

Original Research Article

Typology and Visual Analysis of Seyed Ali Akbar Golestaneh's Shikasta Script Writings

Mehran Behzadi¹; Seyed Reza Hoseini²; Amin Iranpour³; Mohammad Sadegh Mirza Abulqasemi⁴

1. Ph.D. Student in Comparative and Analytical History of Islamic Art, Faculty of Art, Shahed University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran.

2. Corresponding Author, Assistant Professor of Painting Department, Faculty of Art, Shahed University, Tehran, Iran.
Email: rz.hosseini@shahed.ac.ir.

3. Assistant Professor, Department of Islamic Art, Faculty of Art, Shahed University, Tehran, Iran.

4. Associate Professor, Faculty of Art and Architecture, Shiraz University, Shiraz, Iran.

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Abstract

Introduction: Seyed Ali Akbar Golestaneh is one of the prominent Shikasta scriptwriters whose works and status in the history of calligraphy have been the focus of calligraphy artists and researchers. Considering the importance of this Shikasta-Nastaliq calligrapher's position, identifying his works' artistic features and styles still seems necessary. Accordingly, the present research deals with the typology and visual analysis of Seyed Ali Akbar Golestaneh's Shikasta script works in terms of good layout (*ḥosn-e waż'*) and composition (*tarkīb*). Identifying the typological and stylistic features of Seyed Ali Akbar Golestaneh's Shikasta script works with an emphasis on good layout (*ḥosn-e waż'*) and composition (*tarkīb*) is the primary goal of this research.

Research Method: The data for the present research has been collected using a library-based method and relying on the original images of the works in Murraqqa's as well as calligraphic and printed pieces. The analysis in this research is conducted qualitatively using a visual analysis method based on the components of visual analysis of visual works and specialized concepts related to the principles and rules of calligraphy (observing Shikasta-Nastaliq script).

Findings: Golestaneh's Shikasta script works include two types of prose and verse texts. Multiple baselines or seatings (*korsī*) and overlaying (mounted letters and words) are the characteristics of his Linear-script writing (*Satr Nevisi*), which are directly related to the length of the line. Examples of Golestaneh's Shikasta script writings, including a smaller number of his works, include pieces in *Khafi Dang* (small), executed in a double-diagonal script (*Chalipa*) and multi-direction form. From the beauty of disposition (*ḥosn-e waż'*) perspective, the trend towards the horizontal frame and seating (*korsī*), at the same time, multiple sub-seatings in most of the works, as well as multi-direction writing in some works, are the characteristics of Golestaneh's Shikasta Scriptwriting.

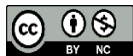
Conclusion: The dominant aspect of Golestaneh's works is the type of linear script (*Satr Nevisi*) and the tendency to write in *Jali* script. The inclination towards horizontal frames and seating (*korsī*) and, at the same time, multiple sub-seating are the dominant characteristics of his works. Two-*Dang* writing (*Khafi* and *Jali*) can also be seen in several of Golestaneh's works. Regarding simple-letter composition, the features of complex writing, the system of composition and arrangement of elongations (*Mads*), the tendency to alliance of circular and curved forms in both horizontal and stepped ways, and the composition of micro-elements (including repetition of similar and aligned movements, tangency, intrusion, and merging of letters with each other) in Golestaneh's works can be expressed.

Keywords

Shikasta Scriptwriting, Shikasta Nastaliq, Ali Akbar Golestaneh, Good Layout (*ḥosn-e waż'*).

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Introduction and Problem Definition

Shikasta Nastaliq (šekasta-nasta'īq) is one of the essential elements of Iranian calligraphy, which was formed in connection with Taliq (Ta'īq) and Nastaliq (Nasta'īq) scripts. Compared to Nastaliq, this script has more turns and freer movements. Apparently, this script was formed under the influence of areas such as scribe and stenography in the Safavid period, and gradually, the elements of Nastaliq, compared to the elements of the Taliq, prevailed in it and became known as Shikasta Nastaliq. The letters and connections in this calligraphic style have various forms and were mainly used for writing Persian literary and poetic texts. «Morteza Qoli Khan Shamlu» and «Muhammad Shafi' Heravi» (Shafiā) are considered to be the pioneers of this script. «Darvish Abdul Majid Taleqani» (1170-1185 A.H.) can be regarded as the most prominent calligrapher of this style. After him, «Seyed Ali Akbar Golestaneh» (1274-1319 A.H.) is also known as one of the first-class masters of this script, who, while following the style of Darvish Abdul Majid, also made changes and modifications. «Seyed Ali Akbar Hasani Hosseini», nicknamed «Golestaneh», was born in 1274 A.H. in Isfahan. He turned to calligraphy when he was a child and learned Naskh, Nastaliq, and Shikasta scripts. He followed the Shikasta script, became a master, and became one of the famous characters of this script. Golestaneh was one of the students of the Darvish School who reached independence in the Shikasta script due to his style and personality. His pieces in Khafi Dang (small), fine-script (Ketaabat), and Sarfasl are distinguished among the followers of Dervish with their grace and smoothness. In his works, using his knowledge of the relationships between forms, capabilities, and the formal beauty of Shikasta Scripts, Golestaneh has made various tasteful innovations toward creating beauty. Explaining these features and generally identifying his stylistic traits in the evolutionary path of the Shikasta Nastaliq script is essential. By focusing on the principle of good layout (ḥosn-e waż'), the current research identifies the visual principles of Shikasta Nastaliq in the Golestaneh style. Accordingly, the research questions are: «1. In what types are Ali Akbar Golestaneh's Shikasta script works performed?» «2. What are the characteristics of Ali Akbar Golestaneh's Shikasta script works in terms of the beauty of disposition (ḥosn-e waż') and composition (tarkīb)?»

Research Method

The current research investigated Ali Akbar Golestaneh's Shikasta script works using an analytical method. The data for the present study has been collected using a library-based method and relying on the original images of the works in Murraqqa's as well as calligraphic and printed pieces. The analysis in this research is conducted qualitatively using a visual analysis method based on the components of visual analysis of visual works and specialized concepts related to the principles and rules of calligraphy (observing Shikasta-Nastaliq script). The research community includes the Murraqqa's and pieces belonging to Ali Akbar Golestaneh, which consists of a total of 200 works and has been executed in different types (such as linear-script writing (Satr Nevisi), double-line writing (Do-Satr Nevisi), fine-script (Ketaabat) and letterhead-script (Katibeh)).

Research Background

Few studies have been done about the analytical topics of the Shikasta Nastaliq script. In an article entitled «Common methods of Shikasta script writing in the Qajar period», «Farid» (2022) first searched for the foundations of Shikasta Nastaliq script formation and then classified the common Shikasta script writing methods in the Qajar period. He divides the Shikasta script writing of the Qajar period into three styles of Darvish followers, Jali script writing, and Tahrir. Also, in a part of the book entitled «Qajar Calligraphy Style» by

«Hashemi Nejad» (2014), the trend of Shikasta Nastaliq in the Qajar period has been discussed. In this book, the Shikasta script, the causes of the Shikasta script emergence, the stylistics of the Shikasta script in the Qajar period, and the calligraphers of this script are addressed, but the detailed analysis and description of the author's intended works were not included. In an article entitled «Interaction of structure and style in the Shikasta script writing of Shafiā, Darvish, and Golestaneh», «Ma'navi Rad» (2013) examined the general characteristics of the Shikasta script writing of the three calligraphers, based on the stylistics and principles of Shikasta script, but did not exclusively explain Golestaneh's innovations. The difference between this research and the mentioned studies is the focus on the works of Ali Akbar Golestaneh and the typology and investigation of the characteristics of good layout (ḥosn-e waż') in these works, which have not been independently studied before.

Theoretical Foundations

1. Composition (tarkīb) and good layout (ḥosn-e waż'): Composition is considered a principle of good layout (ḥosn-e waż'), which defines the position of words, sentences, and lines in calligraphy. It consists of a moderate and congruent composition of letters, words, sentences, lines, double lines together, and more, as well as the beauty of their general situation so that it becomes pleasing to the typical taste of the audience (Fazaeli, 1997, 89). «Babashah Isfahani» has introduced the composition (tarkīb) several times. He introduced composition as the first acquired component of the script and gave a relatively detailed explanation of it: «Composition is of two types: wholly or in part... and the wholly is that which combines several single or compound letters to form a script line that has a good quality pleasing to the typical taste of an audience». Further, emphasizing the concept of «elongation (Mad)», he mentioned examples and instructions regarding the place of «elongation (Mad)», in the composition (tarkīb) (Babashah Isfahani, 2012, 18-19). «Good layout (ḥosn-e waż')» is also mixed with the concept of «composition», and it consists of placing letters and words in the most favorable position so that the overall shape of the work is in the most pleasant and sound state.

2. Line (Satr) and layer (Tabagheh): The two terms «line» and «layer» refer to the types of composition in calligraphy and its area of application (including calligraphic pieces, inscription writing (letterhead-script (Katibeh)), and seal engraving (writing on seals)). These two terms can be defined as referring to the two types or methods of «Fine-Script (Ketaabat)» and «Letterhead-Script (Katibeh)» calligraphy. In the first method, the structure of the composition is the order of the components of the line. The concept of line here refers to an arrangement of letters and words in a central horizontal position so that the sequence of letters and words is placed in the natural direction of writing and reading (i.e., right to left). In this direction, it is also possible to write overlaying (mounted letters and words) (Savar Nevisi), but this writing style is done so that the right-to-left reading direction is still maintained. Another point is that in this definition, usually the different lines (which are written below each other) do not interfere with each other, except to a minor extent; however, in the second method of composition, which is widely used in inscription writing, the components of the line (inscription) are written based on several horizontal baselines or seatings (korsī), so that these letters and words, in addition to the horizontal arrangement (from right to left), are also overlaid (mounted) on top of each other. In this case, the direction of writing and reading letters does not happen continuously from right to left, and in some parts, the continuation of words and phrases must be followed backward from the upper layer of letters and words. Overlaying (mounted letters and words) (Savar Nevisi) (or multi-seating writing) is, of course, also used in Ketabat and calligraphic pieces, especially in the case of Taliq scripts, such as Shikasta Nastaliq; however, when it is based on pseudo-

inscription compositions and is used to fill a specific frame, the terms layer and arranging in layers can be used for it. In other words, it can be said that arranging in layers based on the use of Jali Dangs of the script, the limitation of the composition space, and, on the other hand, the proportional arrangement of the components in a frame takes place (Mirza Abolghasemi, 2015, 94-95; Seraj Shirazi, 1997, 145).

3. Layered and stepped composition: Within the concepts of «line» and «layer», the conceptual duality of «layered composition» and «stepped composition» can be proposed. In this study, the composition of «layers» refers to two types of compositions of letters and elongations (Mads), which are defined compared to the term «stepped composition». In this sense, layer composition refers to the arrangement of letters and elongations (Mads) that are entirely mounted on each other on the vertical axis. On the other hand, «stepped» composition refers to a type of arrangement of letters and elongations (Mads) that are written obliquely, i.e., along with the vertical arrangement, they also move in the horizontal axis (right-to-left writing direction) concerning the previous letter.

Periodization of Golestaneh's works

The period from 1890 to 1900 (1308-1318 A.H.) includes the signed artworks available to Golestaneh. Golestaneh's works in these years have different qualities and characteristics. In the early years, we see most of Golestaneh's linear-script writings (Satr Nevisi), often common Daftari scripts (Fig 7); however, he gradually creates works in different types and formats of Shikasta script. Golestaneh's linear-script writings (Satr Nevisi) were constantly present throughout this period. By innovating in the form of artwork presentation, Golestaneh created his own type (from around 1898 (1316 A.H.)), which was often a horizontal rectangle with dimensions of approximately 6 × 10 cm (Figs 4, 5, & 19). Most of these works have appeared with the themes of verses and hemistiches (one to three hemistiches). From Golestaneh, there are also pieces of Siahmashq type or intertwined-script writings (Darham Nevisi), which mainly belong to the second half of his professional career (Figs 11 & 18). In the current research, Golestaneh's works have been cited throughout his career.

Typology of Golestaneh's Works

Golestaneh has created works in different types of calligraphy, including single-line, double-line, multi-line (Ketaabat), and Chalipa writing. Evidently, it is impossible to categorize calligraphy works (in general), and Golestaneh works in particular, into the mentioned types because some pieces fluctuate on the border of these divisions due to their integrated features. However, in this study, we try to identify and examine the works mentioned in several categories. It is worth noting that this typology is mainly based on form, but it also considers thematic and content aspects.

1. Single-Line Pieces: In analyzing Golestaneh's works, linear-script writing (Satr Nevisi) seems dominant. This feature is in Golestaneh's works so that the associations and effects of linear script writing can also be seen in other pieces. Considering Golestaneh's linear-script writings, his linear-script works can be classified into two simple and complex groups (Malek Zadeh, 2023, interview). Multiple baselines or seatings (korsī) and mounted letters and words are among the characteristics of these linear-script writings; that is, the letters and words are placed on top of the previous letters and words, and of course, the right-to-left writing direction is also taken into account in this mounted script writing, so that by taking into account the precedence and backwardness of the words, along with the optimal arrangement of blackness and whiteness (sawād o bayāz), the readability of the line is also maintained. The length of the lines is an essential factor in the number of seatings (korsī)

and the amount of mounted writing in this group of Golestaneh's works. The shorter the length of the line, the less the number of seatings (korsī); the longer the length of the line, the increased number of baselines or seatings (korsī). In long lines, mounted or overlaid letters and words create multiple seating (korsī) lines. Writing mounted letters and words in long lines greatly helps the blackness and whiteness (sawād o bayāz) of the line, covers the negative and empty spaces of the line, and plays an essential role in the visual balance and weight of the line. In some cases, the beginning of the line is the seating line (korsī), and gradually the number of seating lines increases. The highest number of seating lines (korsī) occurs in the final part of the line, where the line peaks and writing mounted letters and words intensifies (Fig 1).

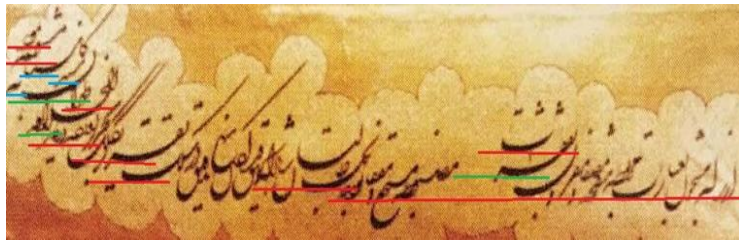


Fig 1. Linear-script writing (Satr Nevisi) with multiple seatings (korsī), Golestaneh's work. Source: Malek Zadeh, 2006, 2.

Several of Golestaneh's linear-script writings (Satr Nevisi) show the tendency toward Jali Dang. Usually, these linear-script writings are written as a single-Dang (Tak Dang); however, in a group of linear-script writings - which belong to a collection or are Murrqqa's - in the margin or background of the main line, Chalipa is written with a Khafi (smaller) script. In this way, according to Dang and direction, a kind of visual diversity has happened in this group of linear-script writings (Satr Nevisi) (Fig 2). Another point in Golestaneh's linear-script writings, especially in the Jali Dangs, is that some spaces are created between the lines, in such a way that the letters and words are written in a chain-like and connected manner, then another group of letters and words are written in a chain-like manner with a space (Malek Zadeh, 2023, Interview). In this way, a kind of contrast between Blackness and Whiteness (sawād o bayāz) is created throughout the line (Fig 1). Golestaneh's single-line and double-line writings can be considered as subcategories of the more general group of «linear-script writing»(Satr Nevisi). With this consideration, it can be said that the peak of Golestaneh's ability, art, and skill in «linear-script writing» has been more and better than other types, and in general, Golestaneh can be considered a «linear-script writing» calligrapher. The noteworthy point is that some Shikasta scriptwriters have considered linear-script writing to be the end of Shikasta writing (Malek Zadeh, 2023, Interview), and linear-script writing is a significant type among contemporary Shikasta writing styles. From this point of view, we can consider the role of Golestaneh and his linear-script writings in the supremacy of Shikasta linear-script writings in the contemporary era.



Fig 2. Jali linear-script writing with a Khafi Chalipa background. Source: Islamic Consultative Assembly Library, Murraqqa' No. 6926.

2. Double-Line Pieces: A number of Golestaneh's works include double-line pieces, the content of which is sometimes literary prose texts and sometimes poetic verses. In these two categories, the prose linear-script writings are longer and executed in a more extended frame. Golestaneh's poetic double-line pieces usually write one hemistich of one verse in each line. In a group of these works, the white space in the background is executed with a more Khafi (smaller) script in the form of a Chalipa, and in this way, with the help of the contrast of Dang and direction, visual diversity is created in the composition (Fig 3).

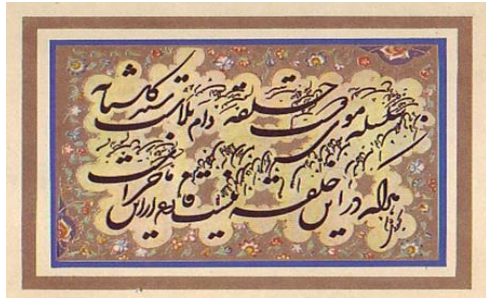


Fig 3. Jali double-line writing with a Khafi background, Seyed Golestaneh. Source: Homayun Farrokh, 1986, 15.

Two hemistichs are written at a closer distance in a group of these works, which have verse content. This closeness of hemistichs in some examples has led to the intrusion of two lines so that the independence of the lines of the hemistichs has been lost to some extent and, except in a few examples, it is not possible to separate the two hemistichs definitively. By increasing the density and intrusion of lines or hemistichs, some pieces have come out of the double-line state and have become close to multi-layered and Siyah Mashq pieces. In other words, in these examples, the overall composition has gone towards layered arrangement and Siyah Mashq pieces by keeping the Dang of the script and increasing compressed and mounted writing. By expanding the intrusion and the density of letters and words, some of these pieces can be defined as Siyah Mashq. However, it should be considered that the foundation of these pieces was the writing of the following two hemistichs, and from this point of view, they can also be considered in connection with double-line pieces. In some cases, adding explanatory sentences or phrases adds another pseudo-line that completely overlaps the hemistichs. In this case, to increase the density and intrusion, the Siyah Mashq quality has increased in these pieces (Figs 4 & 5).

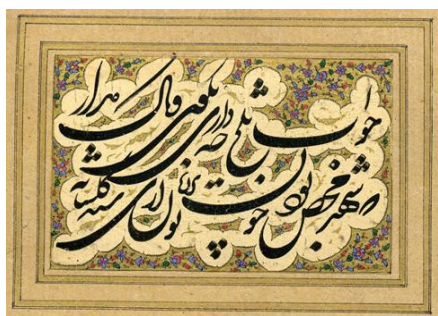


Fig 4. Jali verse writing with minimal intrusion of two lines (hemistichs), Seyed Golestaneh. Source: Islamic Consultative Assembly Library, Murraqqa' No. 9888.

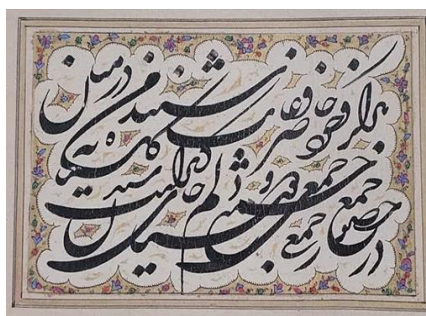


Fig 5. Jali verse writing with maximum intrusion of hemistichs and phrases, Seyed Golestaneh. Source: Sefid Abian, 2012, 35.

3. Multi-Line Pieces: Golestaneh's multi-line pieces are generally executed in a more Khafi and improvisational style. Most of these works, in terms of the style of writing and the content of the pieces, are influenced by the field of written epistles and letters (Monshaât). In this way, in some of these samples, the content and visual characteristics of the samples of the Monshaât become closer, as in them, the calligraphic accuracy has been reduced to a certain extent, and they have been written in the so-called Qalam Andaz (writing rapidly) style and inclined to Tahrir script. This point can be seen especially in a few pieces dated 1310 A.H., which are signed with the following phrase: «Seyed Golestaneh wrote in the manner of the deceased Qaem Maqam» (Fig 9). This signature shows that Golestaneh paid attention to different types of Shikasta writing in the fields of Dabiri and Mashq, as «Mojtaba Malek Zadeh» also considered this feature as one of the factors of the emergence of Golestaneh's special and unique compositions in some of his works (Malek Zadeh, 2023, interview). A number of these works were written in Chalipa and multi-sided seatings (korsî) (Figs 6 & 9), but most of them were written with a horizontal seating (korsî) and in a vertical rectangular frame (Figs 7 & 8). In this area, we can mention a specific sample of Golestaneh's works, a text written in Jali with Khafi Chlipa annotations. This piece is apparently six-lined, but due to the intrusion or compression of the lines, it can also be considered close to multi-layered pieces (Fig 10). One of the characteristics of Golestaneh lines is minimum dotting (Noqte Gozari) in them (Figs 7 & 8) because the numerous and widespread use of the dots is an obstacle and a cover that prevents the representation of more and better effects and beauties of the script (Malek Zadeh, 2023, Interview).



Fig 6. Multi-line writing with Monshaât content in the Chalipa seating (korsî), Golestaneh's work. Source: Qelich Khani, Malekzadeh, Jeddi, & Hamedi., 2021, 110.

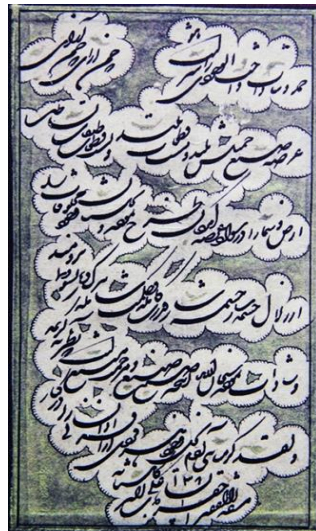


Fig 7. Multi-line writing with Monshaât content in a horizontal seating (korsî), Golestaneh's work, 1890 (1308 A.H.). Source: Qelich Khani, 2013, 170.

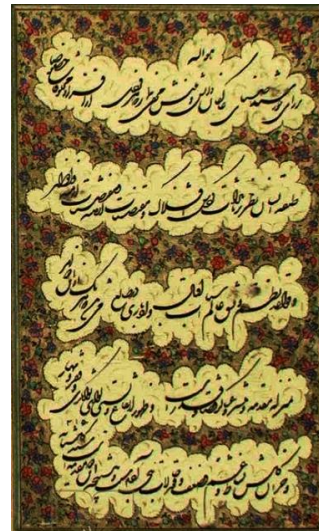


Fig 8. Multi-line writing with Monshaât content in a horizontal seating (korsî), Golestaneh's work, 1898 (1316 A.H.). Source: The National Library and Archives of Iran (NLAI).



Fig. 9. Multi-line writing with Monshaât content in the Chalipa seating (korsī), Golestaneh's work. Source: Sefid Abian, 2012, 25.



Fig. 10. Jali Multi-line writing inclined to layered compositions. Source: Moshashaei, 1996, 5.

4. Multi-Direction Chalipa Pieces: Samples of Golestaneh's Shikasta script writings, which comprise a smaller number of his works, include pieces in Khafi Dang executed in a Chalipa pattern in several directions. These samples are not written in the conventional Chalipa format; as mentioned, they are written in multi-direction form with horizontal lines. These pieces' content is poetry, written in double hemistichs, which makes it close to the familiar format of Chalipa. These pieces can be seen as Golestaneh's influence on the style of predecessors such as Darvish Abdul Majid Taleqani, who has many pieces in this genre. In these pieces' overall composition, it is impossible to determine a fixed pattern because improvisation plays a dominant role in them. In this way, in some pieces, several consecutive verses are written in Chalipa in the same direction. Other samples are executed in different ways (for example, in alternate order, one Chalipa verse and one horizontal verse). However, a general similarity can be seen in their composition, which places them in one group (Fig 11).

5. Siyah Mashq Pieces: It can be said that there are very few Siyah Mashq pieces in Golestaneh's works. However, as mentioned earlier, some of Golestaneh's works can evoke Siyah Mashq. In these pieces, we often see density and compression more than «repetition» and «intrusion» - the main components of Siyah Mashq writing. In a way, it can be said that these pieces are far from reaching «Siyah Mashq» and are more «Siyah Mashq-like». However, in a few samples of Golestaneh's Shikasta script writings, the qualities of Siyah Mashq are increased in the Jali or combined Dangs so that they can be placed in the category of Siyah Mashq (Fig 12).

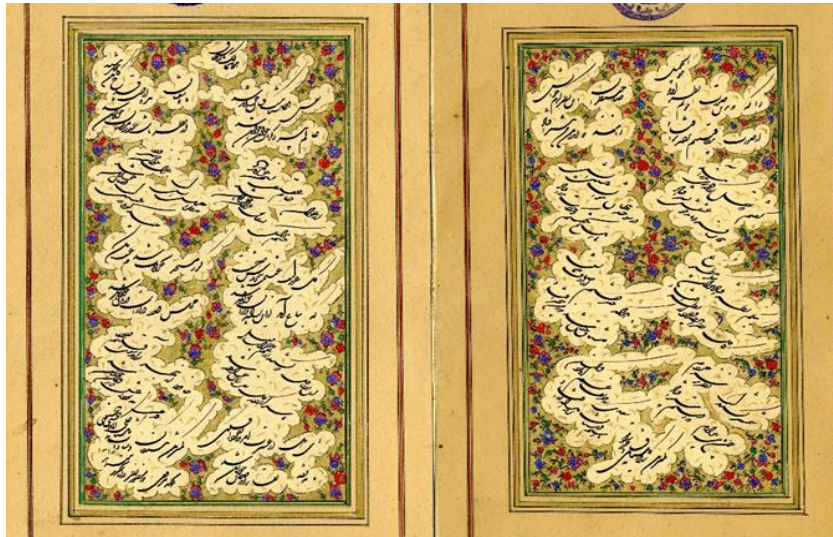


Fig 11. Multi-direction Chalipa writing, Golestaneh's work. Source: Islamic Consultative Assembly Library, Murraqqa' No. 5141.

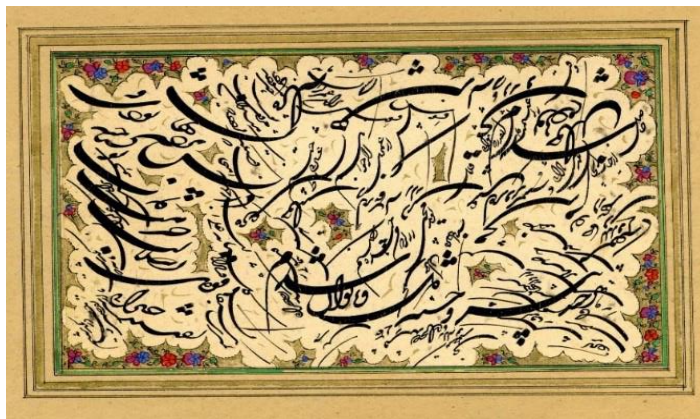


Fig 12. Siyah Mashq-like Shikasta writing, by Golestaneh. Source: Islamic Consultative Assembly Library, Murraqqa' No. 5141.

Good layout (ḥosn-e waẓ') and composition (tarkīb) in Golestaneh's works

In the previous section (typology of Golestaneh's works), under the introduction of each type, some components of the composition (tarkīb) and good layout (ḥosn-e waẓ') of calligraphy elements in that type were also mentioned. In this section, we will examine these components specifically and concerning all the examined works in different types. The components discussed in this section include framing, seating (korsī) arrangement, Dang variety, and simple-letter composition.

1. Framing: The examined works of Golestaneh are written in horizontal and vertical rectangular frames. Among these, multi-line works, multi-direction Chalipa pieces, and some Siyah Mashq pieces mainly have vertical frames and are generally written in a Khafi (small) script. However, single-line and double-line pieces and several Siyah Mashq-like works generally executed in Jali Dang have a horizontal frame. In these two categories, the linear-script writings (Satr Nevisi) are longer and executed in a more extended frame. When these works are converted from one line into three-line writing, the ratio of the length and width of the frame becomes more proportional. In this way, Jali writing and the selection of the horizontal frame in Golestaneh's works can be seen in connection. Also, in comparison, it can be said that Golestaneh's tendency to Jali writing in the horizontal frame is more than the Khafi writing in the vertical frame.

2. Seating (korsī) Arrangement: In Golestaneh's works, the horizontal seating arrangement system is more frequent than the Chalipa seating. This seating system can be seen in different types of Golestaneh's works (one-line, double-line, multi-line, and Siyah Mashq). Even in the Chalipa works, lines and hemistichs can be seen scattered in the horizontal seating (korsī) (Fig 10). In this type (multi-direction Chalipa writing), the composition of horizontal and Chalipa seatings (korsī) has led to visual diversity. Another kind of seating (korsī) arrangement can be observed in Golestaneh's one-line, double-line, and multi-line writings. In these works, the side and peripheral spaces of the work are filled with verses and phrases in multi-direction seating (korsī) (Figs 2, 3, & 10). Another point is the number of secondary seatings (korsī) in line with the main seating, which can be seen more in linear-script writing. As mentioned earlier, in this case, the longer the line, the greater the number of secondary seatings, especially at the end of the line (Fig 1).

3. Dang Variety: Another item in Golestaneh's Shikasta writings is the variety of script Dang. As we said, Golestaneh's tendency is more towards Jali Dang. However, Khafi writing can also be seen in some of Golestaneh's works. Therefore, in Golestaneh's works generally, the variety of Dang can be seen to some extent. Examining Dang variety, while not looking at the whole works but looking at the single work (that is, the internal composition of the works), it can be said that most of Golestaneh's works were executed as a single Dang. At the same time, in some of Golestaneh's works, one can also see the creation of variations with different Dang besides the main Dang. The variety of Dang in these works can be considered in two ways: In the first case, the primary and dominant Dang is Jeli, and the secondary Dang is Khafi. In the second case, the main Dang is Khafi, and the secondary Dang is Jali. The first case can be found in many linear-script writings (one-line, double-line, multi-line), and the second case can be found in some multi-direction and Siyah Mashq pieces. Another point is that in these works, the change of Dang usually happened along with the change of direction in the seating (korsī) (Figs 2, 3, 10, 12).

4. Simple-Letter Composition

1-4. Intertwined-Script Writings: The subject of intertwined-script writing is, in a way, on the border of the two concepts of good shaping (ḥosn-e taškīl) and good layout (ḥosn-e waẓ'). From one point of view, it can be proposed in the domain of letter shape and letter connections. But in one way, intertwined-script writing can be viewed from the perspective of good layout (ḥosn-e waẓ') and composition (tarkīb). The issue of intertwined -script writing can be proposed in this topic in two ways: One concerning the concept of composition, which refers to the composition of simple letters and parts of words, and the other in terms of «repetition» and «frequency» of similar words and phrases that are intertwined and joined in Golestaneh's works. In fact, in the latter case, the «repetition» element of these components can be designed under the concept of good layout (ḥosn-e waẓ') and composition (tarkīb). It should be said before that in Golestaneh's Shikasta writing, the letters and words are connected to such an extent that the legibility and clarity of the words have been observed to some extent. However, the tendency to create complex visual compositions in some cases has led to increased connected and intertwined-script writing. The frequency of connected and well-composed words and phrases such as «بهیچوجه من الوجوه», connecting «است» to the previous participle in present perfect verbs and similar cases (such as «گر دیده است», «رسیده است» and «شده است») is of this type (Fig 13). It can be said that the repetition and frequency of some of these complex compositions in Golestaneh's works, more than the content aspect, was influenced by the attention to their formal and visual qualities.



Fig. 13. intertwined-script writing and repetition of joined elements in Golestaneh's work.

Source: Moshashaie, 2012, 544.

2-4. Composition and Arrangement of Elongations (Mads): Another feature in these works is the composition and connection of elongations (Mads) with each other. The calligrapher's desired elongations (Mads) have been consecutively executed in many of these works. In these samples, the composition of consecutive elongations (Mads) can be witnessed in two ways: In a number of works, the composition of consecutive curved elongations (Mads) or the composition of curved and flat elongations (Mads) has occurred in a layered manner. These samples have considered creating a parallel between recurring elongations (Mads) and Blackness and Whiteness (sawād o bayāz). Repetition of letters and released (Morsal) elongations - such as «ن (Nun)» and «ی (ya)»- can also be placed in this group. In the other group, the common consecutive flats elongations (Mads) (or half-Mads) are written mounted. In several works, the space between the parallel elongations (Mads) is filled with micro-elements to create contrast and visual variety. Released (Morsal) movements such as such as «ن (Nun)» and «ی (ya)» can also be considered as some elongations (Mads) that are performed consecutively and repetitively in samples of Golestaneh's works. Also, the repetition of headstrokes in these works creates a function similar to the repetition of elongations (Mads) (Figs 14 & 15). Also, in some cases, the elongations have been implemented in a non-continuous and single way. In these samples, sometimes, before and after the elongations, we have seen the circles of the letters, which, on the one hand, have a kind of similarity and harmony with the form of the elongation, and on the other hand, they have created a sort of visual contrast because they are more distant than the elongations. In this way, the adjacency of circular letters and elongations brings together the two principles of harmony and visual diversity (Figs 19). Another type of connection between elongations (Mads) in Golestaneh's works is their intersection and contact aligned with each other, which leads to unity in the whole composition. For example, as seen in Fig. 16, the extension of the released «ن (Nun)» (from the word «سختن») in the direction of the elongation (Mad) «ت» (in the word «است») and the extension of the released «ی (ya)» in the direction of «می» (in the word «قلمی») has been placed and has led to visual connection and unity. In some cases, this feature leads to the integration of elongation and released movements in an intensified form. It should be mentioned that the feature of integration can happen in other movements (such as micro-elements) as well (Fig 17). Still, in Golestaneh's works, this feature can mostly be seen in the elongations and released (Morsal) movements. In these samples, sometimes the ends of the letters intersect in two opposite directions and create a unified form. For example, in Fig 17, which is a part of Golestaneh's linear-script writing, the letter «ن» (in the word «امن») is merged with the letter «ه» (in the word «پژمرده»). They are seen in an adjacent form. In another sample, the word «سید» (in an elongation (Mad) form) is applied to «است». Here, the letter س is attached to the beginning of الف and somehow evokes the form of الف. While creating a harmonious space between the two elongations (Mads), this integration has created a visual appeal (Fig. 18). Letter merging may also occur in the middle of letters and words. For example, as seen in Fig 19, the continuation of the letter «ن» is placed in the direction of the word «بندگان» and has merged with it.



Fig 14. Consecutive stepped and layered elongations (Mads) in Golestaneh's works. Source: Moshashaie, 2012, 544 & 535.



Fig 15. Repetition of released (Morsal) movements in Golestaneh's works Islamic Consultative Assembly Library, Murraqqa' No. 6926. Source: Moshashaie, 1996, 3.



Fig 16. The intersection elongations (Mads) along each other. Piece of Golestaneh's Shikasta writing. Source: Sefid Abian, 2012, 36.



Fig 17. Merging the letters «ن» and «ه» in Golestaneh's linear-script writing (Satr Nevisi). Source: Moshashaie, 2012, 544.

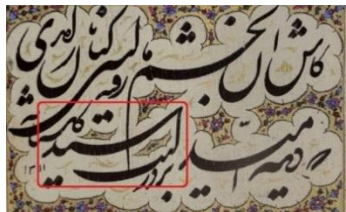


Fig. 18. Merging the brim of «الف» and elongated «س» in Golestaneh's work. Source: Sefid Abian, 2012, 31.



Fig. 19. Merging the released (Morsal) «ن» and elongated middle «ن» by Golestaneh. Source: Moshashaie, 2012, 55.

The next point concerns the elongations (Mads) in composition and their arrangement throughout the work. In many of Golestaneh's works, due to the appropriate and balanced arrangement of the elongations (Mads), unity can be observed in the work's overall composition. This point is particularly evident in Golestaneh's layered and Siyah Mashq-

like compositions. For example, in Fig. 16, the type of distribution and arrangement of the elongations (Mads) in the whole work, along with the appropriate use of micro-elements, has led to the overall balance and unity of the piece. It is possible to consider a triangular system in the composition and connection of elongations (Mads) so that the base of the triangle is placed at the bottom (Fig 20). This point has led to stability and strength in the composition of the work. In another work (Fig 21), elongations (Mads) are dragged to the left side of the image; however, two inverted triangular systems in the composition of elongations (Mads) and circles in this work can be witnessed: One is the triangular composition of «ب», «ک» and «ن» elongations and the other is the triangular composition of «خ», «ص» and «د» circles, which together have led to the stability and unity of the composition. In another sample (Fig 22), the extension of elongations in the lower part of the frame has led to stability in the work's overall composition.

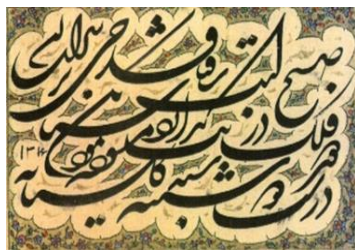


Fig 20. Balanced arrangement of elongations (Mads) in Golestaneh's Shikasta writing. Source: Islamic Consultative Assembly Library, Murraqqa' No. 9888.



Fig 21. Balanced arrangement of elongations (Mads) and circles in Golestaneh's Shikasta writing. Source: Islamic Consultative Assembly Library, Murraqqa' No. 9888.

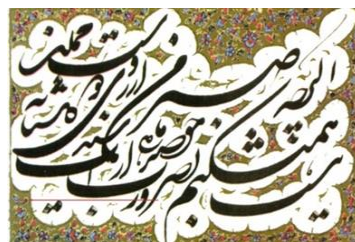


Fig 22. Arrangement of elongations (Mads) and circles in Golestaneh's Shikasta writing. Source: Moshashaie, 1996, 13.



Fig 23. Arrangement of elongations (Mads) and circles in Golestaneh's Shikasta writing.
Source: Islamic Consultative Assembly Library, Murraqqa' No. 9888.

One representation of elegance and manifestation concerning elongations (Mads) is their connection (minimum connection). This principle, which induces visual appeal and pleasure, has great sensitivity and requires the high skill and mastery of the calligrapher because, at the same time, it must observe the same tangencies between the elongations and implement the good composition in the best way (Figs 22 & 23).

3-4. Composition and Adjacency of Circles: In samples of Golestaneh's works, the calligrapher's tendency to adjacency of circular movements, and thus, the creation of rhythm and visual harmony can be witnessed. An example of this type of letter adjacency can be seen in other scripts and other areas, including Nastaliq compositions in seal writing (Mirza Abulqasemi, 2015). In Golestaneh's works, the adjacency of circles has sometimes occurred in horizontal seatings (korsi) and sometimes in stepped and mounted forms. The number of these adjacent circles varies from two to several circles, depending on the text and the composition requirements. It is worth mentioning that sometimes short elongations (Mads) have been adjoined circles in these compositions. These samples can still be related to the composition and adjacency of the circles because the short elongations (Mads), which have more roundness than the long ones, are in some way in sync with the circles (Fig 24). In many cases, it has been tried to write completely adjacent circles with the help of such arrangements. However, in other works, the arrangement of circles with coordinated distances has influenced the composition's unity (Fig 21).



Fig 24. Samples of horizontal and stepped adjacency of circles in Golestaneh's works. Islamic Consultative Assembly Library, Murraqqa' No. 6926. Source: Moshashaie, 2012, 544.

4-4. Composition in Micro-Elements: Besides the system of elongations (Mads) and circles, the connection between micro-elements is also noteworthy in Golestaneh's works. In the execution of these elements, in many samples, the consideration of parallel and isomorphic movements, as well as protracted movements in the vicinity of each other, has led to visual harmony. One of the examples of this case can be seen in Fig 25, where two letters «ر» and double-letter «نه» are arranged in harmony. Also, the composition and adjacency of the letters الف and ل has led to harmony in the composition through intrusion and alignment. In another part, the letter «م» in the word «نگفتيم» with «الف» and «ل» in the word «خيال» have been joined and written in a connected form. In this way, harmony can be seen in the Heightening (šo'ūd) and Lowering (nozūl) of the letters «الف», «ل», and «ميم». Also, the good adjacency of «لا» with «ل» in this piece is noteworthy. The placement of the letter «ل» in line with and along the «ل» of the word «لا» has led to the intensification of the vertical movement in this part of the work, which contrasts with the horizontal movement of the line. On the other hand, it is in harmony with other vertical movements such as الف, لام, and ميم. Creating harmony and visual unity through connecting letters can also be seen in samples of Golestaneh's works. The vital point in this image is the connecting letters and words to each other, which causes greater unity and harmony between the elements in the work. Here, the letter «ل», by joining two other letters, has connected the upper and lower lines and made them more unified (Fig 25). As a final point, it should be mentioned that each of the types of elements examined in calligraphic works (including elongations, circles, micro-elements) should be observed and measured concerning other elements. In combining these elements, depending on the type of artwork and the necessity of the composition, measures such as tangency, intrusion, and overlaying (mounted letters and words) have been used (Fig 26).



Fig 25. Visual connections (including alignments and tangency of letters) in Golestaneh's work. Islamic Consultative Assembly Library, Murraqqa' No. 9888. Source: Moshashaie, 1996, 10 & 16.

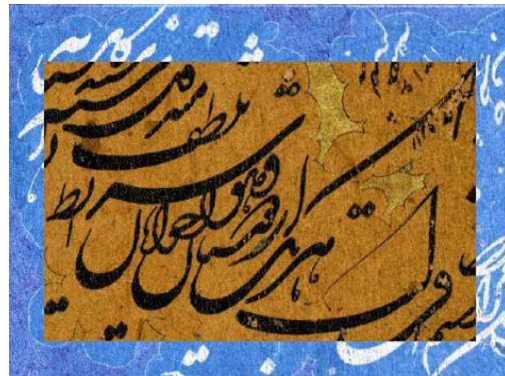


Fig 26. The unified composition of elongations, circles and micro-elements in Golestaneh's work. Source: Islamic Consultative Assembly Library, Murraqqa' No. 6926.

Conclusion

In the present study, Golestaneh's works were examined in terms of typology and then analyzed in terms of good layout (ḥosn-e waẓ') and composition (tarkīb). In the typology section, Golestaneh's works were identified in five categories of «single-line», «double-

line», «multi-line», «multi-direction Chalipa», and «Siyah Mashq» pieces. Meanwhile, one can notice the dominant aspect of Golestaneh's works in linear-script writing (Satr Nevisi). Also, it should be said that in all of Golestaneh's works, the tendency towards Jali Dang can be observed. The type of Siyah Mashq is not very prominent in Golestaneh's works, but it can be said that some of his works, including verse and Chalipa writings, are close to Siyah Mashq by increasing the density and intrusion of letters and words. In the next step of this study, good layout (ḥosn-e waż') and composition (tarkīb) in Golestaneh's works were examined in four areas: framing, seating (korsī) arrangement, variety of Dang, and composition of simple-letters. The tendency towards a horizontal frame and seating (korsī), at the same time, multiple sub-seatings in most of the works, as well as multi-direction writing in some works, are the characteristics of Golestaneh's Shikasta writing. Also, the tendency to Jali Dang is seen especially in single-line and double-line. Double-Dang writing (Khafi and Jali) can be observed in a number of Golestaneh's works. Regarding the composition of simple letters, several characteristics can be expressed in Golestaneh's works: The first characteristic in these works is the intertwined script writing and repetition of particular words and phrases, some of which can be considered as emerging from official and literary themes. Another feature is the composition and arrangement of elongations (Mads) in the part and the whole work. The noteworthy point in this section is the tendency to combine successive elongations (Mads) and semi-elongations in two ways, «layered» and «stepped». Layered elongations (Mads) generally include curved or flat-curved elongations, and stepped elongations mainly include flat consecutive elongations (Mads). Another feature of the composition of elongations in some of Golestaneh's works is the integration of elongations and the formation of unified forms. Another feature in Golestaneh's works is the tendency to use adjacent circles, which can be seen in horizontal and stepped ways. This adjacency can sometimes be observed in a minimum form (in the adjacency of two circles) and sometimes in a maximum form in the adjacency of multiple circles. A remarkable feature in Golestaneh's works is the type of visual connections in the micro-elements, which happened in several ways. Among these cases, the repetition of similar and aligned movements, tangency and intrusion, and the merging of letters can be pointed out. The sum of these features has led to harmonious yet diverse compositions that show artistic taste and creativity in the works of Seyed Ali Akbar Golestaneh.

Author Contributions

This article is extracted from author 1's doctoral dissertation entitled «Stylistics of Shikasta Nasta'liq script in the works of Darvish Abdul Majid Taleghani and Ali Akbar Golestaneh», supervised by authors 2, 3, and 4 at Shahed University of Tehran.

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Conflict of Interest

The author (s) declare that there are no potential conflicts of interest related to this research, in writing, and publication of this article.

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Appendix

1. Mojtaba Malek Zadeh born in Kerman in 1960 (1339 S.H.). When he was a teenager, he started learning Nastaliq calligraphy. Then he left for Shiraz and continued his work under the teaching of calligraphers of Shiraz. From 1984 (1363 S.H.), relying on the works of Darvish, Mirza Gholamreza, and Golestaneh, he started Shikasta script writing. In 1999 (1378 S.H.), he received a master's degree in Shikasta writing from the Iran Calligraphers Association. Malekzadeh, who can be considered the owner of the style in Shikasta writing, has always been loyal to the old style and has written many works in calligraphy (Ketabat) and calligraphic pieces in Shikasta script.

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