

# The Aesthetics of the Circular Surface in Contemporary Egyptian Mural Painting

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## **Abstract:**

Circles have no beginning or end. They refer to eternity, continuity, and permanence. In all cultures, they refer to the sun or the earth, the universe and planets. Circles are used to refer to familiar things such as tires, and the ball in many fruits. The circular shape It indicates perfection.

There are many functions and concepts related to the circular shape; The circle has a history in many civilizations and religions, as it had a special sanctity in the Yazidi religion in Iraq in the past and now, and the Hindu mandala circle also came calling for spiritual peace and human elevation, and also the circle attended in the pharaonic murals in the form of the sun (the god Ra), as the circle appeared in a large number of European paintings between the Renaissance and the nineteenth century to denote the person's scientific status or religious rank. Schools of modern art, circle has been aggressively used in artistic trends as a primary component of artwork; The Cubist school, for example, used circles and geometric shapes in analyzing their elements and stripping them of details to reach a new dimension in the concept of painting, and in Kandinsky's work also when he began to establish the geometric abstraction trend, in addition to the circle's connection with nature in the works of (Vincent Van Gogh).

The interpretations differed in the symbolic readings of the circle as a surface on which the artwork is applied in contemporary Egyptian murals, so the artistic formations on it varied between philosophical ideas and the expression of nature, human feelings, global events, and referring to the history of a particular country, so the Egyptian artist (Mohamed Banawy) was interested in expressing The four seasons and the natural phenomena that occur in the work of art based on the circle, which indicates the perpetuation of this phenomenon every year, as well as other Egyptian artists whose research topic referred to their artistic experiences in treating the circular surface.

## **Keywords:**

Circular surface, Aesthetics, Mural painting, Contemporary Egyptian

## **The circle as an element of the design:**

Design refers to all the processes required to produce new and unique things by drawing on ideas and personal experience, collecting items, and preparing these items for processing, measurement, and modification.

## **1- Design foundations and elements:**

The point: It is the simplest technical element and it is the beginning of the formation of the artwork, and it is known that it has no dimensions and does not indicate its destination, and most people may see it in the form of a circle.

The line: It is what results from moving the point to a certain direction, or it is a group of interconnected points, and it exists in nature in many forms, including the horizontal, vertical, flowing, spiral, and others.

- Shape (area): It is the area defined by the line by its movement, and it is an area of length, width and height, and shapes vary between geometric shape, irregular shape, automatic shape, and organic shape.

The research here aims to shed light on the organic form:

It is made of circular curves, and the circle is considered a rotating conic sector in a plane parallel to its base, and it is the geometric locus of a moving point so that the distance between them and the point remains fixed called (center), and it is also a set of points that are at a fixed distance (radius) from a fixed point, which is the center.

(Diameter of the circle): It is the line passing through the center of the circle, and connecting two opposite points on the circumference of the circle.

The circle enjoys simplicity, as artists have used it for centuries, and some of them tended to draw numerical circles, taking advantage of the lack of a beginning or end to them, and others produced visual optics by means of lines of symmetry in the circle, and I also discovered some of the techniques used during past ages to produce art The circle, when artists used the circle as the best way to reach their decorating goals.

### **The circle and its importance through previous eras:**

Interest in the circle began before the beginning of history recording, so circles appeared in nature in various forms, such as the moon, the sun, and plants with circular flowers. It is closely related to the geometric shapes of angles, straight segments, and polygons. The polygons that are surrounded by a circle are called circular, meaning that their vertices share a circle, and these polygons have special laws and theorems that apply to them.

The circle was the focus of attention and study, especially among the ancient Greeks; Where the Greek philosophers developed a geocentric model in which they relied on the idea that the Earth is a sphere located at the center of the universe and the heavens, and the rest of the heavenly bodies revolve around it in circles. He considered that the fabric of the universe consists of circular rings around the sun, until "Kepler" reached the reality of the shape of the orbits of the celestial bodies, which are incomplete sectors instead of being circles, and "Newton", identified the conditions that It must be available for the body to follow a circular path.

As for medieval scholars, the circle was associated with religions. Some of them believed that the circle, in its essence, carried something sacred or "perfect and perfect"; From their point of view, it is considered one of the most perfect and perfect geometric shapes and was important in technology, arts, religions and cultures.

### **Ancient Sacred Circles Mythology:**

First: The symbolism of the circle in the "Yazidi" religion:

The religious symbols of the peoples are the main entrance to understanding and realizing the essence of the beliefs that developed their concepts in different stages of time. Circles and

geometric shapes expressed symbols that reflect part of their religious beliefs in different historical stages of human interaction with nature and its vocabulary.

The Yazidis, as an ancient religion in this geographical space of the universe, has in its mythology many concepts that reflect ancient history and extend to date according to rituals and religious practices in joys and sorrows; As in the Yazidi religion, it says: Some legends say that some circles were drawn around the villages so that the Angel of Death would not reach them; It is said that this circuit will be dismantled when the danger is over, and this ritual has been practiced and used to prevent evil, and the alms and bounties accompanying this ritual have been collected.

Their association with the circle was also represented in their strong relationship with nature, as they considered the sun a symbol or embodiment of God. Hence, the circle as a symbol has become an important part of the concepts of their religion. It has to do with perfection, eternal time, the concept of beginning and end, formation, creation, and the forms of their mandates, which constitute the circle with its mythological connotation, a great value that should not be excessive with it.

### **Second: Protection circles in the “Mandaean” religion :**

The Mandaean religion began in Iraq and then spread in many countries and took the circle as an important symbol associated with the rituals of burial of the dead; As after the completion of washing and shrouding the dead and transporting them to their burial place, three circles are placed, denoting the “Alexandula”, and the purpose of these circles is that they preserve the soul and body and prevent animals Predatory from approaching the corpse and devouring it, with the soul remaining in it and which will not leave it until after three days during which these closed circles have been opened... At that time, the soul will have been stripped of the body and left for the atmosphere of the kingdom of the world of lights, and these rituals are adhered to today in Europe and America, Where there are communities of Mandaeans, and despite the progress and awareness spread among them, they still practice their rituals naturally with regard to burial customs and the laying of these circular lines.

### **Third: The Hindu Mandalas Circle:**

Mandalas are a Sanskrit word meaning circle or center, which means that it represents both the visible world around us (the circle is the whole world) and the invisible world deep within our minds and bodies (the central healing circle) of the Native Americans and Rollerboards Tibetan famous for its Hindu religion.

Sand drawing is done on the canvas where each sand mandala has a central point surrounded by a circle and a symmetrical design with deep symbolic meaning. It treats the environment and the people in it .

### **Circles in the arts of ancient civilizations:**

The ancient Egyptians acquired an important amount of knowledge in various fields such as astronomy, engineering and mathematics, and some of what they reached is still adopted today. Long lines across the universe, they believed that the sun is the god (Ra), and they imagined this god being carried on a boat and swimming in space.

During the Renaissance, the artist Leonardo da Vinci painted the famous painting (Vitruvian Man), which the artist painted on a circular basis. and cosmic, the center of man and the universe is based on that circle.

The artist Leonardo da Vinci found during his various studies in anatomy, which have survived to this age, distributed in many manuscripts, that when a person stands in a striking manner, he forms the center of a correct circle.

### **The concept of circular shape in modern photography:**

The plastic experiments enumerated the idea of the geometric symbol and interacted with it in its expressive premises, but the focus on the circle had a different depth of expression, as the circle is the pulse of human existence. This is achieved in the painting (The Starry Night) by Vincent Van Gogh.

The circle was considered the basis of the "Cubism" stage and expressed far-reaching visions of the concept of the image and giving it a new aesthetic value, while being careful not to directly transfer reality, but rather to disintegrate it to reach a moral dimension. Wassily Kandinsky painting (Squares with concentric circles), which is a group of squares inside each square a group of circles that take the same center and start with a large circle with smaller and smaller circles inside. The painting led to the establishment of the trend of "geometric abstraction".

### **The Circle in Contemporary Egyptian Mural Painting:**

The circle is almost one of the most common shapes used in daily life due to its advantages that are not available in other shapes. The circle is a real center for several human issues, which sometimes refer us to formative and existential connotations trapped within it, and we may seek to get out of it, and it may be the center of its surroundings, and with a quick look around us, we can see a huge number of circles, indicating more than one meaning.

Some contemporary mural artists have chosen the circular shape of the painting to suggest and emphasize some things. Circular in shape for all humans, but each sees things from his own point of view and his own vision, and this is evident as in the painting (Iris) by the Egyptian artist "Amr Ali El-Din", where the artist executed the iris of the eye in green with mural materials and the artist's keenness to show the lines that express the capillaries inside The iris in wide areas narrows as we move to the center of the circle, and the whole painting came in green, where the artist means the connection of man with nature, the artist sees that all humans are made of the same mold and that nature is the basis of this common pattern, we are all children of nature, we are born from it and return to it .

### **Circle means crowd for some artists:**

The circle mentally indicates a thought provoking awareness and perception; Circles in their public presence are subject to visions of fate, destiny, destiny and life, regardless of their degrees of acceptance, dense, colorful or absurd, as it was said that the circle protects, it confines and endures...pressing what is inside it and keeping other things outside it. Circles provide safety and communication and they refer to society, integrity and perfection. , as is the idea of the painting (Tahrir Square) by the artist "Mohamed Banawi", and the artist executed it in the

form of a scene for Tahrir Square during the period of the “January Revolution in 2011”. The composition came as the birthplace of a group of people in a coordinated and organized way on the ground of the field to call for freedom and dignity, and the artist expressed them with this system to emphasize the sublimity and sophistication of their goals. The colors and stone materials are all white and den on a gray background to emphasize this meaning, and the composition came crowded in the center of the circle and the details diminished as the eye moved outward to indicate the calm that Happened with time or time.

In another painting, similar in composition and contradictory in meaning, came the painting (Genocide) by the artist Amr Ali El-Din, where the artist expressed in an abstract way the meaning of the genocide known to history in 1944, by “Rafael Lemkin”, that it is the systematic and deliberate destruction entirely or Partially on ethnic, religious or national grounds, we see the general composition of the painting as a circle whose center (middle) is empty and sunken from the rest of the painting, which came full of people concerned with that human issue arranged in the form of lines starting from the empty circle and heading outward, and in another similar meaning For extermination or destruction, comes a mural (the emerging corona virus) by the artist "Mohamed Kishk", in the form of a number, and the artist has depicted it in detail of the virus as it is depicted under the microscope, the general composition is circular in shape and has irregular gel shapes that express the virus and its movement around the center of the circle, Which the artist chose to suggest the continuity and suffering inflicted on humanity as a result of infection with this virus and the difficulty of controlling it. They all felt cold and lonely. Nature and its Relationship to the Circle for Contemporary Artists in Egypt:

In all cultures, the circle refers to the sun, the earth, the universe, and other celestial bodies. The circle has no beginning or end. It indicates eternity and perfection. We find that some artists chose it - that is, the circle - to express permanence and continuity, as many natural phenomena occur permanently. It is annual, continuous and renewed every year as the phenomenon of the four seasons, as the earth does not stop rotating around itself And around the sun as well, which makes the occurrence of the four seasons easier than people expect, and the result of this rotation is the alternation of night and day, and the change of seasons takes a full 360-degree rotation around the sun, which aroused many artists, so they took care of drawing and implementing this phenomenon in their artworks and what results from those The phenomenon, and the artist Mohamed Banawi expressed this event in the collection (The Harvest of the Four Seasons), in which the artist expressed the changes that occur during the year thanks to the rotation of the earth around the sun throughout the year; As a result, the year is divided into four seasons; Every season on the surface of the earth has a specific weather (atmosphere) and a specific situation that has been studied by geology and showed the reasons for its change over time. In the work, the (summer) circle came in yellow, expressing the Earth’s inclination towards the sun with its glowing rays, starting and movement, where the artist’s body, anthropomorphically installed in In the middle of the sea and the two summer resorts to emphasize the idea of movement and the long hours of the day that characterize the summer, while the circle (Spring) expressed by the artist in green to symbolize the growth and greenness that occurs in the spring and the beauty and serenity of the air, the fluctuating sea movement expressed by the artist through two boats ; The large boat contains some human elements and the other is empty to reach a state of contradiction to express the caution that people take during the spring, while the

(autumn) circle comes in reddish brown and in the same condition as the full and empty boats to maintain the same atmosphere of caution from the volatile weather, and the artist's choice of color Brown to express the gloom that autumn brings to the soul, as well as to symbolize the fallen leaves, the cold weather increases and the plants stop growing. Warmth, and next to them is a single compound in which some sick individuals are shrunken, indicating the lack of activity that occurs to people due to the harsh climatic conditions in winter.

In another artistic vision of nature, but influenced by the history of a Turkish city and its effects, comes a mural by the artist "Marwa Qandil", a painting (the city of Adana), which is a landscape reflected under the bridge on the surface of the "Seyhan" river. The general design of the painting came in the form of anthropomorphic circular It combines reality and abstraction, where the artist depicted in the center the "Sabanci Mosque", and its reflection on the Seyhan River, all in a stained glass pane in the middle of the circle, with the undefined and somewhat blurry effect of small mosaic pieces and the colors change and vary in many. Sometimes, the painting is dominated by black, which is the main color in the work, in addition to gray, dark red and dark brown, all of which are a color group that symbolizes the mineral resources and famous stones in the city of "Adana" such as iron, manganese, limestone, clay ... etc., Next to the hues of sunshine, river glints like yellow and orange, and white tones reflected on the surface, all in a circular shape that focuses on Adana as an eye on its past and future.

No matter how different and varied the symbolic connotations of the circle as a cosmic element that contains some puzzles, philosophies, and sometimes the natural lived reality, the world of intellectual, visual, imaginative and natural plastic art took advantage of the flexibility of this shape - that is, the circle - and dealt with it as a space capable of colors and decoration, carrying many meanings.

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