

Original Research Article

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بررسی شاخصه‌های گرافیکی تزئینات درب چوبی مسجد سعیدین جبیر بنای درب امام

Investigating the Graphic Characteristics of the Wooden Door Decorations of the Sa'id ibn Jubayr Mosque, Darb-e Imam Building*

Abstract

Problem Definition: Among traditional arts, Islamic architecture and related decorations have always been a suitable platform for the presence of various visual elements, especially decorative arrays. Imamzadeh Darb-e Imam of Isfahan belongs to the Qara Qoyunlu Turkomans period and despite the historical research on the mentioned building, the visual elements of the decorations have been less investigated. A remarkable part of the building's decorations includes wooden works, including wood-carved doors. Among the wooden doors, an old door belonging to the Sa'id ibn Jubayr mosque and the Turkomans period can be seen, however, because of the damages caused to the door due to the passing of time, basically its decorations and features have been less discussed. The issue raised here is to analyze the decorations of the mentioned door, to know it more precisely, and to check the transferable capacity of the artistic dimensions of its decorations to the contemporary period. This study answers the question of this research, which is to know the themes and content of the motifs of this historical work, by examining the meaning of the motifs of the mentioned door and evaluating the features and visual values.

Objective: This research aims to know the visual features and themes of the motifs, distinguish the motifs used in the Turkomans period in the decorations of the mentioned wooden door, read the text of the inscriptions, and reconstruct the decorations.

Research Method: The current research has been carried out using a descriptive-analytical method and data collection has been done based on library sources, documents, and field research.

Results: The results show that in the inscription on the mentioned door, the phrase (لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله على ولي) and the other inscription, the phrase (و توکل علی الله و کفی بالله وکیلا) are written. Geometric patterns, hexagrams, and round star-shaped flowers are among the frequent motifs of the Turkomans period, which are used in decorations. Considering that the qualities and visual literacy are observed in these motifs, they can be used today in branches of contemporary art.

Keywords

Imamzadeh Darb-e Imam, Sa'id ibn Jubayr Mosque, Carving, Wooden Door, Inscription, Visual Qualities, Isfahan

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Introduction

Between the 7th and 9th centuries AH, many arts flourished, among which the art of architecture can be mentioned. The Qara Qoyunlu Turkomans left behind valuable works with Shiite themes in architecture and painting, and their religious tendencies towards Shiism can be seen in the architectural works, especially the Darb-e Imam Building. One of the decorative arts used in this Imamzadeh is woodworking, and the use of the streaks, color, and natural texture of the wood is one of the features that have been noticed by the artist in its construction. This art can be seen in the doors of this Imamzadeh. One of the significant doors that has received little attention from researchers is the old door belonging to Sa'id ibn Jubayr Mosque, which is decorated with Arabesque motifs and inscriptions. The problem of the current research is to investigate the potential visual capabilities of the mentioned motifs on the wooden door and to deal with the visual characteristics and transferable capacities of the artistic dimensions of these motifs to the contemporary period. Since a large part of its decorations have been eroded and despite the importance and age of this historical work, no research has been done in this field so far and the need to address it is perceived. The purpose of this research is to know the visual characteristics of the decorations, identify the themes of the motifs, recognize the motifs used by the Turkomans period in the decorations of the mentioned wooden door, read the text of the inscriptions, and reconstruct the motifs to preserve them. In this regard, the questions raised are as follows: How can the visual characteristics and details of the wooden works of the Darb-e Imam building be evaluated? In which part of the wooden door decorations of Sa'id ibn Jubayr mosque, the features of Turkomans era decorations can be seen? The wooden works of the Darb-e Imam building have a special status, and the plant, geometric motifs, and inscriptions in the Thuluth and Kufic script are still able to be used in contemporary graphics while hundreds of years have passed since they were made.

Research Method

The present research method is descriptive-analytical and most of the data is based on library sources, documents, and field research. First, the characteristics of Qara Qoyunlu art are described from historical, political, geographical, cultural, and artistic perspectives. Then the historical background of the Darb-e Imam building and the Sa'id ibn Jubayr mosque are discussed, and the decorations on the wooden walls of the mentioned mosque are analyzed, investigated, and reviewed.

Research Background

The course of studies around the Darb-e Imam building has tended to focus more on historical research and decoration, and less attention has been paid to Sa'id ibn Jubayr mosque. The main studies in the field of Imamzadeh Darb-e Imam in Isfahan have been historical research, structural and technical investigations, the introduction of decorations, and the introduction of Imamzadehs buried in the shrine of Darb-e Imam, and so far no research has been done on the wooden door of this mosque. All the sources that will be mentioned in the following are related to the topic of the research in terms of introducing the background of the Darb-e Imam and can be used as a suitable sources for identifying its decorations. The book entitled «The Treasure of Historical Monuments of Isfahan», by «Honarfar» (1971) provides a complete description of all the historical works of Isfahan and is considered one of the sources of Isfahan research, especially in the field of ancient tablets and inscriptions. On pages 341-352 of the mentioned book, the reading of the

inscriptions of the Imamzadeh Darb-e Imam has been addressed, the inscriptions of the Sa'id ibn Jubayr mosque have also been mentioned, and a brief history of the mosque has been described. In a research article in the field of «Historical Collection: Darb-e Imam of Isfahan», by «Kheradmand» (1976), while dealing with the text of the inscriptions and stone tablets, the historical background, geographical location, and introduction of the monument's burials have been discussed. In his doctoral dissertation entitled «The aesthetic value in Safavid woodcarving style», «Kianmehr» (2004) investigated the characteristics of Iranian woodcarving art throughout history and dynasties, and while pointing to the wood-carved doors of the Darb-e Imam's monument, he explored their decorations and composition. «Gheysi et al» (2017) conducted a research entitled «Esthetics of gold lantern decorations in the Hazrat Masoumeh (PBUH) Astaneh Museum based on structure», with an aesthetic approach to investigate the structure, color, motifs, and decorations, lanterns made of gold during the Qajar period available at Hazrat Masoumeh (PBUH) Astaneh Museum. Also, «Salehi et al.» (2019) conducted research entitled «Analyzing the elements of the Kufic inscription of Shushtar (Grand) Mosque», aiming at knowing the details of the inscription and answering the question of what is the special feature of the elements of the inscription and their quantitative diversity. According to what has been described, the research and studies that have been carried out in this field are in the context of the historical background of the Darb-e Imam, the motifs, plant and geometric patterns, and stone inscriptions, and in none of the mentioned sources, the wooden door of Sa'id ibn Jubayr mosque is the subject of the research. Besides, the conducted research studies can be used as a suitable source to know the status of the building, its history and architectural characteristics, and its historical background.

Qara Qoyunlu Reign

In the 8th and 9th centuries AH, the Oghuz Turks allied with other Turks and Mongol clans, which was called Turkmen. At the beginning of the 9th century A.H., among these clans, two tribes, Qara Qoyunlu (owner of black sheep) and Aq Qoyunlu (owner of white sheep), gained great power and conquered vast lands in eastern Turkey. These conquests coincided with the time when other Mongol clans, such as the Jalayirids, had moved to the richer lands of the Ilkhanate of Iraq and Azerbaijan. At the end of the 9th century AH, the Turkmen leaders expanded their army which turned them into a huge empire. Against the great power of Timur, Qara Uthman and Aq Qoyunlu went to the battlefield with Timur and fought alongside him. With the death of Timur (807 A.H.), a dispute broke out over his succession. The Turkmen took advantage of this opportunity and quickly started establishing their own government. Qara Yusuf was the first person who took over the leadership of the Turkmen and joined Sultan Ahmad Jalayir. In a battle between Qara Yusuf and Sultan Ahmad Jalayir, Qara Yusuf was defeated. Before his death, Sultan Ahmad declared Azerbaijan to be a part of Pirbadagh. Ten years later Shahrokh took Azerbaijan, and in 823 AH, they entered Tabriz victoriously under the command of Baysunghur. With the presence of Jahanshah, the authority of the Qara Qoyunlohs changed from the tribal-tent-dwelling life to the rule of a stable kingdom in Tabriz (Khodabandelou, Maraei & Mohammadian, 2004, p. 92). With Shahrokh's death, the lands of Jahanshah were added and his power was revealed to everyone. With the expansion of Jahanshah's territory, security was established in western Iran, Fars, Kerman, and Isfahan. In addition, his attacks continued in Azerbaijan. Therefore, the artists of Shiraz, Tabriz, Isfahan, and Yazd became accessible to the Turkmen, and

perhaps, for this reason, no single artistic style emerged during this period (Jahanshah) (Khodabandelou et al., 2004, p. 93).

Architecture in the Turkmen Period

This period coincides with the Timurid period and cultural centers such as Herat, Samarkand, and Mashhad. It also includes the governments of Aq Qoyunlu and Qara Qoyunlu with Tabriz as their capital. The significant and influential works of this period can be seen mainly in the centers of Tabriz and the centers of Iran, especially Isfahan. However, since the works of this period have been examined in the form of the Timurid period, it is not very separable (Ansari & Nejad Ebrahimi, 2010, p. 37). Among the architectural features of the Timurid era, we can mention the presence of golden color in tile works, the predominance of azure color in tile decorations, and the tendency towards height. In this period, they tried to make the buildings look taller in different ways. By creating parallel and vertical lines in the symbols, to draw the eye upwards, dragging the main arches of the covers under the dome to make the ceiling appear taller, and creating arches that go through two floors without being cut between these two floors. The high porches and facades of the Timurid era are decorated with beautiful mosaic tiles, and the onion-shaped and grooved domes, which are mostly decorated with azure tiles, are the special features of this period that distinguish Timurid architecture from the architecture of other historical periods (Rasouli, Etesam, & Matin, 2020, P. 5). It is worth mentioning that the remains of Turkmen buildings in Tabriz and Isfahan (Jahanshah decorated the Darb-e Imam's tomb in Isfahan with beautiful tile works and also repaired the surrounding areas of Yazd, including the Grand (Jame) Mosque with mosaic tiling), represent the importance of Turkoman architecture in the transfer of Timurid architectural innovations to the west and northwest of Iran (Blair & Bloom, 2012, pp. 106-98). Centralized and symmetrical plans, squinch arching, and tiling decoration were all special elements of Timurid architecture, which had a significant impact on the Turkmen mansion located in the west of Iran, as well as the buildings of eastern Anatolia (Blair & Bloom, 2012, pp. 106-107).

The cultural-artistic status of Iran during the Turkmen period

The period of the Turkomen of Aq Qoyunlu and Qara Qoyunlu has been wrongly introduced as a part of Timurids' history in many history and architectural books. This period has been a turning point in the cultural, political, and artistic areas of Iran's history. In this era, on the one hand, there is the growth and expansion of Sufism in the context of the peaceful political space of that period, and on the other hand, Sufism and its various tendencies entered the cultural fabric of society and sultans. The sultans of the time had a close relationship with Sufism and their thoughts, as a result of which this relationship and interest can be seen in all government activities and especially in the buildings that were built by the order of the sultans. In the 9th century AH and at the same time as the period of the Turkmen, Sufism witnessed a transformation and fundamental changes within itself, and that is the entry of Shia thought into Sufism ideology and, as a result, the spread of this issue to the whole society, which was the foundation of the beginning of the Safavid Shia government. Although later, the Safavid government, which has its roots in Sufism and monasteries, fought against this ideology and destroyed the monasteries, this change in the space of art and architecture has also had its impact, and the construction of artifacts with an emphasis on Shia values started from the Turkmen period. The cultural status of the Turkmen period was predominated by Sufism and the different dynasties that existed in this period, and this

issue had a direct impact on all the factors of the society, from the government and the court to the market in the context of the society (Yaquoblou & Nejad Ebrahimi, 2019, p.47). Timurid-Turkmen buildings, which are full of colorful geometric patterns, Kufic and Thulth inscriptions, along with paintings of flowers and plants, endless repetition of honorable Arabic phrases, and longer Persian poems, could make the audience reflect. The words of the Holy aphorisms are written in Bannai script, mostly Arabic, in the Topkapi scroll, and it is placed next to the brickwork knot pattern. These phrases, which are so visible in the Timurid-Turkmen architectural views, are signs that strengthen abstract roles in meaning. The famous Qur'anic prayers such as *لا اله الا الله، الله اكبر، الحمد لله* or the names *علي، محمد، الله* create a harmonious visual collection of religious prayers. The visual repetition of these words has been compared with their verbal repetition, which is famously mentioned in Sufi practices. The Sufis considered this repetition of prayers, which is designed to strengthen mystical meditation, a way to remind man of the greatness of God and the verses of his creation. Such inscriptions containing Sufi mysticism of the Timurid-Turkman world could guide the reflection on the motifs abstracted from nature in certain directions (Yaquoblou & Nejad Ebrahimi, 2019, p. 47). In this period, a new style was used in decorative inscriptions, and the outer walls of many mansions were decorated with sentences in the form of geometric designs, and a wider use of Thulth script in inscriptions and the margins of the porches of buildings became common. The architecture of the Timurid period is at its peak in terms of the use of color, from the technical point of view, and the astonishing variety of design and texture (Khazaei, 2009, p. 61).

Woodcarving in the Turkmen period

As Iranian woodcarving art spans the length of history and dynasties, it adopts characteristics at every point in time in order to express the aesthetic characteristics of a style and its common concepts. Iranian wood carving in the periods before the Safavid dynasty had its own technological and artistic characteristics. In the process of the formation of woodcarving styles, we come to the conclusion that the emergence of an artistic style does not happen all at once, rather, it starts gradually from a certain time and reaches its peak after a few years. During the 8th and 9th centuries A.H., Iranian woodcarving adopts two distinct styles, Ilkhani and Gurkani. However, in addition to the characteristics of these two styles, from the beginning of the 8th century and during the 9th century, we gradually come across signs showing that their use and visual evolution reaches its peak from the middle of the 10th century to the middle of the 11th century A.H. Therefore, these signs can be called transitional signs (Kianmehr, Ansari, Tavousi, & Ayatollahi, 2004, p. 57). During the emergence and development of Iran's Gurkaniyans, one can observe fundamental changes that lead to the evolution of the Timurid woodcarving style from around the beginning of the 9th century. In the late Timurid period, there is also a period of intercession in which several sects gained political power. The most important of them are the Turkmen of Aq Qoyunlu who had political power in Diyarbakir from (872 to 920 AH) and the Turkmen of Qara Qoyunlu who had political power in Tabriz from 810 to 873 AH (Kianmehr et al., 2004, p. 21). The extent of the influence of the ideology of the Safavid doctrine on the art of the Gurkan period is directly related to the growth and extent of the followers of the Safavid doctrine. As we get closer to the Safavid era, we can see more symbols of this sect in Timurid woodcarvings (Kianmehr et al., 2004, pp. 21-22). The Gurkanid period can be considered an intermediary period in the field of woodcarving because the amount of changes is so much that it was able to create a style specific to its era

and provide the foundations of the Safavid style. What is certain is that the woodwork of the early Timurid era still has some signs of the Ilkhani style, however, the artists of this period were able to gradually influence the previous style. One of the accomplishments of Gurkanid woodcarvers is to use a new geometric pattern. As mentioned, in most of the woodcarving works of the Ilkhani period, the surface of the object was divided into several parts by means of embossed lines. This division was based on the method of frame and plate, Alt and Laght knot, however, in the Gurkanid period, while these two methods continued, another type of internal geometrical division and framing flourished, which was implemented with the method of carving. In this method, the main lines are sometimes embossed and sometimes in the form of grooves (Kianmehr et al., 2004, pp. 23-24). Geometric patterns are usually on the base of six and eight, and all of them are implemented in accordance with Iranian knot patterns, such as eight and pieces pattern (an eight-piece star) - Eight and four seli (star cross) - Six and seli - Venus in Venus (Lozenge in lozenge) - eight and ten kond. As mentioned, in these works, geometric divisions are carved in the form of embossed lines. Usually, in most parts of these works, they can be seen from inside the text of altars and margins, even frames and plates, However, inside them, orbicular-shaped patterns are used in woodcarving. The used circulation patterns have elements such as Arabesque and Khataie, which are implemented inside the central text and the altars and corners, and even the lower plates of these works based on reflective composition. However, these same elements are continuously placed inside the narrower margins. In these works, more or less, inscriptions are often seen in Thulth script, whose woodcarving method is similar to the works of Ilkhani period. That is, they have a lower background than the fine plant or Arabesque patterns, but they do not have a net-like background. The most important Arabesque elements of this era are in the form of crown-shaped headbands and elongated dragon fire, while the most important elements of Khataie patterns include round five-petaled flowers with stamens and Indian shot, Dahlia, lilies, cloves, and their leaves (Kianmehr et al., 2004, p. 24).

Darb-e Imam Building

Darb-e Imam Building was built in 857 AH (1453 AD) during the reign of Jahanshah Qara Quyonlu by order of Jalaleddin Safar Shah, and it is the tomb of two Imamzadehs, Ibrahim Batha and Zayn al-Abidin. Imamzadeh Ibrahim Tabatabaei and the mother of Amir Jahanshah Qara Quyonlu are buried in the vicinity of Imamzadeh. The building of Imamzadeh is one of the ancient monuments of Isfahan and the tomb is one of the famous shrines. The Darb-e Imam is the forefather of Imami Sadats of Isfahan (Kheradmand, 1976, p. 79). The building includes three courtyards, north, east and west, and two domes, and the main part contains a large tiled facade in the north courtyard. The motifs of the Darb-e Imam include geometric patterns, plant motifs, and inscriptions, and all the inscriptions are written in Thulth and Kufic script. Exquisite tiling, plaster molding, wall painting, karbandi and stalactite work, and arch construction are among the architectural decorations of the mentioned Imamzadeh. Wooden works of art and woodcarving can also be seen in this Imamzadeh and are decorated with plant, geometric, and inscription motifs. Wooden doors, skylights, chests, Shaeiya shrine, etc. are among these, and various methods have been used in the construction of each of them. The architecture of the Darb-e Imam building was done by one of the master architects of Isfahan named Muhammad bin Ghadir, known as "Ajortarash", and his name is written on the portal inscription of the portico of the building

in Nastaliq script. The inscriptions of this building are written by (Mohammadreza Imami), (Ali Naghi Imami), and (Abdol Rahim).

Sa'id ibn Jubayr Mosque

The northern courtyard, which is located in front of the exquisitely tiled facades of Darb-e Imam, and surroundings of which are decorated with pavilions and tiled spandrels, is one of the most beautiful three courtyards of Darb-e Imam. On the western side of this courtyard, there is a small mosque with a very old door named Sa'id ibn Jubayr. In fact, in this mosque, the Darb-e Imam opens in the north courtyard. Sheikh Jabir Ansari wrote about this small mosque in the history of Isfahan: "Among the other old mosques is the mosque attributed to Sa'id ibn Jubayr, its area is more than one qafiz, and its door opens in the courtyard, and its main building was older than other mosques after Imamzadeh Ismail mosques and a part of the Jame mosque". Sa'id came to Isfahan in 81 AH with Abdurrahman Ashathi, settled down, and worshiped in this place¹. During the Safavid era, a small tiling was done inside this small mosque. The inscription around the altar is written in black script with a mosaic tile on a yellow background, including Ad-Dhuha Surah and the last part of it ends with the words: (سبحان ربك رب العزة عما يصفون و سلام على المرسلين والحمد لله رب العالمين). On the spandrels of the altar, it is written in Banaei script on an azure background: من الله و فتح قريب و بشر- (نصر). The inscription inside the altar is written in black Banaei script on a yellow background and includes Al Ikhlaṣ Surah and the last part of it reads: the year 1123 (See Figure 1) (Honarfar, 1971, pp. 353-352).



Figure 1. Altar of Sa'id ibn Jubayr Mosque. Source: Authors.



Figure 2. The wood-carved double door of Sa'id ibn Jubayr Mosque.
Source: Authors

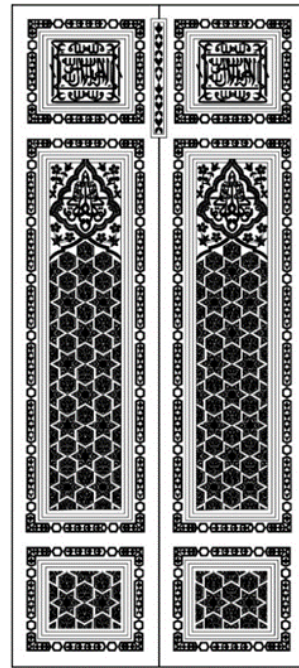


Figure 3. Depicting the wood-carved door decorations of Sa'id ibn Jubayr Mosque.
Source: Authors.

The wood-carved double door of Sa'id ibn Jubayr Mosque

The most significant wooden work of the Darb-e Imam building is the old exquisitely wood-carved door, which in the past opened to the Darb-e Imam complex and connected the northern courtyard to the mosque (See Figure 2). The age of this exquisite wood-carved door, like other parts of the complex, dates back to the period of Jahanshah Qara Quyonlu in the 9th century AH, and a large part of its decorations have been destroyed in an unrecognizable way. The surface of this wooden door is divided into three panels. On the upper panel, a symmetrical inscription is written in the thulth script; the middle panel, a large part of which is eroded, is made up of geometric shapes and inscriptions; and the lower panel of the door has also been completely destroyed, and this part, like the middle panel, contains geometric patterns. On the border of these rectangular panels, geometrical and plant motifs can also be seen (See Figure 3).

Geometric Patterns (Motifs)

As mentioned, during the 8th and 9th centuries A.H., Iranian woodcarving adopted two distinct styles, Ilkhani and Gurkani. As can be seen in the figures, the implemented motif of the mentioned wooden door corresponds to some of the woodcarving characteristics of the described styles (Ilkhani and Gurkani). The composition of these motifs has been implemented on square and rectangular panels with the method of frame and plate and Alt and Laght knot. Geometrical designs and motifs are associated with engravings and comply with proportions, symmetry, and balance. One of the characteristics of this pattern is its sharp and rigid state, which is fully noted in the Timurid-Turkmen geometric pattern (Yaqublou & Nejad Ebrahimi, 2019, p. 111). The motifs used on the middle and lower

panels of the door consist of a six-pointed star and a regular hexagon, inside which a plant motif is used. These sharp and geometric patterns are spread on a level surface and have created symmetrical balance, rhythm, and proportion (See Figures 4 & 6). The motif of the six-pointed kond star was mostly used in woodcarvings of the Gurkanid period and extended until the beginning of the Safavid period (Kianmehr et al., 2004, p. 65). This pattern is one of the most frequent motifs of this period and can be seen on the facade of the Drab-e Imam and other decorations inside the monument (See Figure 7). The surrounding border includes incomplete wave and polygonal geometric motifs filled with Arabesque patterns (See Figure 5).



Figure 5. The motif of incomplete wave pattern and regular hexagon. Source: Authors.

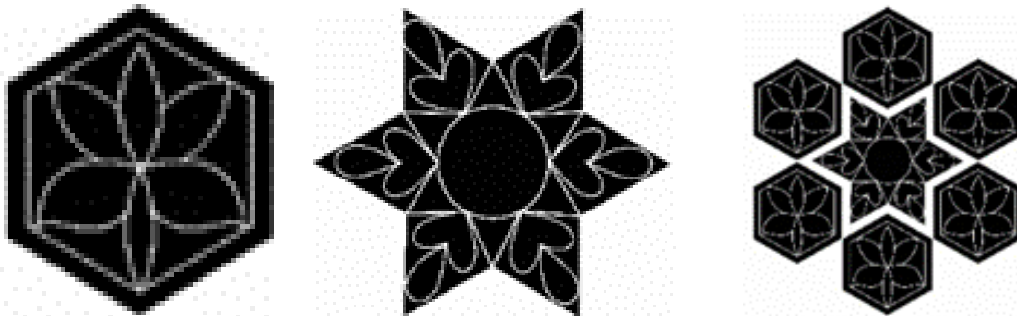


Figure 6. Star and hexagon motifs with plant decorations on the facade of the Darb-e Imam. Source: Authors.



Figure 7. Six-pointed star pattern with plant motifs on the Darb-e Imam. Source: Authors.

In these geometric motifs, the number six has been assigned as a basis, and this has been done in the replication of geometric patterns and symmetry. The artist has taken advantage of the coordination of similar components, these types of designs, which are known as self-similar designs, were very common in the late Timurid and Turkmen periods. Hexagonal geometric motifs are enclosed in the basic shape of a circle, and the visual energy of all elements is organized in such a way that no part of the visual energy effect of other parts destroys and does not create a visual disturbance. Shapes have a similar position and are arranged according to a certain order. Patterns are based on a network system, a system in which geometric networks are divided into specific units and can be regularly replicated and expanded.

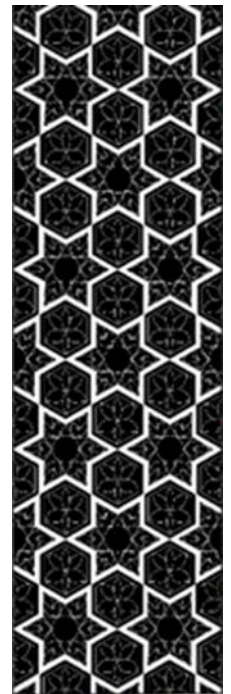


Figure 4. The knot of the wood-carved door. Source: Author.

Inscription

In the uppermost part of the above-mentioned wood-carved door, which is named with inscription No. 1, the phrase «لا اله الا الله، محمد رسول الله، على ولي الله» is placed. In this inscription, the phrase على ولي الله is written symmetrically and in line with the frame. The stretching of the letters ل and ي, has created a border and frame around the phrase لا اله الا الله، محمد رسول الله. In fact, the said phrase is placed in the center of the phrase على ولي الله. Another feature of this inscription is the length and rhythm of the letters, stability, and coherence, which are arranged with an order, arrangement, and coordinated and symmetrical twists and shapes. Stretches and vertical lines have created a beautiful balance and rhythm, so that at first glance, a set of vertical and horizontal lines can be seen, which has multiplied the stability and coherence of the inscription and added to its beauty (See Figure 8).

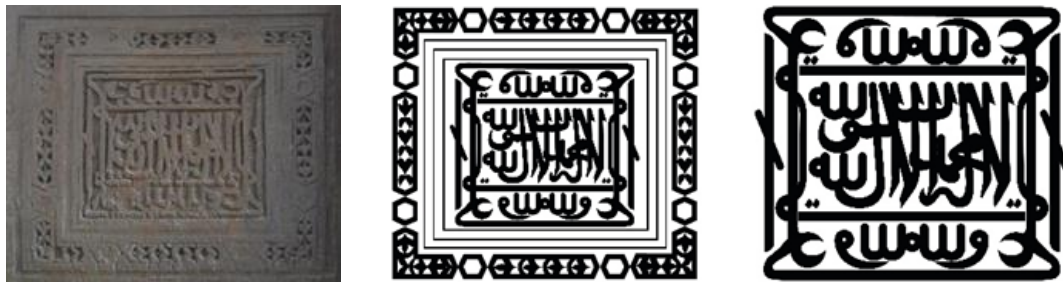


Figure 8. Inscription No. 1. Source: Authors

The other inscription of this work, which is called inscription No. 2, is placed in the middle plate, and in it, the words «و توكل على الله وكفى بالله وكيلا» are written, and a large part of it has been removed so that it cannot be read. Some of the letters of this inscription, such as letters ي، الف، and ل، are written with stretching due to aligning with other letters, establishing coherence and unity in the work, and creating a suitable composition in the work. The combinations of its letters have been made according to the desire of the artist, and this is the reason why the letters are complicated and transformed and their legibility is reduced. The type of placement of letters and words prevents monotony and gives a decorative aspect to the inscription so that the eye does not get tired looking at it. Among the remarkable points of the inscription, it can be pointed out that, while symmetrical, some words have other hidden words inside them, which are very nested and written on top of each other, and because of this, it is difficult to read it (See Figure 9).



Figure 9. Inscription No. 2. Source: Authors.

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The five-petal flower motif, as mentioned, is one of the patterns used in the Timurid period and is used in the plant motifs of this work. These decorations can be seen around the altar-shaped frame and the inscription (See Figure 10).

Table 1. Visual investigation of the words components of the inscription No. 1. Source: Authors.

على ولي الله	الله	محمد رسول الله	محمد رسول الله	لا اله الا الله	لا اله الا الله
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As can be seen in Table 1, in this inscription, the replication of letters next to each other has created a rhythmic space. The elongation of letters induces visual balance. The use of upright letters, with the same height and value, and the order of the letters, are prominent in this work and prevent its monotony. The elements are arranged in line with the frame.

Table 2. Visual investigation of the words components of the inscription No. 2. Source: Authors.

على	الله	توكل-وكيلا	توكل وكيل
الله-بالله	الله	كفى	كفى

Review of other wood-carved doors in Darb-e Imam Building

In the Darb-e Imam monument, there are two other wood-carved doors, which are similar to Sa'id ibn Jubayr mosque in terms of composition, motifs, and division of plates, and both of them belong to the Safavid period. The motifs of the door, which is located at the entrance of the monument, include a ten-pointed star, a five-pointed kond motif, and a Toranj (medallion), which is expanded and displays a unified geometric set. Other elements include the five-star knot rhythm, three-pointed, and Lozenge, based on which the geometric motifs are drawn, and most of the desire is the regular and symmetrical replication of the motifs. The artist has created single and composite motifs to create harmony, proportion, and beauty by replicating and expanding, he decorates a wide surface (See Figure 11).

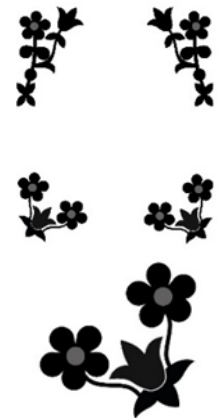


Figure 10. The five-petal flower motif. Source: Authors.



Figure 11. Wood carved entrance door. Source: Authors.

The other door, which is inside the monument and dates back to the Safavid period, has an eight-pointed star in the center of a plant motif. This door is decorated with corners, Toranj (medallion), and Sar-Toranj motifs, and the interior is decorated with Arabesque motifs. On the head of this door, the phrase *سنه ثامن و تسعمائه* (908) is embedded in a mosaic style, which has been completely lost. In the center of the Toranj (Medallion) of the middle plate, an inscription can be seen in a lozenge frame, in which the word *علی* is replicated four times and combined with a broken cross is written in Kufic script (Ali Ahmadi, Amrai, & Ahmad Panah, 2013, p. 74) (See Figure 13). The border of these rectangular frames consists of the rhythm and replications and intersection of hexagonal geometric shapes. In the head part, a type of embossed carving based on the knots of a six-pointed star has been implemented. This geometrical motif was mostly implemented in the wood-carved door of the Gurkan period, and it extended to the beginning of the Safavid period (See Figure 12).

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Figure 12. Wood carved door inside the monument.
Source: Authors.

In this inscription, the observance of positive and negative space can be clearly seen, and according to the characteristics of the Kufic script, the building is designed based on checker cells and the extension of horizontal and vertical lines, and the circulation of lines with the same thickness.



Figure 13. the word علي. source: Authors.

Conclusion

Between the 7th and 9th centuries AH, along with huge social, political, and cultural changes, there were also changes in architecture, and these changes are very impressive and important in the field of architectural decorations. The Qara Quyonlu Turkmen left behind valuable works with Shiite themes in architecture and painting, and their religious tendencies towards Shiism can be seen in the architectural works, especially the Darb-e Imam building. The decorative motifs left over from the Islamic era provide a wide range of innovative designs that can be used in contemporary graphics. The wooden door of Sa'id ibn Jubayr mosque has rich arrays in terms of structure and theme, and among the decorative motifs of the mentioned door, the inscriptions written concerning visual literacy and quality such as clarity, rhythm, replication, and balance are noteworthy. The text of the inscriptions was written according to the Shiite beliefs of the Turkmen, and the phrase « لا اله الا الله، محمد » creates a visual harmony of prayers, which, as described, is the visual replication of these words, in harmony with their oral replications. In the other inscription

of this wooden door, the phrase «و توکل علی الله و کفی بالله وکیلا» is engraved in the altar-shaped frame, which cannot be read due to excessive wear and the words which are written inside and on top of each other. The same and similar geometric pattern is also prominent in the decorations of this wood-carved door. Unity, cohesion and integration, balance, symmetry, rhythm, proportion, unity, and precise calculations of uniform motifs are some of the factors that have been paid attention to in the composition of these motifs. The most important pattern used in geometric decorations is the six-pointed star pattern, which is abundantly seen in the architectural decorations of the Turkmen period. One of the characteristics of this geometric pattern is its rigid and sharp corners, which is fully observed in the Timurid-Turkmen geometric motifs. Plant motifs also comprise a small percentage of decorations, among which the motif of a five-petal flower is one of the important motifs of this period. The decorations of this work can be seen in the margins, frames, and around the plates. Accordingly, it can be concluded that the motifs are not merely decorative and contain concepts of Islamic art, and they express traditional Islamic Iranian themes and concepts and the beliefs and thoughts of their time. It is possible to take advantage of the rich motifs of this wood carving door in contemporary art and graphics.

Appendix

1. History of Isfahan and Ray by Sheikh Jaber Ansari, page 248.

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