

## Studying the Art of Isfahan's Sermehdouzi from the Perspective of Future Studies

### Iman Zakariai Kermani

Assistant Professor of Carpets, Handicrafts Department, Isfahan Art University, Isfahan, Iran.  
i.zakariaee@aii.ac.ir

### Masoume Ghasemi Flavarjani

MA Graduate, Department of Islamic Art, Calligraphy and Miniatures Attitude, Isfahan Art University, Isfahan, Iran. (corresponding author)/ masome.ghasme@gmail.com

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### Introduction

Handicrafts are accurate mirrors of a nation's belief and memories. They display rituals, events, customs, and the past of the people. Traditional embroidery is one of the handicrafts that have a long history in Iran. In recent years, this art has undergone a significant stagnation due to lifestyle changes and cultural changes. The gradual decline and stagnation of Sermehdouzi can lead to the disappearance of this art in the future. Considering that as the subject of future studies can lead to scenarios and suitable proposals to improve the current situation and to achieve the desirable situation by studying impressive factors, including the study of events, trends, images and actions. To this end, this research has adopted a futurism approach. This research aims at the studying of the past and the present states of the art of golden embroidery in Isfahan and plans to improve it in the future; it tries to answer the question how the state of this art can be predicted in order to achieve the desired future from the perspective of futurism. The this research is vital to provide a solution for generating income from handicrafts, including Sermehdouzi.

### Research Method

This research is practical in terms of its purpose and has been carried out adopting a descriptive-analytical method. It is qualitative in nature (scenario method). In this approach, four factors are effective including: events, trends, images, and actions. In this research, data collection has been carried out in two ways: documents and records, questions and surveys. The trends and events in this research have been collected through first-hand sources, including library sources, scientific articles, and internet sources. Survey method and semi-structured interviews have been used to collect information about images and actions. To analyze the data in this type of interview, the research has carried out a content analysis of interviews. After doing each interview, the key points and contents of each interview have been extracted. Based on the contents derived form sets of concepts, the categories will be extracted from these concepts; finally, according to these categories, future research scenarios would be formulated. The sampling and selection of the interviewees were done purposefully and based on the snowball method. The process of conducting this research will lead to the identification of drivers by using the analysis of trends, events, images, and actions.

### **Research Findings**

The purpose of this research was to analyze and investigate the art of Sermehdouzi in Isfahan as well as to identify the effective factors to provide suitable solutions for the development of this art, based on future studies (scenario method). In this research, the trends and events that had been influenced in the past of this art were analyzed and investigated. This art, which has a history as old as the Achaemenid period, continued in different eras and reached its peak in the Safavid period. However, during the Qajar and Pahlavi periods, this art began to decline because of cultural changes and a decrease in the quality of raw materials, sewing, and the importation of European clothing as well as culture into Iran. After reviewing trends and events, images and actions were extracted through interviews with experts. People's lack of familiarity with the craft of Sermedouzi, the low quality of raw materials which produced in the country, old designs, the lack of support for artists, the lack of exports and the unrecognition of embroidery products by other countries, the high cost of the production, and the lack of education and promotion of Sermedouzi caused the gradual decline of this art. After identifying the factors resulting in the decline of the art of embroidery, the drivers of the art of embroidery were identified using the results of interviews with experts. These drivers were divided into four general categories of economic, social, educational, and innovation drivers. Exporting and expanding the sales market to other countries, introducing the people of other countries were identified as the economic drivers for this, creating a direct market for the artist, increasing the export and the production of raw materials inside the country. The social and educational drivers of Sarmedozi included culturalization, expanding institute in other cities, creating a virtual educational platform, and making it easier for those interested in education. Updating motifs, designs, and application, diversity, and innovation, creativity in motifs and production of raw materials inside the country, all are the drivers of innovation in the art of Sermedouzi, which are extracted from the images and actions in this research.

### **Conclusion**

After identifying the drivers, two scenarios including "cypress tree" and "lily flower" have been compiled for the development of this art. In the cypress tree scenario, solutions such as development and promotion, employment and entrepreneurship, home employment, education in schools, construction of sites and programs for creating a sales platform, creation of national and international exhibitions have been proposed to improve the future of the art of Sermehdozi. Suggested solutions in the lily flower scenario include making television programs, interviewing experts and artists, making promotional and educational programs, introducing people to the daintiness and difficulties of this profession and culturalization, making raw materials inside the country, reducing the cost of raw materials, and reviving past designs. Creating new designs, exporting products, creating store and workshop complexes, producing high-quality silk and setting up international exhibitions, the art of Sermedouzi can be included in the global export basket. With the prosperity of the art of Sermedouzi, more artists are attracted to this profession, which will cause economic prosperity and create employment. Finally, by creating more employment and motivation in the workforce, cultural and economic growth can be achieved and a desirable future can be considered for this art.

**Keywords:** Sermehdouzi, traditional embroidery, future studies, scenario writing, Isfahan.