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SOME NOTES ON INTERACTION BETWEEN CULTURE AND DESIGN THROUGH MYTHOLOGY AND ITS' IMPACT ON DESIGNERS CREATIVITY

**Hamidreza
Nematzadeh**

University of Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, h.nematzade@hotmail.com

Reza Afhami

Alireza Ajdari

ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the role of mythical thought as an inspirational tool for designers, while the research line of this paper would differ somehow from objective and so-called scientific papers in the field of design. This paper is based on this assumption that concepts of culture and identity would not be directly discussable in the realm of experimental science and objective study, but they should be understood under the realm of humanities and cultural studies. Another basic assumption is that concepts such as mythology and the related structuralism would be beyond scientific considerations and somehow shapes and gives direction to the scientific oriented design thought, this would be somehow a propose-able framework for Post-modern design. Based on such, the interaction between culture and design, through mythical thought, would be studied. In the beginning a scope of concepts such as culture, complexity and other related ideas would be given, afterwards the concept of structuralism and mythical thought would be introduced. The goal of the study would be an investigation to show how these concepts can help designers to deal with Complexity and conceptualizing such a complexity, regarding the design concept. A report of a case study would be also introduced as the final part.

Keywords: Culture, Complexity, Mythology, Design

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper tries to investigate the role of mythical thought as a cultural concept to help designers generate more effective and creative Ideas. The idea behind this paper is related to the continental tradition in design research and criticism (if we could claim that such a tradition exists), which criticizes the so-called functional design and the modern or anti-ornament view on design praxis. The main argumentation had been theorized by many, from Andrea Branzi (2008) to Anthony Dune(1999). The main problem is not with the functional or modern view, but the problem is about the complexity of human life and the so-called positivist reaction to such a complexity which tries to ignore, deny or omit such a complexity. That is why we try to seek methods which could help designers not only see such a complexity, but also deal with the real cultural problems and generate better ideas. The manifestation behind this paper is that scientific design and experimental would be appreciated, but the designer-researcher should also be open to the confronting complexity which has not been formulated yet. Such a complexity had been mentioned before under the term of emotion. We think the concept of culture would be more helpful for designers, since it is not just emotion, but also how those emotions would be trained and shaped. Regarding all the mentioned above, the concept of culture, design theory and mythology would be introduced and based on them, the possible

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interaction between culture and design through structuralism and mythology would be discussed. Finally a report of a related study would be also introduced.

2. Concept of Culture

Culture-rich designs generate emotional links, promote cultural diversity, and exhibit local features. Culture is embodied by products to communicate values, concepts, and vocabularies of different countries. The cultural creative idea industry takes the spiritual value of culture as the core to build upon its value (Chang, 2012). The term culture is a self-organized foundation which is a great revelation and specific phenomenon of human society. Every culture has embedded in itself a dual investment including cognitive and technical aspects, while there is also a mythical and devotional investment, which is like genetic heritage of a person. Cultural genetic heritage has its' own language as well, which would be transferred from one generation to another generation through reminding mechanism. This heritage is shaped first in the shape of memories of people (Oral Culture), afterwards it would enter different domains. In fact Culture is a social equivalent of this procedure, which carries the social complexity together with this procedure (Morin, 2005,). Culture is in reality the origin of creativity and recreation of complexity existing in societies as well. Culture would shape people and gives them a sort of cohesion. Personal Complexity of people is also related to culture (Razzaghi, 2005).

In contemporary design trend, beyond function, socio-cultural factors have been identified as key features in designing products by which design products are being evaluated (Adelabu, 2012). Indeed the term culture and local features play an important role in the design field, and "cross cultural design" will be a key design evaluation point in the future (Lin, R, 2007), considering as an innovation related to the consumer's perception. When socio-cultural factors are concerned, it is required to acknowledge that there is a close relation between aforementioned elements, social contexts and common knowledge and human consciousness which create identity, culture and emotion (Malinowski, 1954). In addition, in the global market - local design era, connections among local culture, global market and innovative products in design strategy have become increasingly close. For design strategy, cultural value-adding creates the core of product value. Design strategy is the motivation for pushing the development of creative industries forward. Obviously, we need a better understanding of cultural aspects in design strategy, and not only for the global market but also for local design. While cross-cultural factors become important issues for design strategy in the global economy, the intersection of design strategy and cultural features becomes a key issue making both local design and the global market worthy (Crilly, 2004).

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In order to extract specific design considerations originated from social contexts through a systematic and structured way, designers need a specific logic which has the same nature as social and humanitarian logic, which could also offer designers a novel knowledge from society. Among different social principles there is a structured rationality in which its function works the same as some theories of design considered as a specific though which has close relation to common knowledge and human consciousness that creates identity, culture and emotions called mythical thought (Afhami, 2012a). In spite of the fact, mythical narratives are the result of interaction between human and social contexts living in them, and considering that they narrate the true nature of human, an investigation of narratives and rituals for designers would help them reach human elements which would be connected to them based on their identity making vision (Afhami, 2012b).

In recent times, designers have been consciously exploring means and design methods to reach deep understanding of user's trends and their preferences and socio-cultural factors which can be internally and externally materialized in design products. Meanwhile the development of cross-cultural study in multidisciplinary design based research need a theoretical framework to discover new opportunities for innovative culture based design. Indeed, every theory and strategy, physical or social, is basically on ideology construct unit is opposed to science in the sense that science represents the realm of what is and ideology the realm of what ought to be (Nutini, 1971). So the main purpose of this study which is based on the results of previous papers is focused on applying a specific kind of multidisciplinary mythical theory featured by Strauss in design.

Based on the view point of Strauss, The general theme of all myths is transition from nature to culture, from raw and primitive to cooked and mature, which is narrated through mysteries and codes (Wiseman, 1997). In reality, The nature-culture opposition as an ethical-moral conceptual tool implies clear distinction between what is (nature) and what ought to be(culture). In fact the culture-nature opposition as a scientific-epistemological conceptual tool goes beyond the ontological domain asserts that in order to achieve true consensus regarding sensible experience (Nutini, 1971).

In terms of social-cultural factors, it needs to be mentioned that the procedure of understanding deep phenomena of humanity and social aspects, cannot follow principles which have less complexity in redefining the world, as it is. We need to confront human complexity not denying or reducing it (Morin, 2005). We also need to mention that truncated and one-dimensional vision, which is being used in understanding human phenomena, has reached tragic effects (Ibid). Complex

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view point is not only based on particles within whole, it even consider whole as a particle itself (Afhami, 2012a)

Based on aforementioned perspectives, this paper is conducted a field of study to represent a kind of design theory through utilizing Strauss mythical theory as the basic framework to empirically prove its capability to analyzing and extracting socio-cultural factors from deep roots of human beings known as human's perception. This paper also is intended to provide bases, ascertaining the empirical capability of mention theory into analyzing and extracting local and socio-cultural features to be used in design.

3. Interaction between Design theory and Culture

Design exists both as practice and as theoretical reflection. As a consequence, the questions repeatedly arise as to whether, and in what ways, the practice of design is dependent on, reflects on, and develops the notion of culture to generate a theory. The variety of theoretical forms and modes of reflection that designers engage in is itself a strong indicator that theory is essential to design practice in a number of ways. Recognizing this diversity and the related opportunities, the design process that repeatedly links practice and theory in new ways and represents persistent challenges for the designer (Erlhoff, 2008). In describing design process, two main viewpoints exist: theory and methodology of design. Each one of them has their own meaning and they are different from design process. A very important point which needs to be considered is that how design process proceeds and how it can be defined. Regarding Cross, in order to find out the difference in design solutions, we need to consider the difference between Design process (how design is) and methodology of Design (how design could be). Design, regarding its nature, needs a strong theory which generates order between main concepts in design while it also needs to differentiate between main concepts and second order concepts. Strong theoretical foundations would also improve productivity, while it would also generate wider viewpoints for designer in order to generate design solutions. The main issue of design theory is indeed about the beginning point, motivation of design process and Definition of principles of different styles. While the main issue of design methods are about the decision making process of designers and the way it can be improved in design process (Poelman, 2008).

Indeed, every theory, physical or social, is basically on ideology construct unit is opposed to science in the sense that science represents the realm of what a phenomenon is and ideology tries to represent the realm of what ought to be (Nutini, 1971). The term ideology is by no means a precise concept, and it is used in at least three different views. First it is virtually synonymous with ethical

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behavior or ethical norms, which are the transcendental distinction between what is and what ought to be constructing into distinction between epistemology and ethics. The second usage of the term ideology is largely a corollary of the first. The concept of ideology in this sense is concerned the changing a context, a socio-cultural system, or perhaps the entire structure of human society on the basis of a specific what ought to be constructed. Finally, the third use of the term ideology is characterized as scientific-epistemology which is underlain the what is-what ought to be distinction, but it is called scientific-epistemology since it is entirely upon verification, upon bridge between nature as individually perceived and nature as socially perceived (Nutini,1971).

Design is a phenomena that never happens in isolation but interdependent on both global and local histories, cultures and politics. In fact it is the means by which culture is written (Pido, 2001). In recent years, research on product design development methods had been aimed to integrate the insights of various knowledge fields in order to create synergy and attain better results in a faster way. In contemporary design approach Social science and Psychology have been included to enrich the process and methods in product development. Based on aforementioned view point, investigation and knowing the true origin of human's elements, social contexts and the way they act, needs to investigate the relation between them and the way mind works and how it can be affected. According to complex essence and multidimensionality of humans, we need to notice that knowing human thoughts need to enter the domain of complexity and considering it as well. In fact, the procedure of understanding deep phenomena of humanity and social aspects needs, cannot follow principles which have less complexity in redefining the world, as it is. We need to confront human complexity not denying or reducing it (Morin, 2005). We also need to mention that truncated and one-dimensional vision, which is being used in understanding human phenomena, has reached tragic effects (Ibid).

4. Complexity

Complexity is referred to show a specific kind of understanding, which means a sort of alarm to our understanding mechanism, or in other words sort of stopping from enlightenment based on reductive logic or too much reduction. The main purpose of complexity thought is to generate a sort of multi-dimensional logic which has not reached its' totality. This is a theoretical discourse towards lack of faith and going beyond, rather than an ideal discourse (Morin, 2005).

The modern disease of mind is in its' too much simplification, so that it blinds the mind in confronting reality. This disease exists in idealism which hides the

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reality, instead of expressing it and considers itself as the only real affair. We are still ignorant toward the problem of complexity. A simple mind considers whether simplicity or variety; however it cannot see that simplicity can be also consisted of various elements. The principle of simplicity whether separates what is related or unifies different aspects. Simple affair is not just consisted of one side. We need to understand different aspects as well and this can help us to consider complex patterns in low level, in medium level and in high level in a very schematic way. In confrontation to human brain, we can reach this point to define phenomena, which are really impressive and have a hyper-complexity level. Meaning that we can define hyper-complexity as a new concept to consider the phenomenon of human (Morin, 2005).

As it mentioned before, culture as a self-organization structure which is based as genetic heritage is like every self-organizing system, even the simplest between them, needs to generate a lot of units and would synthesize them in billion ways (Morin, 2005). that is imprisoned by determinism, so that its' elements have a sort of relative independence and their complementary character cannot be separated from experimental and logical aspect of them and cannot be separated from an interaction between them, meaning that they are connected to turmoil (Morin, 1973). when it comes to Complexity, it is a quantitative phenomenon embedded a huge number of interactions and interventions between huge number of units synthesizing them.

In order to understand complexity, we can connect contradictory thoughts in a rivalry and complementary way and in order to understand the depth of it, we need to consider the characteristics of the connection as well. In fact, understanding the original essence of the complex thought needs to integrate terminology and concepts in a system which puts these concepts in relation to each other (Murin, 1977). In complex thought, when we reach the contradictions based on experiential and rational ways, it does not mean a mistake, but refers to reaching a deep layer of reality which we cannot express it in our thought thanks to its' depth . Order and disorder help each other in an interesting way to shape the world in a specific way (Morin, 2005). In addition, Complexity is connected with Integration of order and disorder and also with statistical difference between those elements as well. It can be mentioned that what is complicated, is related to experimental world, to un-certainty and to lack of ability to generalize a law and a specific order on one hand, and to a rational logic, meaning lack of ability to preventing contradictions, as well. the notion of our lack of real acquaintance with the external world of social relations or rather the realization that we view that world through coded screens is one of the

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central ideas of Levi-Strauss's structuralism and one the pride of his conception of the relationship between nature and culture because the emphasis is entirely upon verification, upon bridge between nature as individually perceived and culture as socially perceived, as well as, the ideology in this sense is termed as scientific ideology approach(Nutini,1971).

5. Levi-Strauss's mythical theory

Mythology in Old Greek Culture was a Vital Experience which was involved in daily processes of Human (Zeimaran, 2001). Greek mythologies were trying to express details of life, Gods, heroes of stories, mythical creatures and origin of the world. Modern Scientists, through investigation of myths of Greek and Religious narratives, wanted to find a correct understanding on the essence of self-built myths (Hellas, 1952). Mythology was the symbol of life before science and icon of archeological life. Change of myths in every nation, represents change in life, change of social structures and change in thought and knowledge. Mythologies are narratives, which originate from Nature and mind of primitive human, and it comes from bilateral relation between these two. In other words, myth is an attempt to the relation between surrounding realities with meta-physical realities. In reality, human created myths in order to generate a peace between nature and him (Wikipedia.org, 2013).

Scientific thought tries to grind the problems into their most little origins, so that it generates an acceptable solution for each of them (Strauss, 1980). However in mythological thought, there is no clear border between whole and particular, in reality whole is a part of particular and particular is also a representative of whole. Indeed, in mythical thought, there is a current, which is in contrast to the main current in scientific thought. Mythical logic tries to find the origin of phenomena based on whole decomposing those into particulars, so that the essence of whole projected on the system is understood. Expression of myth as kind of mental logic, is not a pre-modern thought, but it is an expression which is in accordance with modern thought. The aim is to know the mental logic which is without unsystematic thought, and is also consisted of a complicated thought process which tries to differentiate and unify our knowledge from the Being. (Afhami, 2012a).

Claude Levi-Straus studied myths systematically and structurally, considers them as a symbol of free function of mind, a function which is not affected by external causes. They reflect the mind in its natural sense. He also believes that in myth, mind imitates itself like an object. Straus also believes that myth is a

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language and as language, it can be analyzed and described as well. Myth is the language of un-conscious that should be expressed in order to be understood (Wiseman, 1977).

Based on the view point of Strauss, The general theme of all myths is transition from nature to culture, from raw and primitive to cooked and mature, which is narrated through mysteries and codes (Wiseman, 1997). The nature-culture opposition is an ethical-moral conceptual tool implies clear distinction between what is (nature) and what ought to be (culture). In fact the nature-culture opposition as a scientific-epistemological conceptual tool goes beyond the ontological domain asserts that in order to achieve true consensus regarding sensible experience (Nutini, 1971). In terms of Strauss ideology, it is considered as a curious of an ethical-moral ideology system and a scientific epistemology theory of culture. Levi-Strauss conceptual system falls largely within the domain of ideology containing the notion of meta-language or levels of analysis, and this takes structuralism one step along the way from scientific-ideology to genuine science (Nutini,1971). Although Levi-Strauss has truly Galilean conception of scientific methodology, his adherence to ancient, ideological ideas about qualities and contraries prevent him from producing scientific results (Nutini,1971). In addition based on Strauss ideological view, art is approached as it serves a mediating function, similar to mythical form, between nature and culture. In fact art is a mythic form, dedicated to perpetuating the myth by endlessly seeking the logical progressions in art (Strauss, 1980).

Based on Strauss mythical approach, myths are a network that is defined just by their structure. This network discovers meaning for the person , of course not the meaning of myth , but also the meaning of the rest of the world, or the considerations of the other part of the world, society, history , all of which are in the margins of consciousness (Wiseman,1997). Levi-Straus tries to show myths of different cultures in different countries, regardless of their content, follow the same structures. Straus reaches this conclusion that although content, characters and events in different myths are quite different, however their structures are the same (Wiseman,1997) , factually the Mythical Logic featured by Strauss is universal and would not change based on cultural and regional aspects, only output would change based on essence of input. The main function of Myths, according to Straus, is a logical expression of contradictory structures and offering an appropriate model which would help us conquer the contradictions. Myths are used in order to defeat contradictions through debates and analogical contact. (Segal, 2004), These contradictions show the concept of culture and nature as well. Straus believes that tangible adjectives, such as raw and cooked, new and old, up and down, are deep in structure and are defined in

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sets in which logical argumentations have been changed into artistic way (Wiseman, 1997).

The analysis of phenomenon, according to Levi-Straus consists of these steps:

1. Definition of phenomenon under study as a connector between two or more actual or hypothetical concepts.
2. Creation of a table of possible transitions between those concepts Offering the table as general matter of analysis and analogy

The main aim is to discover this point that how relations in nature could used in to produce culture, as culture is also considered as a part of these relations. (Wiseman,1997).

Expression of myth as kind of mental logic, is not a pre-modern thought, but it is an expression which is in accordance with modern thought. Another point which legitimates the existence of mythical thought as a theory in modern world, are the discussions about difference between new science and old Knowledge, this is one of the hot topics between post-modern philosophers. Some of them claim that a sort of new knowledge has come out of old knowledge and new science. Some other thinkers, such as Umberto Eco and many eastern philosophers, consider this thought as hidden, strong and changeless in the nature of human being and have discovered some traces of this movement which has been reached through adaptation between modern and traditional thought. Jung have considered this logic as a part of personal and collective un-consciousness .Claude Levi-Strauss have also considered this as similar logic with human thought, which has been changed as a something different.

Many contemporary designers have applied semiotics in their design process to express the reflect of common knowledge in cultures and traditions (Afhami, 2012a). The term Design process is defined as an activity and metabolism between inputs and outputs, and also it has an effect on inputs in order to generate outputs. Mythical features act like procedures of design methods in order to reach creative ideas, however this sort of creativity is much more nearer to the mentality of human being. Discussed logic acts like systematic methods of design but The difference is that input elements in Mythical system is consisted of cultural features, and the other difference is in the type of external features , which are in the shape of narrative formats. Designers can use them in their idea making process to generate new design concepts. In order to reach the total form of myths, designers should investigate the external features and find the contradictory dualities in them (Afhami, 2012a).

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This logic has the ability to change into a specific design theory, conceptual design based on social aspects and also beliefs of people which are resulted from their internal vision. The key feature of discussed social logic, is its changeability that generates a whole out of contradictory concepts, in which their narratives and output is visible. Based on Structuralism view of Straus, Myths follow a systematic order, they accept features and structures of a society as an input and through logical interactions of themselves, and they generate their output in the shape of mythical narratives, which includes patterns of human life and its realities. So This logic has also the ability to extract concepts from daily life of human beings and their collective un-conscious and offer it to the designers in the form of contradictory dualities or specifications from cultural, emotional or religious contexts (Afhami, 2012a).

6. Research proposal for applying the concept of mythical thought in Design

In application of the challenges of mythical thought in design or any cultural concepts, there can be challenges, while approaches can also be defined. There are two extreme views, not only in intellectual approaches but also in orthodox view on culture. Some might consider mythical thought as superstitious aspects of thinking, which should be wiped away by intellectual thought. Others might consider the modern thought as quite destructive and anti-human, which should be ignored or at least bypassed through a possible romance or emotional approach. Our proposal is something different. We believe that functional aspects of design is not something soul-less and anti-human, this was a result of centuries of effort and study, on the other hand mythical thought , even decorative items are not just superstitious or something un-necessary, which should be removed or wiped away. Cultural concepts and Scientific based design can play a creative and interactive role. The question is how such a dialogue could be constructed. Our proposal is that culture can have a complementary role in improving the scientific thought. Cultural concepts could remind or at least show the designers of what has been neglected, what has been ignored and what could exist beyond a mere observational viewpoint, something which could be named as Culturally Augmented Reality applied for designers. Having culturally aware eyeglasses, we could see that there are a huge number of emotions, motivations, contexts and situations which are normally ignored in a mere observational or scientific viewpoint and this can be positively changed. In other words, mythical concepts embed a horizon of emotions and contexts which can improve the activity of human community. This argumentation is inspired by Levi-Straus view on myth, which considered them as reflection of social

structure and problems of the target community. In the continuum an example, our case study can elaborate such an argumentation.

7. Case study

In this part of the paper, a study is conducted to deeply investigate and assess the impact of proposed ideology on analyzing and extracting socio-cultural factors and social contexts as well as its' capability to develop an innovative design methodology. For comprehensiveness of results, this stage is done through various stages which were based on a descriptive design model of design process including exploration (determining a design subject and a specific mythical context, extracting particular design portions from chosen mythical context and assessing their impacts on the focused group, generating concepts and evaluating the outcomes of the process.

The first step of design process is exploratory phase which is the main focus of this study. In this phase, designers try to know the design problems and consider different factors which are related to that trying to identify all the main and effective elements in design and design goals. In this procedure, two kinds of design features are evaluated including internal and external factors. External factors are considered as Environmental and social factors connected to human society (Afhami, 2012b).

At the first step a particular sort of Tapestry is used as the test sample which was designed to use in hospital in the south of Iran. The main focused was considered upon it's pattern having inspired by a kind of mythical context. In this stage Also, a myth which was specific for that region found to investigate and gather characteristic design portions. So, the selected mythical ritual which is called ZĀR or ZĀĀR (زار in Persian), is a religious custom originating in central Ethiopia during the 18th century spreading throughout Sudan, Somalia, southern Iran and elsewhere in the Middle East (Wikipedia). In southern coastal regions of Iran where people believe in the existence of ZĀR as harmful wind (bād) associated with spirit possession that can be either vicious or peaceful. Despite varieties of ZĀR most of them are very dangerous and cause disease, discomfort, and at times serious illnesses for victims. Special ceremonies are held to pacify the ZĀR and alleviate the patient's symptoms, called by a leader, bring together the patient and those previously afflicted by the ZĀR involving incense, music, and movement that consists of two phases recognized: separation and incorporation. Separation part which is preparations begins with a person complaining from feeling of disease and discomfort to cult leaders who is known as Bābā zār(male) or Māmā zār(female). As some cult leaders have

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already been possessed by *zārs* and have managed to control them, they can help others in controlling their *zārs*. The procedures of governing *zār* through *Bābā* or *Māmā zār* involving preparation of patient to stay in isolation for up to seven days, cleaning and washing the patient's body for incorporation, informing the members of cult about the upcoming ceremony and gathering in a circle with the patient in the center while a piece of cloth, with eggs, dates, confetti, and aromatic herbs spread on the floor

Having opted for a remedy from *Bābā* or *Māmā zār*, the patient will prepare to stay in isolation for up to seven days. During this period, only *Bābā zār* or *Māmā zār* can visit the patient and use specific treatments such as rubbing a combination of aromatic herbs, such as Guraku and Gešt, and spices on the patient's body. After the separation phase ends, the patient's body is cleaned and washed, and preparations are made for the incorporation phase. Members of the cult inform everyone about the upcoming ceremony and, as it is considered a sin not to attend a ceremony, every member of the cult attends. There can also be a group of spectators, who may or may not be possessed, who participate in the ceremony. Everyone gathers in a circle with the patient in the center while a piece of cloth, with eggs, dates, confetti, and aromatic herbs, is spread on the floor and taking load on music (drums) by The *zār* leader, following by musicians and others present. Every piece of music goes with a specific spirit; with each type of music, some members of the cult may start moving and shaking. If there is no reaction from the patient, musicians change the tune until they see a reaction that helps the healer identify the spirit who has taken over the afflicted. The reaction is usually expressed as a swinging of the upper body, vertical movements of the head, and the shaking of the shoulders. When the *zār* is identified, the healer starts a conversation where she/he tries to find out what the spirit wants in exchange for leaving the patient alone. *Māmā zār* or *Bābā zār* speak with the spirit through the patient and ask the *zār* about the reasons behind the affliction as well as its demands for leaving the patient alone.

After the patient's head is covered with a piece of white cloth to keep him/her from the glances of strangers, a tray holding aromatic herbs on charcoal is passed around and the patient and the participants are frequently incensed with the smoke from the mixture. The *zār* leader takes the lead on music (drums) and is followed by musicians and others present. The leader usually knows the name of the *zārs* and the music (specific beat of drums) that goes with them. *Bābā* or *Māmā zārs* also sing and the participants respond in turn. During the singing of the incantations, which can be in different languages or dialects

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(Moghaddam, 2009) or pure melodic sounds containing no discernible words, a *zār* makes itself known by means of a sign that is recognized by the possessed person, who then feels a strong inner urge to move. Every piece of music goes with a specific spirit; with each type of music, some members of the cult may start moving and shaking. If there is no reaction from the patient, musicians change the tune until they see a reaction that helps the healer identify the spirit who has taken over the afflicted. The reaction is usually expressed as a swinging of the upper body, vertical movements of the head, and the shaking of the shoulders. When the *zār* is identified, the healer starts a conversation where she/he tries to find out what the spirit wants in exchange for leaving the patient alone. *Māmā zār* or *Bābā zār* speak with the spirit through the patient and ask the *zār* about the reasons behind the affliction as well as its demands for leaving the patient alone (Moghaddam, 2009). It is generally believed that when *zār is being controlled meant that it is pulled down.*

The *zār* names its demands, which may be as simple as a few prayers or a piece of bamboo (*keyzarān*) or something more substantial such as a sacrifice. *Bābā/Māmā zār* then makes a "binding" by tying a piece of cloth around the patient's arm. This is an assurance that the demands of the *zār* will be met. The belief among the cult is that if the *zār's* wishes are not granted, the *zār* will return and create more problems for the patient. If the demands of the *zār* can be easily obtained, they are quickly attended to through the initiation of a ceremony with music, food, and the offering that the *zār* has demanded. Otherwise, the demands will be met at a later time in a similar ceremony. At this point, the incorporation phase is completed; the patient becomes a member of the cult and is expected to participate in all future ceremonies. These ceremonies may take up to seven days beyond the separation phase. Members of the cult must follow certain rules regarding their outfits (which should always be clean and white) and must adhere to prohibitions on the touching of corpses (animal or human), the drinking of alcohol, sex with unlawful partners (Sāedi, 1961). Selling or letting go of the object the *zār* has asked for is prohibited as well; if the *zār* has asked for an outfit or an accessory, the patient must have that particular outfit/accessory on in all future ceremonies (Moghaddam, 2009).

8. Conclusions

Our case study did show that the role of mythical thought can be very helpful in generating design ideas. As an example, the Zar ceremony showed that cure from a disease is not just a physical process, but mental, emotional and even social aspects would needed to be considered in such a procedure. So in

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designing a cure calendar and related agreements and algorithms, the role of social and emotional supporters, whether family or companions, can be highly considered and studied. We propose that such considerations could facilitate and accelerate the cure procedure. However such a proposal needs to be experimented in order to be scientifically proved. On the other hand an applicable model from the mythical thought needs to be studied as well. These could be used for further studies.

To summarize, the role of mythical thought and the structure behind it could be very helpful for designers in order to generate new ideas. The main value of mythology is not only that it gives designer a historical experience of human problems, but also the way people living with that myth understand and perceive the world and how it could be implemented. The structure behind the myth would be a very good beginning to understand the social and cognitive arrangement of the target society and the way it could be improved. However, much more research should be done in order to make such approaches understandable and applicable for designers. Applying these concepts into design praxis would be the next challenge for design researchers.

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