Abstract

Fish (two fishes) is one of the repetitive dual patterns in decorative works of art which is thought to be a metaphorical expression of some underlying concepts in different cultures. Herati-Two-Symbolic-Fish is an example of two fishes pattern projection in Iranian carpets. At the same time, this pattern also symbolizes the Pisces constellation in the zodiac design. In this study, the dual structure of two fishes symbol and reception of its metaphorical expression in both iconographic material and literary devices within different cultures were investigated. Iconography was employed to describe illustrations and the pertaining symbolic meanings. Then, a structural approach was used to analyze this dual structure and the underlying relations with death/ life bicorporal concepts in myths and legends. In addition, analyzing pictorial and verbal depictions, and utilizing etymological considerations, this study attempted to reveal that two fishes, as a logical structure, is reflected in both cosmological and human body symbolism.

Results from iconographic and structural analysis showed that despite cultural differences and evolutions in some of the elements linked to the central fish-related institute in both iconographic and literary material, the underlying semantic structure, which is responsible for the internal semantic relations and logics among different elements, remains unchanged; and, the fish-related institute remains as the symbolic reflection of the death/life opposition.

Keywords: Herati, Two fishes (Pisces), Bicorporal fish pattern, Duality, Structural analysis, Iconography, Body symbolism.

1. Introduction

It is often claimed that one of the ways for decoding the meaning of pictures is to understand their features, and the relations existing among them. From the time of antiquity to the present, the repetition of motifs primarily requires an explanation regarding the methods of their formation and the meanings they reflect. Currently, lacking obvious contemporary context, having no publically known underlying stories (despite scenes from the life of Jesus), or being created based on the artist's personal interpretation of specific symbols, are some of the issues that make the semantic analysis of symbols in works of art more difficult and important at the same time. According to Panofsky¹, the iconographic method is used for the semantic analysis of pictures. After providing an explicit description of the picture under scrutiny, iconography tries to identify its meaning in written resources, which is implying to the fact that employed metaphors in word expressions and non-word expressions cannot be understood on the basis of a simple comparison as they go over and beyond simple substitutions. In other words, by providing an explicit description of the picture, the study seeks to fathom out its repetitive structural pattern, implicit figural connotations, and the way it is interpreted across different cultures.

Either in pictorial works of art or in the verbal expressions, logical fish-related patterns of contradiction (e.g. the two fishes motif) can be a compendium of some strong ancient belief projected in pictorial works, illustrations, and myths or narrations. This, in one sense, and the
repetition of the two fishes motif in most of the zodiac designs in the real sense, have motivated researchers to conduct descriptive semantic analyses on this motif.

Death and life (darkness and brightness) opposition theme is a central and universal concept which is reflected in different metaphorical expressions. The underlying implication of the two fishes pattern seems to be associated with the sometimes opposing darkness and brightness theme. However, although fish, as an intermediate element in bicorporal relations has been matter of attention in some of the previous works, understanding the two fishes pattern with respect to the myths and narrations composed to emphasize the relation between life and death has never been attempted by the research community before. The main objective of this article is to indicate the associative meanings of two fishes - as a motif among zodiac signs in astrology (Pisces), or a popular symbol - in various cultures. It also tries to indicate the association between the zodiac-sign, Pisces and a well-known dual fish motif in Iranian cultures, Herati. Subsequently, by the structural analysis of its duality and by considering fish as an intermediary and central element in some myths and narratives, a comparative research method - based on reviewing the pictorial data and also focusing on etymology as useful sources - is employed to analyze of the symbolic structure of two fishes as the symbol of dual oppositions representing death and darkness versus life and brightness. In fact, the etymological approach is utilized to explain the presence of the motif in association with the concept of foot in related cultures.

2. Fish Pattern in Pictorial and Descriptive Resources from Different Cultures

According to archeological findings, the first Paleolithic fish figurines were found with the cycle of life engraved on one side and the labyrinth of death on the other. Surprisingly, single and double fish figurines carved on the walls of the catacombs, have been found in many places. As a popular religious symbol, the fish was a sacred entity to Ishtar, Isis, Venus, and also for the Japanese Kwan-non. In addition, it symbolised Hathor, the Egyptian goddess, and was worn as an amulet which was supposed to bring happiness, affluence, and prosperity. The fish figurines on the pottery bowls excavated in Susa from the third millennium to the end of the second millennium BC and on the pottery bowls dug out in the Shahr-I Sokhta. The presence of the fish or the two fish motif in astrology which is related to the 12th constellation of zodiac called Pisces is represented by Piscis in Latin, Pisko in Sanskrit, Māhīg in middle Persian in Bundahišn, and fish in English. In Sumerian, the word was used as Pish, meaning a Great Fish which was etymologically coterminous with Vish in the word Vishnu. As one of the zodiac signs, Pisces represents paired parallel fishes in opposite directions which are sometimes connected together with a cord. An alternative for the two-fish representation of the zodiac sign Pisces is the single Great Fish which is more common in the Islamic tradition and is reflected by the medieval Latin designation of the sign as Piscis in the singular.

J. H. Rogers, investigating the origins of the zodiac signs in Mesopotamian tradition, maintains that Pisces contains two fishes whose tails are adjoined by a ribbon signifying catching fish. Additionally, it represents one of the celestial seas and signifies a watery constellation derived from Ea. In Mul.Apin and earlier resources, the western fish was represented as a ‘Great Swallow’ displayed on the neck of Pegasus. Similarly, the northern fish, depicted in the middle part of Andromeda, was named Anunitum, meaning the Lady of Heavens. It may worth noting that although the Mul.Apin table does not make any reference to fish, its mentioning of the tails (Zibbat.Mesh) most likely refers to the swallow with bifurcated tail and not the fish. The word swallow, however, came to symbolise the zodiacal Pisces in later times. Du.Nu.Nu or Riski.nu.mi which signifies the fish cord is related to other late Babylonian source explicitly denoting Pisces. Finally, there are also other sources which represent this zodiac sign as the field, the square of Pegasus whose

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4 Busenbark (as in n.3), p. 174.
5 Fig. [1. n.1]
8 Fig. [2]
pictograph has been indicated between two fishes on the Dendera Zodiac. In the same vein, the Cylinder seal iconography to Sumerian and Akkadian era (3200-2000 B.C.) shows that the fish motif in the zodiac was represented swallow/field.

The Pisces is not the only zodiac sign which has a bicorporal or double representation. In fact, other zodiac signs such as Gemini, Virgo, and Sagittarius have also a double sign representation. As an illustration, for Ptolemy, double signs signified the coming of the season in solstices and equinoxes and the prediction of weather. However, different cultures provide various significations attached to the double signs differentiating between spiritual and temporal power, the upper and the lower worlds, the past and future, and the ending of one cycle and the beginning of another. For instance, the Chinese Bronze Age vessels had two fishes painted on them which symbolized creative power. Likewise, in Christian zodiac symbolism in San Miniato al Monte church the Virgin is associated with the stellar Virgo and the Christ as a child is linked to Pisces, the two fishes of heaven. Interestingly, Virgo and Pisces are located in opposite sides of the zodiac looking at each other in adoration and joy. During the medieval period, this kind of symbolism between Virgin and Christ formed the foundation of the hermetic commentaries in arts such as painting and sculpture.

**Herati; a cultural metaphor of Pisces: Mahi (fish), Mahi dar-ham, or Herati** are different names of a motif in Persian and Islamic works of art, especially in pottery and carpet weaving. There is no clear-cut explanation for the use of the term; however, Herati is frequently used to symbolize the two fishes, either non-separated, especially in the field of pottery, or separated by a circular flower or a circle. Iranian researchers have presented certain evidences explaining that the motif is founded in Mithraism. They postulate that Mithra was born by the help of two dolphins and consider the circular flower as a Mithra’s head between the two fish. Overall, Herati symbolic representation of the two fish pattern signifies Mithra’s head between the two dolphins. However, in this study we explored Iranian Islamic works of art to find other possible associations linked to Herati.

**Structural analysis of the duality pattern in pictorial resources:** Lévi-Strauss, examining bicorporal patterns, has claimed that the mythical system employs a metaphorical approach to specify the relative position of human beings, animals, and gods within a matrix of binary oppositions such as high and low, this world and the world after, culture and nature, etc., all of which are alterations and variations within the same universe. By studying the Native American myths, Lévi-Strauss makes an attempt to explain why these natives regarded harelips and twins as similar instances. The importance of such an approach lies in the fact that all myths and patterns whose significations are established based on semantic correspondence and substitution, reflect the mental function and the related thought-procedure; and, in fact, the final purpose is not merely the narration of myths through words or other media such as painting or music.

An illustration of Abu-Ma’shar astrological manuscript represents the sun in the Jupiter insight which is the large star of fortune with two upward fishes in his hands, and the sun in the Saturn insight which is the large star of misfortune opposing Jupiter in terms of his effect on people and events with two downward fishes in his hands. All of these cases promote us to think of the fact that the bidirectional forms structurally are creating the binary opposition such as darkness versus brightness or negative point versus positive point. Besides, in one of the depictions of Herati, as a decorative design of carpet of around sixteenth century, two fishes appeared very similar to two leaves and a rosette in between which could be related to sun. If this interpretation about Herati is correct, it could have been accompanied by the meaning of ending one cycle and beginning of another, like the sun movement. Therefore, in both Iranian astrological illustrations - where the mythological images appeared along with constellations and planets - and decorative

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10 see A. T. Fomenko et al., Mysteries of Egyptian Zodiacs and Other Riddles of Ancient History, to appear, pp. 43, 71-84.
13 Dunnigan (as in n. 2), pp. 3122-24.
15 Fig. [3]
17 E. Leach, *Claude Lévi-Strauss*, University of Chicago Press 1989, pp. 75-76.
19 Fig. [A]
20 Fig. [C]
works of art - where the well-known Herati is the fish related figure - the two fish pattern could be an example of Pisces. This comparison illustrates the fact that under varying historical and contextual conditions, objects were reintegrated and one concept might have been expressed by different forms.

Consequently, on the basis of the above, repetition of twin patterns like twin fishes (Pisces) with one fish placed on the other and a node or a cord between the two, and rosette with their pertaining solar discs, are not random expressions and are generated based on some ritual beliefs. The underlying ritual beliefs caused the repetition of such structures in various forms and made them perdurable and undying in the history. This is why Panofsky as an art historian who used iconography to investigate repetitive structures through the evolution of history, has been treated as a structuralist by Lévi-Strauss. In the following, inspired by Lévi-Strauss’s structural approach in investigation of bicorporal patterns in myths and narrations, we try to employ a structural analysis approach based on iconography to analyze the dual nature of double fish motif, as a repetitive structure, and to demonstrate that such art, especially in the form of painting, is the portrayal of experiences in the world. We also try to show that the double sign motif, has in fact a mythical representation which is repeated differently in various cultures.

The conception of an iconographic illustration is a visual process while understanding a metaphorical expression is a cognitive one. However, these two different approaches are tightly tied up because a metaphor usually projects an image in the mind which is related to an iconographic depiction. Therefore, to consider this very close link between iconographic and metaphorical expression, and to avoid pseudo-formal analysis, the application of the duality concepts related to fish pattern is studied in several myths and narrations.

3. Fish in the Narratives about the Journey of the Solar Gods

The knowledge of primitive man was based on numerous myths which were connected to natural, celestial phenomena whose originality was explicable. These myths were simply represented by enigmatic allegories and analogical coding of different aspects of the Sun and Moon. As a case in point, one of the semantic imports related to the duality nature of fish is a structure representing the way the sun and moon move. This movement is a journey symbolizing the movement of a fish in an upward direction (on the earth) to a downward direction (under the earth). Many writers have emphasized the relationship among the myths of fish and sun in various cultures. This relationship may be studied by analyzing the mythical stories and legends popular in old cultures belonging to Sumerians, Babylonians, Greeks and Hindis. Surprisingly, there is a remarkable similarity between these legends and the myth of ‘Jonah and the Whale’ which has aroused the curiosity of researchers in the domain of religion. In these stories which often represent the conflict between death and darkness, and life and brightness, the heroes are the Solar Heroes - i.e., they have sun-like characters. To shed more light on the issue, we can refer to the existing evidence in myths of different cultures.

One of the myths in ancient Sumerian culture is about Ea (Table 1: story 1), a deity with a temperate and friendly mood, who rises out of the sea each morning to teach man various arts of civilization such as agriculture, civil government, hand crafts, and so on. The early sculptures created to represent Ea had a half man and half fish appearance. Ishtar (Table 1: story 2) is another mythical character in ancient Sumerian mythology, who is believed to be Ea’s daughter. It was declared that Ishtar sustained all kinds of life on the earth and rose out of ocean each day to perform her duties.

In the Vedas (Table 1: story 3), the second book of Hindus, the earth is defined and represented as a huge fish swallowing the cheerful red orb, the sun, at sunset and throwing it back at sunrise just as the mythical Whale cast
out Jonah (Table 1: story 4).\textsuperscript{25} The myth of Jonah that was devoured by a whale and was disgorged on the coast of Joppa after three days, has been reported in both Quran and Hebrew scriptures. This myth is similar to the legend of Herakles and Hesione which is set in destroying darkness by the help of the solar god.

In one of the versions of Hesione's stories which was found in the fifth BC, Herakles descends into the belly of a monster where his hair is signed by the intense heat and finally manages to kill it by inflicting heavy blows to its sides. Similarly, in another tale from Melanesian Islands, Kamakajaku (Table 1: story 5), the hero, is swallowed by a fish which carries him to the realm of the sun where he cuts the fish's belly with a piece of obsidian and finds his way out. He then follows the sun to a village in the sky where he starts teaching the children of sun how to make a fire and cook food.\textsuperscript{26}

\textbf{Structural analysis of the duality pattern in myths and narratives:} Lévi-Strauss maintains that the role of an anthropologist is analogous to that of linguist- that is, by focusing on the system of elements at the linguistic level, he assumes that phonemes are not independent entities; rather, they are defined based on the system of contrasts which highlights their relations to another.\textsuperscript{27} In the same vein, the elements of myth find a semantic value based on their mutual and contrastive relations. On the basis of the above, from a logical view point, it is observed that Lévi-Strauss's approach is not imposing an interpretation or extraneous method of analysis; but, is based on the contrastive array of myths.\textsuperscript{28} He maintains that only by adopting such an approach- a new combinatorial arrangement of the mythical system-it is possible to decode the hidden meaning of Amerindian myths. Moreover, what is mentioned about the Lévi-Strauss's approach, is also considered by Kirk.\textsuperscript{29}

Myth is ‘a product of language’ and ‘just as the elements of language – sounds or phonemes- are meaningless in isolation, and only take on significance in combination with other phonemes, so the elements of myth- the individual narrative elements, the persons or objects- are meaningless in themselves, and only take on significance through their relation with each other. But it is not the formation of mere narratives such that is significant; rather it is the underlying structure of relations that determines the real meaning of a myth. Variant versions of myth may show changes in the surface meaning, but the structure and basic relationships will often remain constant indeed may even be emphasized by the alteration of the overt symbols and by consequent inversions forms of transformation’.

Accordingly, the elements and institutes involved in symbolizing 	extit{Mythologiques} use allegories and narrations which take different and new forms in respective religious and secular patterns. At times, the significance of the employed metaphors and their relationship to those used in other patterns is not straightforward. Exemplifying this would be the symbolization of Ea as Ioannes and as the fish-god (i.e. Dagon) who was worshiped by the people in Philistine. According to certain interpretations, Ea or Ioannes symbolized a primeval sun god whose benefactor intentions benefited the whole earth. At the end of the day, however, it retreated to the sea to spend the night beneath the waves like a fish.\textsuperscript{30} In another mythical narration which goes back to fifth BC, Pausanius found out that Hercules' twelve labors actually signify the annual passage of the sun through the twelve zodiac sign. Similarly, the adventures of Gilgamesh (Table 1: story 6), the hero of Sumerian myth, are believed to be an allegory representing the seasons. Gilgamesh's return to Erech in the twelfth chapter, symbolizes the renewal of life and vegetation as the sun completes its annual revolution.\textsuperscript{31}

However, by comparing various myths and the duality of symbolic patterns -concerning the Great Fish or the watery monster which carried the sun from up world to down world among different stories or the equivalent of the rebirth of mythical hero to twelfth sign of zodiac-represented by them in the dual movement of sun (East/West), it can be inferred that all these narratives have the same structural origin so that the transformation of one sign to another

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid, p.58.
\textsuperscript{27} B. Wiseman, Lévi-Strauss, anthropology, and aesthetics, Cambridge University Press 2007, pp.100-103.
\textsuperscript{28} Wiseman, Lévi-Strauss, anthropology, and aesthetics, pp. 206-207.
\textsuperscript{29} G. S. Kirk, Myth, its meaning and functions in ancient and other cultures, CUP Archive 1970, pp.42-43.
\textsuperscript{30} Busenbark (as in n. 3), p. 56.
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid, pp. 60-71.
will substitute the characters respectively and their individual persona does not play a vital role in the structure of the story. Concepts like 1) sunset, being swallowed, and submerged into water, 2) sun, solar heroes like Herakles and Jonah and 3) sunrise, being disgorged, and emerged etc., are but a few signs which change across different mythical narrations. These changes, according to Lévi-Strauss, are code dependent; because, every sign represents the relationships existing between various lexical categories, and in this transformation, the meaning of individual words is of little significance, because meaning is not transferred from one term to another. This signifies the importance of Pisces where represented as a dual fish form. Here are more examples where we explore Pisces and its symbolic duality across different cultures.

The Great Monad is one of the conventional designs for representing two fish in a circle which is the oldest symbol signifying male and female principles in the Far East. In China and India, this symbol is called Yin and Yang respectively. In Japan, the characters are called In and Yo, but when reversed and joined, they are called Yo-Ni. Evidently, the sign of fishes or Pisces in the zodiac, apparently enjoyed the same origin and significance as the Great Monad. Manilius, in his forth book, Astronomica, enumerates the prevalent and dominant nature of emblems and explains different abilities, skills and consequences they signify, say about Pisces the fishes: ‘The folk engendered by the two fishes...’. An illustration, Yin and Yang combine as Yih, and by doing so, they are empowered to express and define the existing combinations. In fact, Yang is a clear emblem denoting light, power, positive principle and rule, masculinity, and refers to objects that are hard and celestial. By contrast, Yin is the emblem of darkness denoting flexibility, negative principle and rule, femininity, and refers to matters that are feminine, soft, and terrestrial. Additionally, Yang represents the great sun and Yin symbolised the great moon. In Chinese tradition, they indicate the integrated nature of the earth and the sky and the integrity of the whole existence and universe.

The painting related to the 18th century and created by Jaipur is a work of art reflecting Vishnu’s various transfigurations. In the first stage, Vishnu turns into a half-man and half-fish figurine. The duality of fish in the picture is represented by two dark and bright halves as if its body is divided into two equal parts by a line. In a narrative on reincarnations, Vishnu explains this stage as: ‘... when the Brahma, the Veda creator falls into asleep and a monster called Hayagriva kidnaps Veda. Vishnu is then reincarnated as a fish (Matsya) which saves Manu and his partisans from destructive storm and takes him to Brahma. At this time, Brahma wakes up, kills Hayagriva and rescues Veda’. It is clearly observed that all these narratives samples have central common core with a universal structure; however, their content varies cross culturally.

In the above legends, two different structures can be recognised. In the first, the two fishes duality pattern in iconographic illustrations and myths is associated with the death/life (darkness/brightness) concept while in the second, the fish itself, is located in an intermediate position and can be treated as a boundary between death and life. In the later, the duality is created from the binary opposition among death and life.

Finally, based on Lévi-Strauss’s Studies on binary oppositions, if the duality patterns in the above legends are associated with the relation between darkness and brightness in cosmic level, fish, in myths and legends of several different cultures, plays an intermediate role as in Fig [6].

4. Fish in Symbolizing Human Body

Another fundamental concept related to duality and bicorporality concerns the relationship between fish and its symbolisation in the human body. As a case in point, in medieval astrology, the zodiac signs were associated not only with the twelve human psychological types, but also with specific parts of the human body which was symbolised as Melothesic Man meaning the Zodiac Man. Based on the images and narratives related to Melothesic man or zodiac man, it is interesting to know that Pisces as a motif is represented and symbolised by man’s feet. In addition, in many archeological remains, fish-gods are displayed in such a way that their head and their

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32 Wiseman (as in n. 23), p. 277.
33 Busenbark (as in n. 3), p. 176.
34 Beck, A brief history of ancient astrology (as in n. 10), p. 66.
35 Busenbark (as in n. 3), p. 176.
36 V. Ions, Indian mythology, Peter Bedrick Books 1984, p. 48.
legs have projected out of the head and tail of the fish. In the fish and human like Talismans remained from the past, the end of the body is equivalent with the tail of the fish.38

However, as the above concepts and illustrations evolved out of their contemporary context, linguistic data have a facilitative role since they guide us to find the meanings underlying myths. Sadovszky39 in his book named Fish, Symbol and Myth tries to reconstruct the semantic sphere surrounding the concept of fish in Eurasian cultures based on ancient and modern linguistic data as well as Mythological data. What caught the attention of Sadovszky were the samples with the semantic relationship between the 'calf of the leg' and 'fish roe'. He demonstrated the term 'ikra' in Russian and Dutch languages referred to both of these meanings. By reconstructing the conceptual nuances related to the fish, Sadovszky indicates that the association between cultural concepts may be sought in lexical roots which are homonyms. Although he first thought that these semantic relations are only limited to Russian and Dutch languages, he also managed to prove the generalization in several types of Indo-European languages. As an illustration, in languages like Sanskrit and Avestan, specific lexis40 has been used for 'fish roe' which is semantically interrelated with 'calf of the leg'.41 Another equally interesting feature in analysing such a structure is the lexical similarity between words used for signifying small round mass-globe and calf muscles42 in Sanskrit.43 It is very interesting that similarly, in modern Persian, similar lexical items are used for denoting the round part of muscle: 'māḥīche' in modern form and 'māḥīzag' in ancient form, and fish: 'māḥi' in modern Persian and ‘māḥīk’44 in middle Persian (Table 2).

Studying such etymological similarities can shed light on certain ancient remains. Consequently, by the etymological study of lexical items such as ‘fish’ and ‘calf of the leg’ and considering the bifurcated tail which was associated with twelfth sign, Pisces, or ‘māḥīq’ in the zodiac signs of very old times, the duality of these concepts (as in man's feet and fish tail) in reference with double structures and images associated with fish-gods can be explained.45 46

In addition, the archeological findings in Altai mountain by S. I. Roudenko in 1947 has revealed that on the frozen right lower leg of a chieftain in Pazyryk Valley a fish had been tattooed. The archeological finds helped Sadovszky to indicate the association between the lower leg as the reduced version of the human body and the fish.47 48 Overall, based on the comparative study conducted by Sadovszky49 there is a semantic association between the fish and the pillar on central support. Furthermore, the indication of the association between fish and the periodic return of the spawns season, and fish as a symbol of fertility explains the important role of fish from ancient times into the modern civilization. Moreover, the word ‘sole’ was used to signify a European flatfish, mid-13C., from Latin 'solea'. The interesting point is that the word was over-generalised and used for the bottom of the foot in early 14C., and later used for muscle of the calf of the leg, 1670s, because of its flatness.50 Also, the word muscle in old English was spelled as ‘mussel' meaning ‘seashell'51 which also means 'calf of the leg.' The linguistic and archeological evidences indicate that in the Indo-European cultures, especially Iranian culture, there is some relationship between human leg (a paired organ), and the bifurcated tail of the fish. Such duality is important in the symbolism of human body, and

38 Fig. [1. n. 6], Fig. [5. n. 6-10]
40 Minânda and Matsyândã mean 'fish roe' that Minâ and Matsya mean 'fish' and anda means 'egg, semen'. According to etymological researches, -anda is a productive suffix in Sanskrit, it is also possible that in the course of time the semantic association with anda 'egg' was lost and the anda was treated as a suffix. A similar situation occurred in Picarda and Picandika. On the one hand, Picanda mean 'calf of the leg' and as Mayrhofer (M. Mayrhofer, Kurzgefasstes etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen: A concise etymological Sanskrit dictionary, 1. C. winter 1963, p. 26) said anda (andám) means 'egg' and Pica or Picaa means 'fish' that in western Indo-European is Pisio 'Fish' in Sanskrit. On the other hand, the word Piccha means 'calf of the leg' that is associated to Latin Piscis 'Fish'.
41 In Sanskrit 'peśi' means egg and 'peśi' means calf of the leg.
42 In Sanskrit, the calf of the leg is associated with a small globe and round mass and Pinda means 'calf of the leg' and 'ball, globe, and round mass.'
43 Von Sadovszky (as in n. 33), pp. 1-12.
44 Mayrhofer, Kurzgefasstes etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen: A concise etymological Sanskrit dictionary (as in n. 34), II, C. winter 1963, p.566.
46 Fig. [5. n. 8-9]
47 Fig. [5. n. 11]
48 Ibid, p. 75.
49 Ibid, p. 566.
the representation of Babylonian deities and ancient Iranian fish-gods.\textsuperscript{52}

It is noteworthy that despite Indo-European cultures, in which Fish and leg are related through etymological and iconographic analysis of pictorial works of art (as in above), in Native American cultures, there are some myths and narratives which relate fish and leg.\textsuperscript{53} In these narratives, feet as repetitive structure play an intermediary role between the two contrastive symbolic worlds. However, in expressions from both cultures, the intermediate element, feet, placed at the point of bifurcation which is thought to be a separation between the two halves.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

As previously mentioned, Lévi-Strauss's\textsuperscript{54} attempt was to discover repetitive basic mythical themes. In his bidirectional and reciprocal relationships the existence of symmetrical elements is spotted by negative and positive position (–, +) for each side and an intermediary element identified by both positive and negative signs (±). This accentuates the bilateral relations which designate the bidirectional features of the relationships. In many structural systems the relationship between the two elements cannot be established only based on a single feature, but the arrangement of several features is quite necessary. In brief, placing narratives and myths side by side does not provide the possibility to decipher the concept of duality related to the fish. The important thing is to pinpoint the exact meaning of the features which represent the structural basis of the concept of duality.

Considering the content of the table 2 and above visual depictions, this assertion shed more light on the concept represented in Fig [7].\textsuperscript{55} According to Lévi-Strauss, the similarity between these elements depends on the contrastive relations existing among them; and, within a myth, a structure can reveal itself at different levels, or by means of different codes. For example, among South American myths, Lévi-Strauss distinguished a sociological, a culinary (or techno-economic), an acoustic, a cosmological, and an astronomical code.\textsuperscript{56} Similarly, in this study, the relationship between the two fishes (as in zodiac signs and in decorative arts like Herati in Iranian culture) and the dual movement of the sun, the relationship existing in the duality structure of rabbit and girl with harelips and the twins or the relationship between the two fish motif and sole of human feet, as well as the association between the formal structure of calf muscle and bifurcated shape of the fish tail are all reproduction of dual cognitive structures related to fish and different verbal and pictorial narratives that provide symbolic and metaphoric expressions about the contrast between death (darkness) on the one hand and life (light) on the other. However, in this work, by employing iconography, an attempt was made to explain the mythical role of fish (Pisces) and related symbol in arts and zodiac signs and shed light on duality and its significance in pictorial and verbal arts in different cultures. The etymological data and the zodiac signs in body symbolism were used to explain the dual structures in several images.

In view of the evidence attained in this study, besides the narratives selected from the existing myths, the structural duality of elements associated with the two fish pattern varied across different pictorial and verbal illustrations was considered. Visual and verbal metaphorical expressions utilise different methods to illustrate the implied meanings and concepts. Despite verbal expressions in which the concepts are transferred through a story, and in a discursive and sequential manner, in visual expressions, the concepts are transferred suddenly and in their entirety, which explains the need for a dual bidirectional pattern to illustrate the purposed bicorporal relations. It was observed that individual elements do not play a vital role in the structure of the story; instead, the meaning is appeared from a specific composition of elements. This means that, a change in one element may cause a corresponding change in other elements before reaching stability. Clearly, by comparing verbal and pictorial data concerning the concept of duality in related myths and by adopting archeological and etymological resources, the word fish and its collocates were reinterpreted by using the iconographical method in order to explain the mythical significance of the (two-
fish motif and the duality concept across different samples where the distinguished dualities are variations and evolutions of certain structures repeated in cosmological and human body symbolism. In other words, it was observed that despite the existing formal variations and conflicts regarding universal and human body symbolism, their true essence and meaning could be examined within a structural framework. However, system of visual depiction like the mythic system involves a continuous development of objects and their interactions, which, of course, leads to a dialectic between opposing elements. In other words, this is actually the resulted dialectic, or the discourse among the elements, that explains their opposing interactions. Consequently, one can say that mythic fields, with any type of expression (visual or verbal), are representations of attempts to create an intermediary role between opposing patterns like death and life that has a logical structure. Therefore, the structural analysis in this work and the tabulated paradigms, as shorthand patterns of expressions, reveal that every structure is a global connotation of a system of ideas and representations; and, using structures, one can integrate these ideas as precise, concrete, and semantically effective illustrations. Finally, the presented investigation provides a further insight into the two fishes duality pattern and can be treated as a new application of the Lévi-Strauss's structural analysis.

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**Table. 1** Representation of death/life oppositions in some of above stories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Stories</th>
<th>Death (darkness)</th>
<th>Life (brightness)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Falling</td>
<td>Raising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Falling</td>
<td>Raising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Swallowing</td>
<td>Throwing back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Devouring</td>
<td>Disgorging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Swallowing</td>
<td>Running away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Death</td>
<td>Rebirth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table. 2** The etymologically fish-related words in Indo-European languages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>fish</th>
<th>fish roe</th>
<th>calf of the leg</th>
<th>round mass, small globe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>Ikra</td>
<td>Ikra</td>
<td>Ikra</td>
<td>Ikra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>Kala (kra)</td>
<td>Ikra</td>
<td>Ikra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Indian Family of Languages</td>
<td>Mīnā</td>
<td>Mīnānda</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mīnānda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanskrit</td>
<td>Piccha</td>
<td>Peši</td>
<td>Pešī (muscle) Pinda Picchā picanda</td>
<td>Pinda picanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pluc</td>
<td>Pluc</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>Piscis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avestan</td>
<td>Matsya</td>
<td>Matsyānda</td>
<td></td>
<td>Matsyānda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern Persian</td>
<td>Māhī (māhīk)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Māhīche (māhīzag)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Persian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kafir</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fig. 1 Representations of fish (two fishes) in different cultures, especially Iranian Islamic culture.
Fig. 2 Representations of Pisces on different zodiacs and in different astrology manuscripts.
Fig. 3 Representation of Herati; two symbolic fish pattern in Persian rugs, Mahi (fish) or Mahi darham.

Fig. 4 Illustration of an Astrological Manuscript.
Fig. 5 Representations of fish in symbolism of human body in ancient astrology manuscripts, archeological data, and works of art.
Binary Oppositions wherein *Fish* Plays an Intermediate Role

- Underworld and Up-world
- Evil and Goodness Worlds
- Be Swallowed and Be Disgorged
- Submerged and Emerged
- West and East (North)

**Fig. 6** Darkness and brightness structural paradigm.

**Fig. 7** Intermediate element and two halves.

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