concepts in the form of mythical animals and transforming them into symbolic design formulations.	510	828	6.543	8.811	3.201	0.656
Enhancing the aesthetic and artistic value in the creative symbolic design of mythical animals.	512	712	6.431	7.81	3.441	0.813
Repetition of the attempt twice at each trial for both groups.	520	790	6.525	7.811	3.222	0.834

Table 3. Shows the value of the differences between the degrees of the control and experimental groups in understanding the elements of the vocabulary of the ancient heritage, as well what it means of different symbolic connotations.

Category of performance improvement	Percentages of performance improvement	Semantic level	(Z) value Mannen Whitney	Rank mean	Arithmetic mean	Group
Experimental	20.50%	0.0007	5.43	12.644	5.5	Control
				25.64	6.221	Experimental

Table 4. Shows the value of the average differences between the control and experimental groups, the extent of openness, the acquisition of intellectual stock, and the use of symbols and expressions in the design formulas.

Category of performance improvement	Percentages of performance improvement	Semantic level	(Z) value Mannen Whitney	Rank mean	Arithmetic mean	Group
Experimental	18.25%	0.0007	3.22	13.11	7.619	Control
				25.77	8.144	Experimental

Table 5. Shows the value of the average differences between the scores of the control and experimental groups in enhancing the visual sense, abstracting concepts with symbolic design formulations, and linking them sensory with cultural concepts.

Category of performance improvement	Percentages of performance improvement	Semantic level	(Z) value Mannen Whitney	Rank mean	Arithmetic mean	Group
Experimental	15.75%	0.0007	3.57	11.7	7.581	Control
				26.5	8.46	Experimental

(enhancing the visual sense and the ability to abstract concepts into symbolic design formulations and link them sensory to concepts culture) in favor of the experimental group scores.

In the fifth item of the questionnaire (diversification of symbols according to the diversity of concepts and the diversity of innovative design symbolic formulations), it is clear from the results that there are statistical differences indicating the distinction of the performance of the experimental sample in terms of the level of performance improvement for each item of the evaluation form. This validates the research hypotheses: Most of the results of the evaluation items indicate an improvement in performance with the presence of statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the control group and the experimental group. It is the same as indicated by the skill level test in employing the concepts and semantics of the meanings of mythical symbols using symbolic connotations and visual language in the symbolic representation of the meanings of myths with a higher performance results in the experimental group in versus the other group. (**Table 6**)

In the sixth item of the questionnaire form, (linking the basics of design and visual formulations of symbolic concepts in the form of mythical animals and transforming them into symbolic design formulations), it is also clear through the results achieved. In which, there are indicative differences indicating the distinction of the performance of the experimental sample in terms of the level of performance improvement by clarifying the semantic and average level indicator Arithmetic. (**Table 7**)

In the seventh item of the questionnaire, (enhancing the aesthetic and artistic value in the creative symbolic design of mythical animals), it is clear in this item that there are significant differences indicating the performance of the experimental sample is also distinguished by a high improvement in the level of performance. It is indicated by the percentages also in the semantic level and the arithmetic mean. (**Table 8**)

In the eighth and final item of the questionnaire form, (repetition of the attempt twice at each experiment for both groups), when examining the accuracy of comprehension and performance capabilities, it is clear in this item that there are also clear indicative differences indicating the distinction of the performance of the experimental sample after repeating the experiment for the second time and a higher improvement Performance level. It is indicated by the ratios also in the indicative level and the arithmetic average for this item. (**Table 9**)

In the last (see **Table 10**), it was tested to classify the items of the question-

naire and to give a statistical ranking for each item based on the percentages and the order of performance improvement when implementing the experiments from both groups. For this reason, the second item was considered to be in the first order and the third item to be in the eighth order, with sequential arrangements between the first and last order.

8.7. Findings and Recommendations

In this part, the results of the research that were extracted and analyzed theoretically and statistically are discussed. The results provide evidence of the validity of the hypotheses in the existence of a close connection between the concepts and the mythical connotations of mythical animals and the abstract design formulations of those symbols. The study proved the extent to which hypotheses

Table 6. Shows the value of the differences between the degrees of the control and experimental groups in the extent of diversity in design formulations according to the diversity of concepts and forms of mythical symbols.

Category of performance improvement	Percentages of performance improvement	Semantic level	(Z) value Mannen Whitney	Rank mean	Arithmetic mean	Group
Experimental	14.50%	0.0007	4.47	12.42	6.3	Control
				27.57	8.322	Experimental

Table 7. Shows the value of the differences between the degrees of the control and experimental groups in linking the basics of design and visual formulations of symbolic concepts and their modifications to the forms of symbolic mythical animals.

Category of performance improvement	Percentages of performance improvement	Semantic level	(Z) value Mannen Whitney	Rank mean	Arithmetic mean	Group
Experimental	13.75%	0.0007	3.97	13.32	6.5	Control
				27.67	8.325	Experimental

Table 8. Shows the value of the differences between the degrees of the control and experimental groups in enhancing the aesthetic and artistic value in the symbolic and creative design of mythical animals.

Category of performance improvement	Percentages of performance improvement	Semantic level	(Z) value Mannen Whitney	Rank mean	Arithmetic mean	Group
Experimental	13.75%	0.0007	3.97	13.32	6.5	Control
				27.67	8.325	Experimental

Table 9. Shows the value of differences between the scores of the control and experimental groups in the repetition of the two-time attempt at each trial for both groups.

Category of performance improvement	Percentages of performance improvement	Semantic level	(Z) value Mannen Whitney	Rank mean	Arithmetic mean	Group
Experimental	11.25%	0.0007	3.97	2.34	6.5	Control
				21.64	8.211	Experimental

Table 10. Shows the evaluation percentages of the four arbitration members for the completed artworks of the control and experimental groups for each item of the questionnaire designated for evaluating the indicator of improvement in performance (symbolic designs), and the arrangement of each of the items according to percentages.

Improved performance		The items of the form
Percentages Ranking		
Third	18.25%	The student's understanding of the vocabulary of symbols and their meanings when implementing and transforming the mental image of innovative design formulas.
First	24.75%	Deepening the interpretation of the meanings and connotations of the symbolic elements and linking them to the connotations of culture and heritage and the various symbolic connotations they mean.
Eighth	11.25%	The extent of openness and acquisition of intellectual stock about other cultures and the ability to employ symbols in innovative design transformations.
Fifth	14.50%	Enhancing the visual sense and the ability to abstract concepts into symbolic design formulations and link them sensory to cultural concepts.
Sixth	13.75%	Diversifying symbols according to the diversity of concepts and the diversity of innovative design symbolic formulations.
Second	20.50%	Linking the basics of design and visual formulations of symbolic concepts in the form of mythical animals and transforming them into symbolic design formulations.
Fourth	15.75%	Enhancing the aesthetic and artistic value in the creative symbolic design of mythical animals.
Seventh	12.27%	Repetition of the attempt twice at each trial for both groups.

are interconnected and supported by statistical results and previous studies. It strengthened the theoretical framework in the study with its applied side. The results of the research reveal the achievement of the objectives of the study and verifying them through evidence and proofs, and then prove the validity of the formulated hypotheses. In this part, a set of recommendations are presented that would contribute to supporting mental abilities and innovative designs in the transformation of symbolic myths and their moral connotations.

9. Search Results

To link the theoretical and practical framework in which this research study was founded, and to achieve the goal of discovering the correlation and symmetry between cultural and religious concepts and connotations and their equivalent mythical animal symbols that were formulated in fine form following symbolic selections that were drawn mentally from historical and cultural stock. The achieved results indicate the existence of a balance between the two frameworks and the proposal to establish a new theoretical framework that deepens the possibility of investing the creative faculties of art students in general and contributing to enhancing their mental and creative abilities and visual sense in creating meaningful designs.

According to the aforementioned, the most important findings of the researchers are as follows:

1. Enhancing the faculty of imagination, deduction, and the faculty of creativity among art students to create innovative and new design formulas.

2. Creating modern and advanced artistic formulations to represent all kinds of religious, mythological and cultural concepts, enriching visual formulas developed from the formulas of ancient symbols.

3. Create a link between the concepts and expressive connotations of mythical symbols on different cultures and similar abstract symbolic designs.

4. Deepening the study of the real meanings of the mythical concepts of mythical animal forms and the innovative creation in designing the new animal shapes.

5. Combining originality with regard to traditional symbols of mythical animal shapes and new symbols in creating symbolic innovative designs.

6. The new visual formulas for symbols of mythical animal forms of previous civilizations support the development of the ability to extrapolate new artworks and symbolic designs.

Therefore, the researcher recommends the following:

1. Deepening the study of mythical symbols and their implications and drawing inspiration from new concepts and their inspiration in visual expression.

2. Drawing inspiration from ancient civilizational cultures, cultural and religious beliefs as one of the most important sources of inspiration for creativity in the artistic field.

3. Creativity in innovation to create a unique visual language and keep pace with the current era so that it becomes a dominant language for coding on ancient mythological concepts.

4. Intensify the study of symbols and their meanings and enhance the student's skills in creating innovative designs that are compatible with inherited societal concepts.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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