

Original Research Article

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مطالعه تحلیلی نقوش تزیینی منبر مسجد جامع مجموعه «سلطان محمود شاه بندرآباد یزد»

Analytical Study of Decorative Motifs of Pulpit in the Grand Mosque of Sultan Mahmud Shah of Bondorabad Complex in Yazd*

Abstract

Problem Definition: "Sultan Mahmud Shah of Bondarabad" complex in Yazd is a historical building founded in the 7th century A.H. by a religious mystic, Sheikh Taqi al-Din Dada Muhammad, in the village of Bondarabad. This complex includes a mosque, monastery, mausoleum, reservoir, protective towers, and other side buildings that have been formed over several years, different parts of which have various decorations. For example, the pulpit of the Grand (Jameh) Mosque of this building has many decorative motifs. Therefore, the historical importance of this building, as well as the decorative motifs used in the pulpit of its Grand Mosque, necessitated the present research, and during it, the following questions are answered: What kind of decorative motifs does the pulpit of the Grand Mosque of Sultan Mahmud Shah Bondarabad have? What meanings and concepts do these motifs have?

Objective: The current research aims to identify the decorative motifs of the pulpit of the Grand Mosque of Sultan Mahmud Shah in Bondarabad, Yazd, as well as to know their hidden meanings and concepts.

Research Method: The current research has studied the pulpit of Sultan Mahmud Shah Grand Mosque in Bondarabad, Yazd, using a descriptive-analytical method and qualitatively analyzed library, documentary, and field information.

Results: The findings of the present research show that the pulpit of the Grand Mosque of this historical building has been decorated with floral, geometric, inscriptions, and calligraphy motifs. Its plant motifs include Khataei and Arabesque, and its calligraphy motifs include Thulth and Kufic Banaei scripts, and the texts of the inscriptions also express the principle of monotheism and prophethood, the flow of the word of God from the position of the Prophet of Islam (PBUH), and the belief of the Shiites of the Twelve Imams. Also, its geometric motifs include five-pointed stars and a ten-pointed sun, which form the eight-twelve Pili knot.

Keywords

Pulpit, Grand (Jameh) Mosque, Decorative Motifs, Sultan Mahmud Shah Complex, Bondarabad Yazd

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Introduction

One of the less-known historical buildings of Yazd province, most parts of which belongs to the Timurid period, is the collection of Sultan Mahmud Shah in Bondarabad. It includes various parts, such as the Grand (Jame) Mosque, Khaneqah (monastery), tomb, and other side buildings. This historical building was founded by the religious mystic of Yazd, «Sheikh Taqi al-Din Dada Muhammad», in the 7th century A.H. Its management was later under the responsibility of his descendants and gradually, additions were added to its buildings. Next to the altar of the Grand Mosque of this complex is a tiled pulpit, which is unique in terms of the beauty of its decorative motifs. From the point of view of decorative motifs, this pulpit has formed the most productive part of the complex and it can indicate that the artists who created this pulpit have spent a lot of effort in its decorations. For this reason, the current research aims to identify these decorative motifs as well as to know their hidden meanings and concepts, and in the course of it, these questions have been answered: What kind of decorative motifs does the pulpit of the Grand Mosque of Sultan Mahmud Shah have? And what meanings and concepts do these motifs have? In this regard, firstly, the complex of Sultan Mahmud Shah, Grand Mosque, and the pulpit of the Grand Mosque have been introduced, and then the decorative motifs of the Grand Mosque pulpit have been conceptualized and analyzed.

Research Method

The present research method is descriptive-analytical, and its data was collected by searching library, documentary, and field sources. In this regard, the pulpit of Sultan Mahmud Shah Bondarabad Mosque, Yazd, was purposefully selected as the research sample, and its decorative motifs were analyzed by qualitative analysis.

Research Background

In the field of conceptualization of the decorative motifs of the pulpit in the Grand Mosque of Sultan Mahmud Shah Bondarabad, Yazd, no research has been carried out, and the investigations carried out are primarily in the fields of restoration and architecture. For example, the article entitled «Study of the cornering of the dome in Sultan Mahmud Bondarabad complex» (2019) has been done by «Emami Meybodi, Oliya and Tehrani». Its results show the importance of the knowledge of geometry in forming a novel pattern of the mentioned geometric system in the cupola of the tomb of the complex, which offers a different solution from the common tradition of Al-Muzaffar in achieving a regular hexagon under the dome. Also, these authors have identified the age of different parts of this historical building in the article entitled «Review of the Physical Developments (Chronology) of the Sultan Mahmud Bondarabad complex» (2018). In the book entitled «Historical Antiquities of Bondarabad Yazd» written by «Majdzadeh Sahba» (1959), the architecture and tiling decorations of the Bondarabad complex are also examined. «Turkzadeh and Fattahi» (2007) also mentioned the description of the structure of the building, its decorations, and the restoration process in the book entitled «Report on the Restoration Plan of the Sultan Bondarabad complex of Yazd». Among other sources, we can refer to the 13th volume of «Ganjnameh» written by «Haji Ghasemi» (2010), which investigated Imamzadehs and tombs and examined the structure of the building in terms of its decorations and religious function. It is also possible to mention the book entitled «Memorials of Yazd» (1995) written by «Afshar» in which brief explanations about the history of Bondarabad village and Sultan Mahmud Shah Bondarabad complex and other

historical monuments of this village are presented. Regarding the pulpit of Bondarabad Grand Mosque, «Khakbaz Alvandian» (2014) in the article «The restoration process of the tiling pulpit of the Sultan Bondarabad complex of Yazd» has limited references to its decorative motifs, and has discussed more about its restoration process. Also, «O'Kane» (2003) introduced and described five pulpits in the article entitled «Tiled Pulpits of Iran», one of which is the pulpit of the Grand Mosque of Sultan Mahmoud Shah Bondarabad, Yazd. In the existing background, the complex of Sultan Mahmoud Shah Bondarabad has been examined in a brief and limited way, but it should be pointed out that in general, detailed studies on the concept of pulpit decorative motifs have not been carried out, emphasizing the traditionalists' view and form and meaning in religious art, and the future research is not innovative and has the necessary innovation and has provided new information about the semantic dimension of the decorative motifs of the pulpit of the Grand Mosque of Sultan Mahmoud Shah in Bondarabad.

The Grand Mosque of Sultan Mahmud Shah complex in Bondarabad, Yazd

In the Khaneqah (monastery) of Bondarabad complex, one of the children of Sheikh Taqi al-Din Dada Muhammad, named «Sultan Mahmudshah», is buried, and for this reason, today this complex is known as Sultan Mahmud Shah (Ghalam Siyah, 2016, p. 929). According to the documents of Yazd Province Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization, this complex was registered in the list of national monuments of the country in 1346 (A.H.), and the construction date of the building is also 7th century A.H. (See Figure 1). The complex of Sultan Mahmud Shah Bondarabad includes the Grand (Jame) Mosque, Khaneqah (monastery), Tomb, Reservoir, protective towers, and other side buildings that were formed during several different periods (See Figure 2). In recent years, many parts of this historical monument have been taken out from under the quicksand, and other parts are in ruins, and even with restorations, their use cannot be identified definitively (See Figure 3). The building of the Grand (Jame) Mosque is like other mosques of the 8th century A.H. The mosque's courtyard is square, 11 meters long, and 11 meters wide, and there are two 9-meter-wide verandas in the east and west, and the two ends lead to the south dome of the Jameh Mosque. In the south of the courtyard of the Grand Mosque, there is a row with a width of 9 meters, and behind it is a dome with a length and width of 9 meters, which has an altar on its southern wall, and in the northern part of the Grand Mosque, a covered nave can be seen (Afshar, 1995, p. 128). There are four towers on the north and west sides of the Grand Mosque. According to the available documents, this mosque had three entrances. Its two entrances are in the northern and western parts, which have been blocked, and the other entrance is on the northeastern side, which now forms the entrance to the Grand Mosque. After the entrance door, the Grand Mosque's nave is located, which occupies two of its long sides up to the end of the dome. The courtyard of the building is also square. It is located after the Shabestan (bedchamber). Half-story pavilions surround the porch on the three sides of the building, east, west, and south. Behind the porch, you can see the dome built with a long dome arch. Figures 2 and 3 show parts of the plan and building of the Grand Mosque.



Figure 1. A view of Sultan Mahmud Shah's complex in Bondarabad, Yazd. Source: Authors

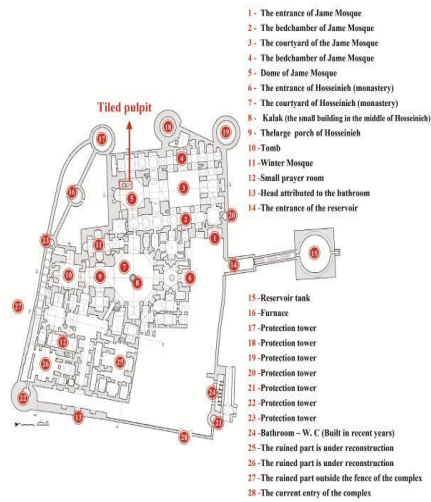


Figure 2. A view of parts of the complex of Sultan Mahmud Shah Bondarabad and the place of the pulpit on the plan. Source: Authors.

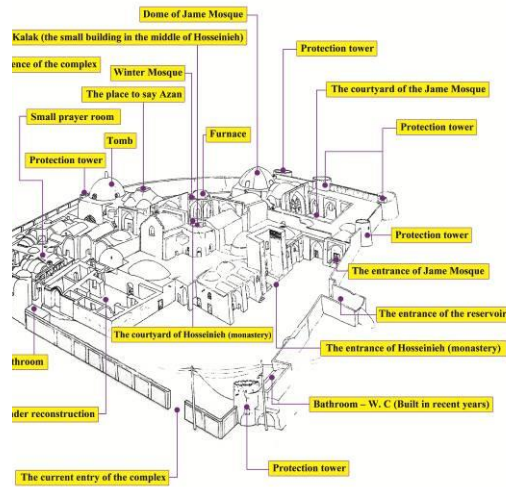


Figure 3. A view of parts of the complex of Sultan Mahmud Shah Bondarabad on a drawing perspective. Source: Authors. Source: Turkzadeh & Fattahi, 2007, p. 75.

Pulpit of the Grand (Jame) Mosque of Sultan Mahmud Shah in Bondarabad, Yazd

The word pulpit means a high place where a preacher speaks to people on top of it. Its Persian equivalent is Korsi, and its English equivalent is Pulpit 2 (Dehghani & Samanian, 2015, p. 30). The origin of the formation of the pulpit goes back to the beginning of Islam, where the Holy Prophet (PBUH) sat on top of it and communicated divine revelation to the people (Dehghani & Samanian, 2015, p. 31). The Grand Mosque of the Sultan Bondarabad complex has a 13-step tiled pulpit that has the most elaborate decorations (See Figure 4). "Lisa Golombek" estimated the approximate date of 844 to 875 AH for the pulpit and its decorations; she has presented this history in comparison with other mosques with pulpits and tiled decorations, such as Kashan, Abrandabad, and Firoozabad mosques (Emami Meybodi, 2008, p. 95). Paying attention to the placement of the pulpit on the surface of the finished floor of the Grand Mosque and the beginning of the marble tiling on the brick floor, as well as the interruption of the decorations of plaster casts by its shelter walls, strengthens the possibility that the pulpit of the Grand Mosque of Sultan Mahmud Shah Bondarabad belongs to the post-construction period of the mosque (Emami Meybodi, 2008, p. 94). The materials used in it include clay (adobe), plaster mortar, soil, and straw (thatch) (Khakbaz Alvandian, 2014, p. 21).



Figure 4. Sultan Mahmud Shah Bondarabad Grand Mosque pulpit. Source: Authors.

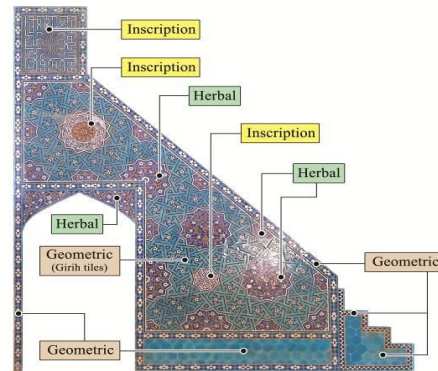


Figure 5. Locating of tiled motifs of the pulpit of the Grand Mosque of Sultan Mahmud Shah Bondarabad Yazd. Source: Authors.

All kinds of decorative motifs on the pulpit of Grand Mosque of Sultan Mahmud Shah Bondarabad, Yazd


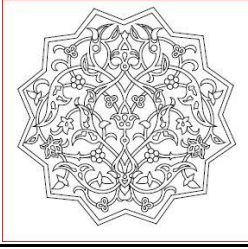



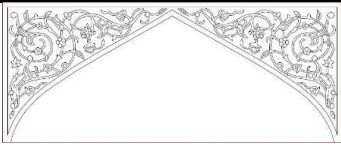
The pulpit of the Grand Mosque of Sultan Mahmud Shah Bondarabad complex has a lot of decorative motifs of mosaic tiles and includes plant motifs, inscriptions, and geometry (See Figure 5). Also, the decorative motifs on both sides of the pulpit are symmetrical; with the difference that on its western side, Islamic motifs have been engraved inside a twelve-pointed star, and on its eastern side, an inscription has been drawn with a thul script and the theme of great blessings (Khakbaz Alvandian, 2014, p .21).

Analysis and conceptualization of plant motifs in the pulpit of the Grand Mosque of Sultan Mahmud Shah Bondarabad, Yazd

In the pulpit of the Grand Mosque, these plant motifs include Khataei and Arabesque motifs that decorate the inner parts of the eight-pointed and twelve-pointed stars and above the arched opening of the pulpit. Khataei motifs are a collection of flowers, buds, leaves, and stems that are placed on a spiral structure and are designed, in most cases, with arabesque motifs (Eskanderpour Khorrami, 2000, p. 6). Khataei patterns represent plants, God's creations, and signs of divine power. With this design, the artist has looked at plants as a manifestation of the power of truth and has actually referred to verse 60 of Surah Mubarakah-e Naml (Zekavat & Ghazizadeh, 2019, p. 73). Arabesque motifs are also decorative motifs in the shape of a plant with spiral stems and a type of motif including complex lines and curves and various circular arcs whose beginning and end are unclear (Zekavat & Ghazizadeh, 2019, p. 73). «André Godard» believes that the plant-based Arabesque motifs have been removed from nature by the artist and abstracted, which is a state that shows stability in change; in fact, these motifs create a special spiritual state that indicates the world of monotheism (Memarzadeh, 2007, p. 206). Monotheism is the main basis of the Islamic religion, and «creatures came into existence by the grace of the divine appearance of honor and are considered a reflection of his presence. The presence of this principle in Islamic art creates the principle of unity in the same diversity and multiplicity in the same unity, and Islamic art manifests this unity by choosing a special form that is a unique combination of abstraction and reality» (Ghorbani, 2015, p. 116). For this reason, it has a desire for abstraction and adheres to reality, and the adaptation of Islamic motifs is

summarized in this matter (Ghorbani, 2015, p. 116). In the structure of the Grand Jameh Mosque pulpit of the Sultan Mahmud Shah Bondarabad complex, these plant motifs and Islamic motifs are drawn symmetrically with turquoise blue, azure blue, black, white, and fawn colors (See Table 1).

Table 1. Vegetal motifs (Islamic, Khataei) in the decorations of the pulpit of the Grand Mosque of the Sultan Mahmud Shah collection in Bondarabad, Yazd. Source: (Authors).

row	Khataei and Arabesque motifs in the structure of the pulpit	Lined images of decorative motifs	Descriptions
1			The combination of Khataei and Arabesque motifs
	<p>Figure 6. Details of decorative plant motifs on the pulpit of the Grand Mosque of Sultan Mahmud Shah Bondarabad. Source: Authors.</p>	<p>Figure 7. Linear details of plant decorative motifs on the pulpit of the Grand Mosque of the Sultan Mahmud Shah Bondarabad complex. Source: Khakbaz Alvandian, 2014, p. 22.</p>	
2			The combination of Khataei and Arabesque motifs
	<p>Figure 8. Details of decorative plant motifs on the pulpit of the Grand Mosque of Sultan Mahmud Shah Bondarabad. Source: Authors.</p>	<p>Figure 9. Linear details of plant decorative motifs on the pulpit of the Grand Mosque of the Sultan Mahmud Shah Bondarabad complex. Source: Khakbaz Alvandian, 2014, p. 22.</p>	
3			The combination of Khataei and Arabesque motifs
	<p>Figure 10. Details of decorative plant motifs on the pulpit of the Grand Mosque of Sultan Mahmud Shah Bondarabad. Source: Authors.</p>	<p>Figure 11. Linear details of plant decorative motifs on the pulpit of the Grand Mosque of the Sultan Mahmud Shah Bondarabad complex. Source: Khakbaz Alvandian, 2014, p. 22.</p>	

Analysis and Conceptology of Calligraphic Designs and Inscriptions in the Pulpit of the Grand Mosque of Sultan Mahmud Shah Bondarabad, Yazd

Calligraphy and handwriting have a very important place in Islamic art. It is worth mentioning that the sacred art of Islam has a direct relationship with the Qur'anic and divine words and revelation in terms of form and meaning and includes various forms of expression. But in more precise terms, it includes architecture and calligraphy, which are mixed with the texture and meaning of the Qur'an, and the roots of their formation should be sought in it (Nasr, 1991, p. 39). It should also be said that the importance of handwriting, calligraphy, and writing is emphasized in the Qur'an, and this Qur'anic verse is also a testimony to this claim: «Noon val-Qalam va Ma yasturun: Noon swears by the pen and what writes.» (Surah Qalam, verse 68) The science of calligraphy is rooted in the truths of the Qur'anic revelation, and the art of calligraphy through this science, which is the basis of the rules of different styles of traditional calligraphy, expresses special cosmic correspondences and, through symbolism, reveals truths of a cosmic nature (Ghorbani, 2015, p. 96). In the art of calligraphy, the dimensions and proportions of the letters, in playing with images, especially represent some attributes and characteristics of God. For example, God's glory, power, and supremacy are represented through vertical lines, especially line ALEF, which is a symbol of unity or monotheism and leaves its mark on the weights or rhythms of speech (Ahsant & Godarzi Soroush, 2017, pp. 117- 116); beauty, grace, and resolution are displayed through horizontal lines, under which signs and movements are written like the notes of a musical score (Rahmati, 2011, p. 203). In this regard, Burckhardt also considers calligraphy as the geometry of the soul and believes that calligraphy obeys the rules of the soul and that the heart is dominant over the human soul. From here, the direct manifestations of the soul go beyond the border of self-awareness (Burckhardt, 2007, p. 60). Therefore, the external forms of calligraphy can be considered to represent existences and, simultaneously, a direct symbol of spiritual realities in the minds of Muslims (Ghorbani, 2015, p. 97). The pulpit of Grand Jameh Mosque of Sultan Mahmud Shah Bondarabad complex is decorated with calligraphic motifs, and three inscriptions with distinct colors and calligraphy can be seen on the pulpit. The smallest inscription on the pulpit is white. It is located on an azure background and inside one of the octagonal suns. It contains the words There is no God but God, Muhammad is the Messenger of God «لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله» which has been written in Kufic calligraphy and drawn symmetrically. This inscription can be seen on both sides of the pulpit (See Table 2; Figures 7 & 8). It should be said that the sun or multi-pointed stars in some works of Islamic art are symbols of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) (Hosseini, 2011, p. 11). Also, the inscription with the shape of the sun can be a reference to verse 35 of Surah «Nor», which states that God is the absolute light of existence, and the phrase Shahadatain or «لا اله الا الله، محمد رسول الله» There is no god but God, Muhammad is the Messenger of God also expresses two important Islamic beliefs, namely monotheism and prophethood. But the other inscription of the pulpit has been engraved inside the rectangular space of the upper part of the pulpit or its square crown. The phrase «نصر من الله وفتح قريب و بشر المؤمنين» can be seen in the Kufic calligraphy inside it, which emphasizes the 13th verse of Surah «Al-Saf». It should be noted that the word «مؤمنين» in this verse, «مؤمنان» has been written on the inscription, which may have been unintentionally changed in the restoration of the tiles (See Table 2, Figure 12). This inscription was made next to the highest step of the pulpit. Burckhardt believes that the oldest extant pulpits have seven to eleven steps. The justification for this large number of

steps can be explained as follows: According to Islamic customs, the Imam is obliged to deliver the Friday sermon on one of the lower steps of the pulpit and the steps above the pulpit, especially the highest one, is the place of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). For this reason, it is always kept empty. According to the knowledge and piety of the Imam and preacher, a step is assigned to him. (Burckhardt, 1986, p. 104). Therefore, writing this inscription on the highest step of the pulpit indicates that the Qur'anic verse was revealed to the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and asked to promise the believers a great victory from God. This inscription conveys the word of God from the position of the Prophet (PBUH). In the middle of the inscription and at the junction of the decorative lines, there is a parallel geometric shape that is separated from the text of the inscription with a fawn color, and in the middle of it, there is a pattern in the shape of a cross or crucifix. According to experts, this number 4 is derived from the crucifix's shape, meaning that Satan misleads humanity from four directions: front, back, right, and left, so to speak, at any time and place. (Esfandiari, 2009, p. 10). This concept is understood that a person wins over Satan when he engages in Jihad with him, and the placement of the fawn-colored geometric pattern with azure blue edges in the center of the inscription strengthens this claim. The writings of the inscription have been engraved in white color with azure blue borders on a blue-turquoise background, and a frame with three colors of fawn, black, and blue-turquoise has been drawn and painted on the edges of the inscription (Table 2, Figure 13.). The other most prolific inscription on the pulpit is the one on which the phrase "Salawat-e-Kabirah" is written in the third script. Salawat-e-Kabirah, prayers, and praises are due to the twelve infallible Shia Imams and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The inscription of Salawat-e-Kabirah on the pulpit is located between the arched opening at the back of the pulpit and the inscription on the square crown of the pulpit. This inscription consists of two small and large circles, which have been engraved inside one of the twelve-pointed stars of the pulpit. The combination of the twelve names of the innocent Imams and the twelve-pointed star refers to the principle of Imamate and guardianship in Shiite belief. The names of the infallible Imams bring to mind the concept that divine truth can emerge from the window of the infallibles' luminous existence. In this way, the Alevi Tariqat creates an essential unity with the Prophetic Law. (Siyahkohiyan, 2010, p. 57). In the outer margin of the large circle of the inscription, the words «اللهم صل على محمد المصطفى على المرتضى حسن المجتبي حسين الشهيد بكر بلاء على زين العابدين محمد الباقر»

«علي موسى الرضا God bless Ali Muhammad al-Mustafi Ali al-Mortaza Hasan al-Mujtabi Hossein al-Shaheed Bakr Bala Ali Zain al-Abdin Muhammad al-Baqir Jafar al-Sadiq and Musa al-Kazim" have been written and in its inner margin the words

«علي موسى الرضا Ali Musa al-Reza محمد التقي على النقي حسن العسكري الحجة القائم و اله عليهم اجمعين الطيبين الطاهرين»

Muhammad al-Taqi Ali-e-Naqi Hassan al-Askari Al-Hojjat al-Qa'im and Allah Alaihim Ajmain al-Taybin al-Taheerin" have been written. In the small circle inside the larger circle, the phrase «وصل على» Wa Sall-e Ala" has been similarly repeated twelve times, and from these repetitions, the geometric pattern of the twelve-pointed star has been formed. Placing the names of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the twelve Imams (pbuh) in a circle and rotating them around a center shows their unity. The sun-like center of the circle, a twelve-pointed star with a fawn color, points to the Supreme Being. In general, it is understood that these innocents follow one principle, namely the holy essence of God. Fawn-colored triangles have also been drawn in the circumference of the larger circle, which are like rays of sunlight and refer to the meaning of verse 35 of Surah Nor. The writings of the big circle have been drawn in white and on a blue background with fawn-colored Arabs, and the

writings of the small circle have been drawn in fawn color and on a black background, and the peripheral lines of both circles are also white (See Table 2, Figures 14 & 15).

Table 2. Calligraphic patterns and inscriptions in the decorations of the pulpit of the Grand Mosque of Sultan Mahmud Shah Bondarabad, Yazd. Source: Authors.

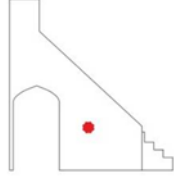
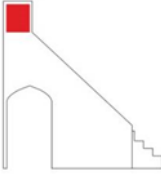
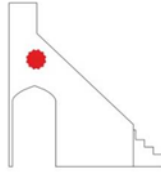



<p>The position of the inscription on the pulpit</p>			
<p>Figure of the inscription</p>			
<p>Location</p>	<p>On both sides of the pulpit, the center of the pulpit.</p>	<p>On both sides of the pulpit, the highest part of the pulpit or the square crown.</p>	<p>On one side of the pulpit, above the arched opening of the pulpit</p>

Figure 11. The position of the inscription «There is no God but God» «لا اله الا الله» on the pulpit. Source: Authors.

Figure 14. The location of the inscription «نصر من الله وفتح قريب و «Nasr o Menallah wa Fathon Gharib wa Basher al-Mu'menan» on the surface of the pulpit. Source: Authors.

Figure 16. The position of the inscription «Salawat-e-Kabirah» on the pulpit. Source: Authors.

Figure 12. The position of the inscription «There is no God but God» «لا اله الا الله» on the pulpit. Source: Authors.

Figure 15. Calligraphic inscriptions of the inscription «نصر من الله وفتح قريب و بشرالمومنان» «Nasr o Men Allah wa Fatahon Gharib wa Basher al-Mu'menan» on the surface of the pulpit. Source: Authors.

Figure 17. The position of the inscription «Salawat-e-Kabirah» on the pulpit. Source: Authors.

Figure 13. The calligraphy of the inscription «لا اله الا الله» «There is no God but God» on the pulpit. Source: Khakbaz Alvandian, 2014, 23.



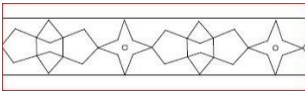
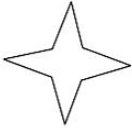
Figure 18. Calligraphic patterns of the inscription «Salawat-e-Kabira» on the pulpit. Source: Khakbaz Alvandian, 2014, p. 23.

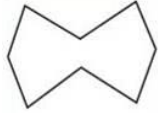
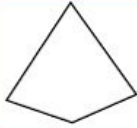

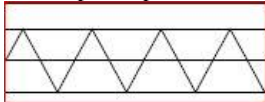

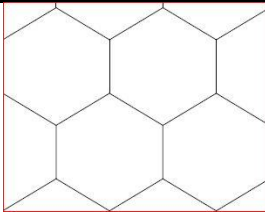
The text of the inscription	There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.	Help and support from God and victory is near, O Prophet, give glad tidings to the believers.	The phrase «Salawat-e-Kabirah».
Execution type	Mosaic	Mosaic	Mosaic
Type of writing	Kufic Banaei	Kufic Banaei	Thoth
Colors used	White, azure blue	Black, white, azure blue, turquoise blue, fawn	Black, white, azure blue, turquoise blue, fawn
Reason for use	Referring to the principles of monotheism and prophethood in Muslim beliefs.	A symbol of the word of God flowing from the position of the Prophet of Islam (PBUH).	Blessings on the twelve Shiite Imams and reference to the principles of Shiite belief.


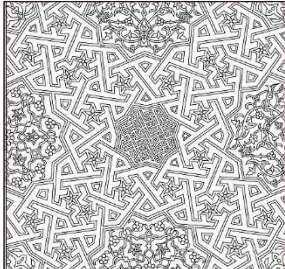
Analysis and conceptualization of geometric motifs on the pulpit of the Grand Mosque of Sultan Mahmoud Shah in Bondarabad, Yazd

Geometric motifs are important and widely used decorative motifs in Islamic art, and the artist follows the rules of geometry and mathematics to draw geometric motifs. Systematic order and structure govern the principles of mathematics, and the use of this type of motifs in the decoration of Islamic works of art refers to the systematicity of the world and the wisdom of the creation of existence (Zekavat & Ghazizadeh, 2019, p. 75). «Nasr» believes that geometric motifs in Islamic art have an encrypted content and are a symbol of multiplicity in the same unity, and in other words, the endless multiplicity of creation (Nasr, 1998, p. 143). Geometry is the secret of the unity of existence throughout the multiplicity of levels of existence, and the flow of the single thing in all levels of the world and existence is the source of the unity of this glorious and lawful order in all its levels (Afifi, 2001, p. 328). In the decorations of the Grand Mosque of Sultan Mahmud Shah in Bondarabad, Yazd, various geometric motifs include three categories. The first category is the motifs that exist on the sides of the pulpit (See Table 3, Figures 19 to 26), and the second category is the hexagonal tiling motifs that have been located in the lowest part of the pulpit (See Table 3, Figures 27 & 28), and the third category includes geometric knot motifs. Almost most of the surface of the pulpit is decorated with them (See Table 3, Figures 29 & 30).

Table 3. All kinds of geometric motifs used in the pulpit of the Grand Mosque of Sultan Mahmoud Shah Bondarabad, Yazd. Source: Authors.

Row	Images of geometric motifs in the pulpit structure	Lined images of decorative motifs	Explanations
1	 <p>Figure 19. Geometric motifs on the edges of the pulpit structure. Source: Authors.</p>  <p>Figure 20. Geometric motifs on the edges of the pulpit structure. Source: Authors.</p>	 <p>Figure 21. Geometric patterns of the edges of the pulpit structure in a linear way. Source: Khakbaz Alvandian, 2014, p. 23.</p> 	Patterns on the sides of the pulpit: the combination of the four-pointed or four-pointed star, the sharp drum, the slow clarinet, and the guive, and repeating the pattern of the triangle or the pattern of the

		<p>Figure 22. The linear pattern of the four-pointed or four-pointed star. Source: http://chap.sch.ir/</p>  <p>Figure 23. of the linear pattern of the fast drum. Source: http://chap.sch.ir/</p>  <p>Figure 24. Tangerine linear pattern. Source: http://chap.sch.ir/</p>  <p>Figure 25. Linear pattern of mercury. Source: http://chap.sch.ir/</p>  <p>Figure 26. Geometric patterns of the edges of the pulpit structure in a linear way. Source: Khakbaz Alvandian, 2014, p. 23.</p>	<p>six-pointed star, which is reproduced in the form of a half-star.</p>
<p>2</p>	 <p>Figure 27. The geometric motifs of the lower part of the pulpit are regular hexagons. Source: Authors.</p>	 <p>Figure 28. The geometric motifs of the lower part of the pulpit are linear, regular hexagons. Source: Khakbaz Alvandian, 2014, p. 23.</p>	<p>Patterns of the lower part of the pulpit: regular hexagon</p>

<p>3</p>	 <p>Figure 29. Geometric knot motifs in the pulpit. Source: Authors.</p>	 <p>Figure 30. Geometric knot motifs in the pulpit in a linear form. Source: Khakbaz Alvandian, 2014, p. 23.</p>	<p>Geometric knot motifs: eight-twelve-pili knot</p>
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It is worth mentioning that the knots form the geometric motifs of the central surfaces of the pulpit. A knot is a set of geometric shapes drawn together in a special and coherent order in a specific context (Samanian, 2008, p. 7). Knots are complex tissues with a regular and homogeneous composition and can be expanded from all sides without causing a change in their regular and harmonious composition (Hayati & Aghamuhammadi, 2016, p. 16). Knotting has a special use in the art of Islamic architecture, and its various types are used in arts such as inlaying, tiling, plastering, making intarsias, brickwork, mirrorwork, stonework, and blacksmithing (Helli, 1986, p. 63). The geometric decorations of the pulpit of the Sultan Mahmud Shah complex in Bondarabad include Pili knots. In specialized terms, it is called the eight-twelve-pili knot. The reason for its name is the formation of eight-pointed and twelve-pointed stars in the knot distribution. It seems that the Pili knot is simplified and evokes the word «علي Ali» (See Figure 31); of course, in the image of Pili on the pulpit, the letter «ع» is repeated five times around the axis of a five-pointed star. The number five is a sacred number and is related to the concept of «five people of Al- e-Abba» in Shiite thought and expresses it, and the middle star is also associated with the word «Allah (الله)» (See Figure 31). Also, the Pili knot consists of a twelve-pointed star and twelve five-pointed stars along it, which emphasizes the twelve Imams of Shiites (See Figure 32). Another concept that is inferred from this role is related to verses 19 to 22 of Surah Al-Rahman. In these verses, it is mentioned that two seas meet and do not merge and do not exceed each other's boundaries. «Yahya bin Saeed Qattan» said: «I heard from Imam Sadiq (A.S.) that in the commentary of verse 19 of Surah Al-Rahman, he said: Ali and Fatimah are two deep seas that neither oppress the other and «pearls and corals» in verse 22 Surah «Al-Rahman» means Hassan and Hossain who come out of these two seas» (Sheikh Sadouq, vol. 1, 1983, p. 65; Fatal Nishabouri, vol. 1, 1996, p. 148 & Qomi, vol. 2, 1983, p. 344). In some quotes, in addition to the above narration, the Prophet of Islam (PBUH) has been mentioned as an example of «بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخٌ» «Baynahuma Barzakh» (between them, purgatory) (Ibn Ughda Kufi, 2003, p. 216). This narration is also narrated in Sunni sources (Haskaee, vol. 2, 1990, p. 284 & Siyuti, vol. 6, 1983, p. 142-143). According to existing Traditions and Ahadith (narratives), the word «Purgatory» in the mentioned verses refers to the grace of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and «Pearl and Marjan», Hassan (PBUH) and Hussein (PBUH), the children of Hazrat Ali (PBUH) and Hazrat Fatimah (PBUH) have been introduced (Rabi Nataj & Khalili, 2016, p. 91). With more precision in the Pili knots, it seems that these turquoise geometric motifs are similar to sea waves that surround the

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twelve-pointed stars, and two small white stars are formed at their intersection, and this is a kind of independence and coherence of the motifs in maintaining their limits. It shows their lack of mixing or encroachment (See Figure 33). But another hadith(narrative) that is related to these motifs is a story in which God emphasizes having five lights to escape from the fire of hell, and these five lights were mentioned by Hazrat Mohammad Mustafa (PBUH), Hazrat Ali Mortaza (A.S.), Imam Hassan (A.S.), Imam Hussain (A.S.) and Hazrat Fatimah (S.A) introduce that these five people are known among Shiites as «the five people of Al Aba» and this article is to express the point that they have a sacred dignity and a pure position in the presence of God. Another point also points to the importance of friendship and holding on to the bosom of these innocents, who are the guardians and protectors of the believers against the fire of hell (Shayestehfar, 2002, p. 89). The meaning of this hadith (narrative) can be seen in the general scope of the image of Pili, and the image of Pili with turquoise blue color as five tones, like a cooling force, has prevailed over the color of henna, which has the power of fire, and this itself expresses the concept of protection against fire.

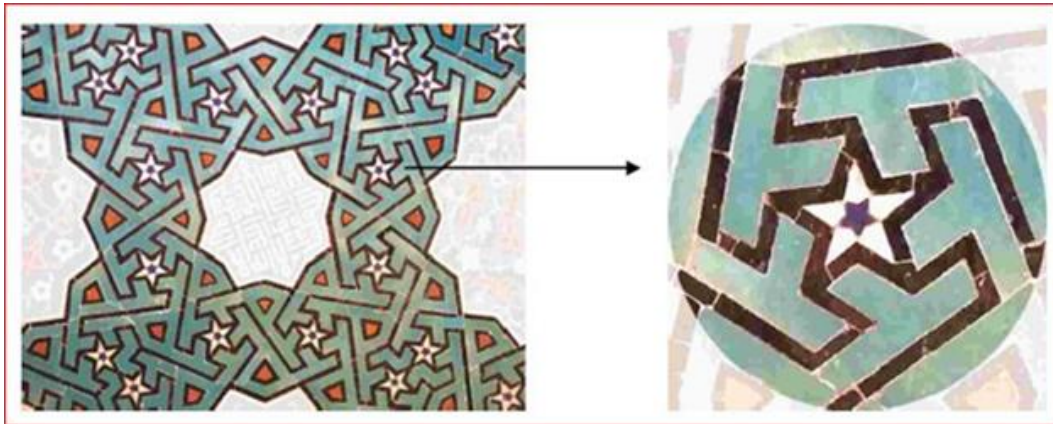


Figure 31. Circling the letter «ع» 5 times around the five-pointed star in the role of Pili in decorating the pulpit of the Grand Mosque of Sultan Mahmud Shah in Bondarabad. Source: Authors.

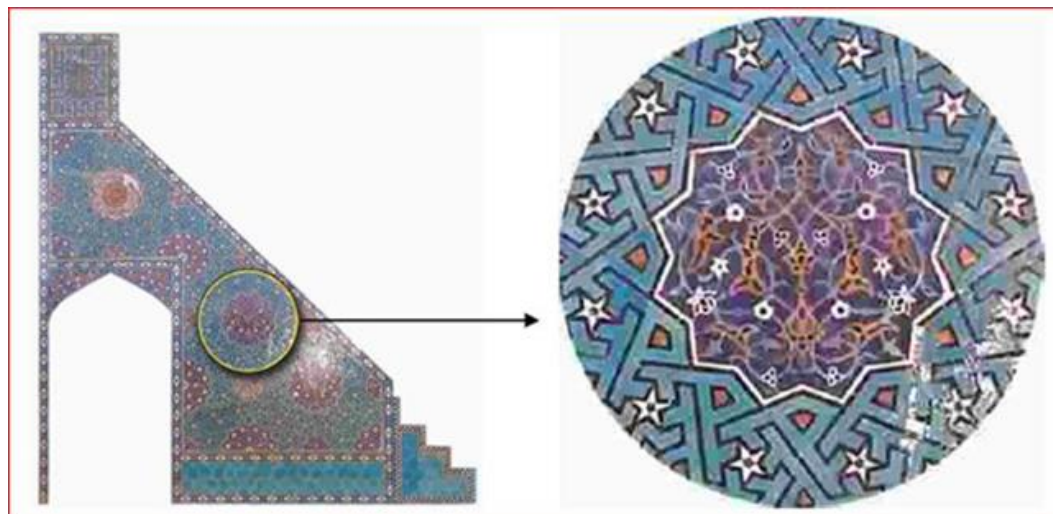


Figure 32. Twelve five-pointed stars around the twelve-pointed star. Source: Authors.

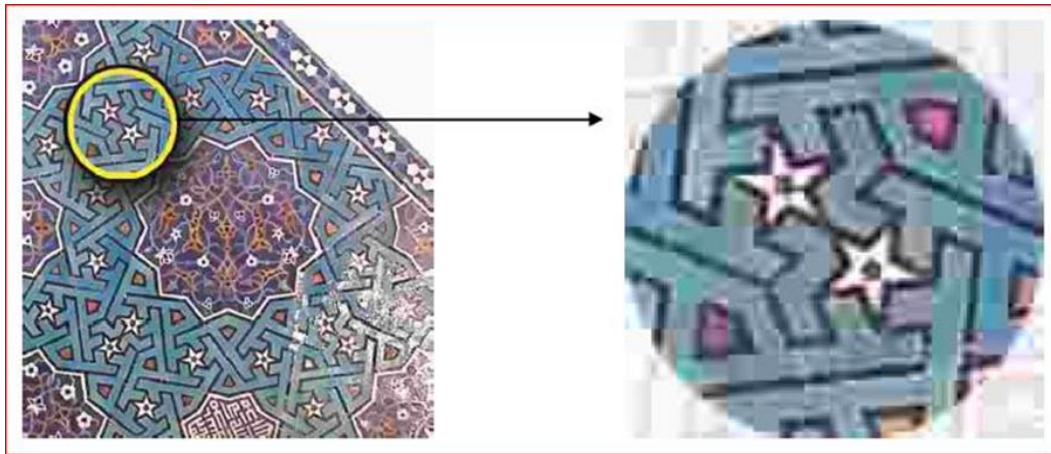


Figure 33. The formation of two five-pointed stars at the intersection of Pili motifs, source: Authors.

Conclusion

The research results show that the pulpit of Grand Jameh Mosque of Sultan Mahmud Shah in Bondarabad Yazd has decorative plant motifs (Arabesque and Khataei), inscriptions, calligraphy, and geometry. Khataei motifs represent the universe's plants and are signs of divine power and beauty. Arabesques are abstract plant motifs and a symbol of the world of monotheism, and both of these motifs express the concept of unity in multiplicity and multiplicity in unity in spiral rotations and in a similar state. The motifs of the inscriptions also include Kufic scripts of construction and thulth, and their content is the sentences «لا اله الا الله» "There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah", «اللهم صل على محمد المصطفى على المرتضى حسن المجتبي حسين الشهيد بكر بلاء» "Verse 13 of Surah «Saf» and «Blessing of God upon Ali Muhammad al-Mustafi Ali al-Mortaza Hassan al-Mujtabi Hossein al-Shaheed Be Karbla Ali Zeyn al-Abdin Muhammad al-Baqir Jafar al-Sadiq and Musa al-Kazim" and It contains the words «على موسى الرضا محمدالتقى على النقى حسن العسكري الحجة القائم و اله عليهم اجمعين الطيبين الطاهرين» «Ali Musa al-Reza Muhammad al-Taqi Ali al-Naqi Hassan al-Askari al-Hijjah al-Qaim wa Allah Alaihim Ajmain al-Taybeen al-Tahirin» which contain Shiite concepts and religious and mystical thoughts. It is worth mentioning that one of the most important geometric motifs of the pulpit is the motif of the eight-twelve-pili knot, which is associated with the name of Hazrat Ali (A.S). Also, the combination of the four-pointed star or the four-pointed star, the sharp drum, the slow clarinet, and the guive, and the repetition of the triangle pattern or the six-pointed star pattern that is reproduced in the form of a half-star, and the regular hexagonal pattern are other geometric decorations of this pulpit, and these motifs are reminiscent of the orderly, proportional, and mathematical system of the universe and the wisdom is the creation of the world, and the concept of divine monotheism and the multiplicity of the universe is deduced from the symbolic and mathematical representation of these motifs. In general, the pulpit of the Grand Jameh Mosque of Sultan Mahmud Shah in Bondarabad, Yazd, is a combination of Islamic and Khataei plant motifs, geometrical and linear motifs, and inscriptions that form a coherent whole. The artist aims to represent Islamic and Shia beliefs, and the three principles of monotheism, prophethood, and Imamate (wilayat) are their central concepts.

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