



**Analytical-descriptive Study of the Role of Art and Architecture in Strengthening the Spiritual Dimensions of Tourism with Emphasis on Aesthetic Elements (Case study: Seven examples of historical and religious buildings in Qazvin)**

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**Abstract**

Spirituality is an inner and natural concept and a truth in the heart of the universe that human beings can achieve in the context of travel and tourism, as well as in the path of movement and communication with society, the universe, and God. The revival of high values and indicators aims to create and recreate a new identity and promote to create and recreate the sense of spirituality in a meaningful relationship between tourists and visitors with the environment. The environment and elements in the urban space in macro-planning is a crucial and undeniable issue. This article examines the role of art and architecture in strengthening the spiritual dimension of tourism with an emphasis on aesthetic elements. For this purpose, seven examples of ancient historical and religious buildings in Qazvin, including Saad Al-

Saltanah Palace, Chehel Sotun Palace, Aali Qapo Mansion, Darb-e Koushk Gate, Jameh Mosque, Al-Nabi Mosque, and Imamzadeh Hussein (AS), have been studied. Accordingly, by applying an analytical-descriptive approach based on library documents and by using Content Analysis and inferential method, this study identified elements, indicators, and components of aesthetics that lead to promotion the sense of spirituality of tourists in tourist places. These components includes environmental psychology, the importance and impact of urban space and landscape, art and perception of aesthetics, beauty and perfection, color and light, geometry and its application in sacred art, geometry in Islamic decorations and patterns, form and structure of Islamic art and transcendent values in Iranian-Islamic art patterns.

**Keywords:** Sacred art, Geometric motifs, Aesthetics, Spiritual tourism

### **Introduction**

The position of art and architecture by relying on aesthetics in strengthening the view and spiritual dimensions of tourism is very prominent and effective. Art is an attempt by artists to create beautiful and enjoyable shapes, images, and works through which they convey their mental messages, ideas, and individual thoughts to others (Nami, 1992). Visual arts are one of the most dynamic and powerful languages for expressing the ideas and ideals of the human mind. All humans' visual knowledge of the world and everything within it is obtained mostly through form, shape, and color concerning space, leading to the influence and stimulation of emotions, feelings, and mental forces (Haeri, 2009, p.17). As the most social human art, Architecture is the best type of art, and no art like architecture can exist throughout the moments of current life (Haeri, 2009, p.17). Every structure and historical monument, as a part of the architectural culture of a society, objectifies a mental idea through its apparent form and is a manifestation for measuring this culture (Grutter, 2004, p.53). On the other hand, spirituality is the essence of life, and it is a fundamental human quality that values and transcends one's life. The verse "Tell them to walk in the land, and then see what was the end of the tribes before them, most of whom were polytheists ..." (Verse 42 of Surah Room) confirms the special place of tourism and its importance in Islamic culture, which causes more recognition about Creator and the universe. From the point of view of psychologists, spirituality is defined as the constant human effort to respond to the questions of life. Pargament and Mahoney

(2002) consider spirituality to mean the search for the sacred. According to this definition, spirituality is a process that includes efforts to discover the sacred and thus preserve it. Ethics as a set of human moods and rooted human traits and mysticism in the meaning and concept of recognizing the truth are the two basic elements of spirituality in Islam. Identifying the truth is possible in two ways: one by arguing from effect to efficiency and the other through inward purification and emptying the soul of others. The knowledge obtained through this is exploratory and intuitive. Islamic spirituality in the form of innate spirituality is the complete form of spirituality so that its purpose is to achieve self-knowledge and theology (Sohrabi, 2017). It is not easy to find the meaning and concept while humans are attached to stillness and habit. Therefore, tourism as another dynamic and fluid category is important (Roknodin Eftekhari, Jahanian, khooshebast, & Vahedi, 2018). In the physical sense, tourism means moving from a point and returning to it after a process. Tourism can be interpreted as the embodiment of spirituality because the tourist is driven by the search for meaning (Jahanian, 2017). Spirituality is, in fact, at the highest level of Maslow's pyramid of needs, where humans transcend their physical and material requirements and desires and strive for self-fulfillment and attainment of the soul by forming immaterial requirements in their conscience (Zargham Boroujeny, 2017). Therefore, tourism and search are among the most important and effective ways to achieve meaning to respond to basic requirements of humans, the spiritual dimensions of which can be achieved to get excellence, meaning, and mutual understanding (Shafia & Sabbaghpour Azarian, 2016). Through touring, human beings are acquainted with geographical spaces and urban environments, fellow human beings, and other cultures, and this familiarity leads to more knowledge of humans (Papali Yazdi & Saghaei, 2013, p.88). The historical, cultural, and tourism potentials in urban environments and contexts have the ability and possibility of dynamism and vitality of urban spaces. They can be effective in attracting tourists as well as developing spatial patterns of tourism. The existence of parameters such as identity, readability, sense of place, collective memory, and visual perception and beauty of urban space leads to tourists' visual pleasure and spiritual satisfaction. The beauty of the stone or composite facade in urban landscapes is by no means enough for tourists because they seek the meaning, spirit, and truth hidden in the buildings and structures derived from the culture and spirit of the inhabitants of the city. Valuable sights in tourism attract people, where it is a tiny point of the infinite circle of

the universe and conveys a spiritual feeling to them. The appearance and perspective created from the set of structures and buildings and the material needs should provide the spiritual requirements of humans and their growth and excellence (Ebrahimzadeh, Kashefidoost, & Ghadermarzi, 2016). For a long time, these values have disappeared from society, and the relationship between man and space has been based on duality. This has resulted in nothing unless spatial alienation. Unfortunately, architecture has moved towards construction and objectification, and spatial sensitivities have been lost. During this period, other buildings and cities are no longer ambiguous and, on the contrary, are full of loss and dispersion. Accordingly, the architecture of the building and man are considered two separate categories, and therefore the greatest spiritual damage resulting from it has been inflicted on man. The answer and solution to this problem should be considered in the cultural turn of values into signs and symbols that affect architecture as a part of space and the human environment (Haeri, 2009, p.98). Today, we are witnessing the formation of works of art and buildings that have no place, not only among the community of architects and artists but also among the general public. Also, they have nothing to offer to the future. In the analysis and study of these works, immortality is the reference. In addition, immortality indicates a kind of life, effectiveness, charm, and beauty. The immortality of work requires simultaneous attention to all aspects of architecture, such as man, artist, society, history, nature, and God. Permanent works and phenomena remain and load over time and become part of collective memories. Therefore, attention to the permanent design of space leads to an increase in the sense of belongingness to space. The artist and society are related to the other two dimensions of nature and God, which approach unity and create eternal works. With the sincerity and refinement he has created in himself, the committed artist does not leave any role in the work because he considers himself poor and in need of God and presents his work to God as a small service that is better to be anonymous. What the artist has created reflects the common human understanding of the teachings of divine revelation, which is the main creator of beauty. Hence, it is because of such a view and belief that the artist's work has no individual nature, does not fit into the form of time, and with the connection to true beauty, it lasts and does not become obsolete and will never be forgotten. Accordingly, we can understand the profound impact of a historical monument of a mosque or a tomb from previous centuries or the secret of the dignity and permanence of traditional Iranian arts in passing

through all these many events and sufferings and various attitudes. The absence of meaning and such a firm belief in art and architecture and replacing the mortal self with the eternal God introduce today's architecture as confused and critical and sometimes cut off from heaven and helpless on earth (Noghrehkar & Hamzehnejad, 2009).

### **Effective elements in strengthening the spiritual dimensions of tourism**

Based on this research, recognizing the mental and objective dimensions and aspects of aesthetic components in the principles of past architecture, reviving and recreating them to achieve meaning, excellence, and mutual understanding have been proposed as the three basic components of the concept of spirituality in tourism (Shafia & Sabbaghpour Azarian, 2016). In Iranian Islamic thought, the space resulting from the emergence of art should be a sign of beauty, and since one of the results of the arts is the manifestation of beauty, the architect and urban planner with knowledge of the face of truth and understand the form of reality must be diligent in creation in such spaces. Aesthetics can be examined from thinkers of transcendent wisdom and the point of view of architects and urban planners. One of the most influential identity-building foundations in the cultural and human dimensions is the perspective of any society in the field of aesthetics. If aesthetic values are shaken, and put in crisis, all aspects of society will gradually move towards problems. Physical/formal components and mental-psychological components are among the most critical components in this field. The physical part expresses the objective and physical aspects of comprehensive aesthetics and mediates communication with the audience to perceive beauty. Proportion, composition, geometry, sign, presence of mosque, the path between plurality and unity, self-sufficiency, different spaces (static and dynamic characteristics), and hierarchy are the most important indicators of this component. The psychological part of the soul also expresses the symbolic aspects of the essence of comprehensive aesthetics, which plays a prominent role in forming Iranian-Islamic architecture and urban planning. Among the indicators in this component, we can mention light, symmetry, color, impact on the audience and the receiver, perfection and its perception, the principle of simplicity, and avoidance of futility (Sadeghi, Dadgar, & Samavati, 2018). The influential factors and elements such as environmental psychology, the importance and impact of the environment of space and urban landscape, art and perception of aesthetics, beauty and perfection, color and light, geometry

and its application in sacred art, geometry in Eslimi decorations, and motifs, the format and structure of Islamic art and transcendent values in Iranian-Islamic art designs are investigated as follows.

### **1. Environmental psychology**

Environmental perception results from the interaction of sensory perception and cognition and is associated with human knowledge of the environment (Mahmoudinejad & Sadeghi, 2009, p.25). Accordingly, environmental psychology examines a human's relationship with the physical environment in the context of shaping their values and needs. Environmental psychology has three basic paradigms of perception, cognition, and behavioral bases in the category of epistemology. Form, function, and meaning are also among the components of urban spaces. Form means a part of a phenomenon and can be perceived by the human senses. Performance refers to a property of a phenomenon and faces part of the need-benefit of a phenomenon. Meaning is also a property of the phenomenon and can relate to other aspects of life. Meaning should transform cultural values into signs and symbols that affect architecture as part of the human environment (Mahmoudinejad & Sadeghi, 2009, p.167). Iranian architecture has created spaces where one finds oneself in a Minoan area and does not feel the passage of time. An Iranian's whole idea of paradise, shrine, emblem, garden, roof, and courtyard indicates the needs that were once met and felt in the context of a society's culture and today no longer exist as they should and perhaps. Memory was a common aspect between people, especially in enjoying a new song and a space. A memory is reminiscent of an event in which a person's feelings and emotions are excited and remembered (Haeri, 2009, p.98). Figures 1 and 2 are related to Saad Al-Saltanah palace in the city of Qazvin, and the impact and association of memory in this building are understandable. Restoration, reconstruction, and revitalization of this project, in addition to preserving the historical values of the city, has also been very effective in the growth of tourism infrastructure.



Figure. 1. Sarai Saad Al-Saltanah in the city of Qazvin. Source: Author.



Figure. 2. Saad Al-Saltanah palace is one of the most influential urban spaces and points, which can be considered a monument of great cultural and historical value, making the space lively and memorable. Source: Author.

## 2. Importance and impact of the space environment and urban landscape

Due to the importance of mental and visual perception of tourists from the environment and urban landscape, tourism depends on the quality of architectural spaces, a set of elements that are a symbol and a sign to read it. Suppose planning and management are done based on the aspects of the urban landscape identity with a spirituality approach. It will be possible to create a spiritual sense in the urban tourism landscape (Hashemi & Parchkani, 2016). The urban landscape, as the exterior of the city, also expresses its inner spirituality and character. Paying attention to the body and appearance of a town without considering its useful content and the way of social interactions and spiritual needs of human beings will not create a favorable atmosphere for citizens. The ideal urban landscape is achieved by expanding the aesthetic and visual experience of tourists. The proposed mental model of the relationship between humans and the environment indicates a two-way relationship between the characteristics of the urban environment on the one hand and the cognition, perception, and evaluation of human behavior on the other. In the first stage, the geometry and tangible and visible features of the environment and urban landscape, such as visual, audio, smell, etc., are exposed to the tourist's five senses and perception. In the second stage, the urban

environment is recognized by the tourist. In the third stage, the tourist mind reacts positively or negatively based on the cognition gained from the environment. In the fourth stage, the interaction between the urban environment and human beings engages in certain behaviors. Based on the study of the relationship between the urban environment and humans, it can be concluded that the urban landscape as a system consists of a combination of three subsystems: the objective landscape of the city, the mental landscape of the town, and the evaluative mental landscape of the city (Ebrahimzadeh et al., 2016). The selected samples in figures 3 and 4 are intense, vivid, and dynamic indicators and signs which have a mental impact on the audience and the observer due to their unique external and internal features.



**Figure 3.** The facade of Aali Qapo Mansion Gate is currently a strong point and sign in the city of Qazvin. A white inscription can be seen on an azure blue background in the middle of the gate and above the wooden door. It is made of mosaic tiles, and the elastics above the entrance door are decorated with tiles—source: Author.



**Figure 4.** North porch of Jameh Mosque in the city of Qazvin as one of the oldest four porch mosques related to the early Islamic centuries with a magnificent dome, elegant minarets, tiled decorations, high porches, and expensive bed decorations. The architecture is from the Seljuk and Safavid eras. Source: Author.

### 3. Art and perception of aesthetics

Art means the creation of objects and subjects that are created and addressed to evoke an aesthetic experience. The world of art means giving meaning and content to things in the context of a particular cultural framework (Levinson & Guyer, 2008, p.14). From Kant's point of view, the beauty of objects in works of art and natural phenomena depends on the fact that they



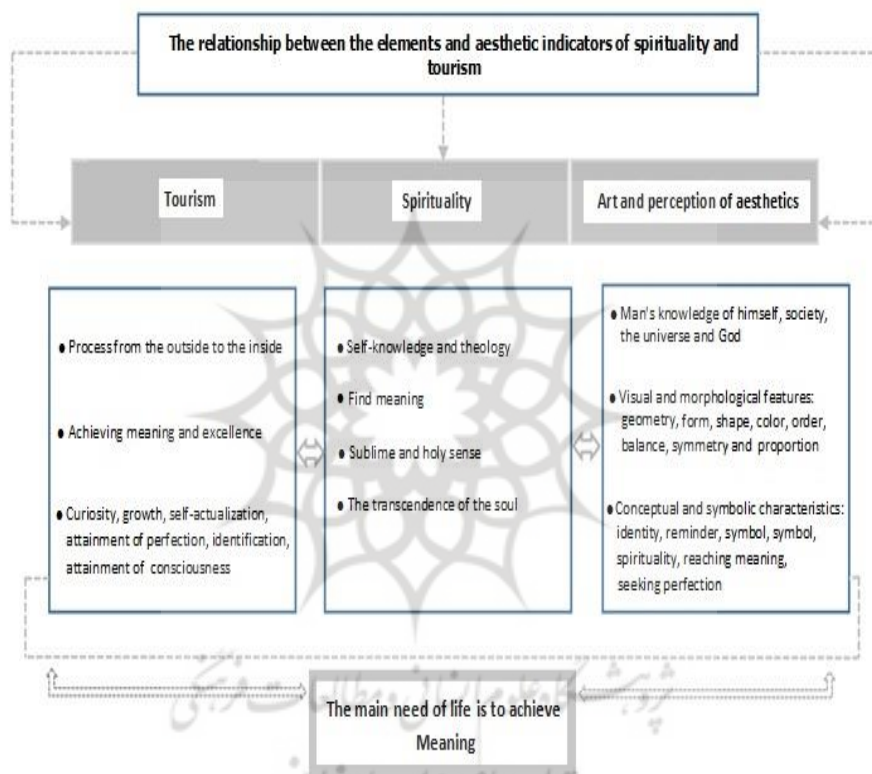
can stimulate the free play of powers or cognitive talents based on their pure forms - both spatial and temporal - without the mediation of concepts. Clive Bell and Roger Fry believed that spatial form is the only appropriate aspect of visual art considered art. Also, according to Bell's famous interpretation, having an expressive face is a necessary and sufficient condition for something to be art. Art is inherently the meaning of communicating and expressing mental states or non-propositional themes (Levinson & Guyer, 2008, p.12). Cognition of beauty is a perceptual process that occurs at different levels of symbolic semantic sense. Accordingly, the aesthetic features of the environment can be sought in three main sensory, formal, and symbolic aspects. What is perceived by the senses is among the sensory elements. Formal elements can also create various spatial states according to visual laws, and therefore recognizing their syntactic structure is effective in their emotional expression. The study of expressive and semantic features indicates that the ambiguity that arises from an aesthetic experience in the face of work is because of uncertainty in the language of the work. Therefore, the knowledge of semiotics, which is based on this ambiguity, can be a suitable approach in evaluating examples of architecture. Also, the art of architecture can benefit from the rules of semiotics in the production of meaning and its transmission; on the other hand, the perception of beauty as a category resulting from the interaction of the architectural space and the observer emphasizes the aspects and features that enable the space to effectively affect the audience (Mirshahzadeh, Eslami, & Einifar, 2011). Public perception also refers to the process of extracting the concept from complex stimuli in the landscape. The most important factors affecting human perception are the five senses, biological, social, psychological, and cultural needs of curiosity (knowing the environment and predicting its effects), aesthetics (taste, cultural background, emotional experiences), and proper understanding of the environment that can lead to the feeling of visual pleasure, beauty, diversity, and security in the environment (Moayed Alinejad, & Navai, 2013). Table 1 summarizes urban planning, architecture experts, and Islamic thinkers' attitudes, concepts, components, and aesthetic characteristics.

**Table 1. Concepts, components, and aesthetic characteristics of experts in urban planning and architecture and Islamic thinkers.**

References	Basic concepts and tips	Theorist and specialist in the field of urban planning and architecture
The Book of rules and criteria for urban space design	He considers proportion and harmony as a part and whole of a fundamental category in beauty. Some of the elements of beauty in the city in his definition are: awareness of space, the principle of simplicity, order, coherence, interconnectedness, scale and proportion, confinement of confinement, static dynamics, etc. (Sadeghi et al., 2016)	<b>Mahmood Tavasoli</b>
The book of perception of the identity and beauty of the city in the light of Islamic thought	In his view, beauty is divided into spiritual and material beauty, reasonable, tangible, true and false beauty, or natural and artistic beauty. Several beauty components in the city are a symbol, identity, taste, perfection, purity, spirituality, remembrance, peace, lack of nostalgia, meaningful environment, color, unity, balance, unity in plurality and ... (Sadeghi et al., 2016)	<b>Mohammad Naghizadeh</b>
An Introduction to Islamic Identity in Architecture and Urban Planning	In his view, beauty is an actual existence that is perceived in the material world with material manifestations by the senses, in the rational world with conceptual characteristics by the intellect, and in the realm of the kingdom by the heart, the soul in relation to the existence and capacity of the audience. From Ober's point of view, some of the aesthetic elements of fitness, vitality and dynamism, glory, motivation, creativity, variety of factors, being full of roles and colors, being relaxing and safe, etc. (Sadeghi et al., 2016)	<b>Abdolhamid Noghrehkar</b>

References	Basic concepts and tips	Islamic thinkers
The book of Al-Manazer	According to Ibn Haytham, light and color are motivating and influential in the soul of the audience. Ibn Haytham says that light creates good. According to him: light, color and proportion, combination are components of beauty. (Sadeghi et al., 2016)	<b>Ibn Haytham</b>
Sahifa of Imam and Man from Imam Khomeini's point of view	He considers beauty as an inherent property of an object. As a result, the foundation of the science of aesthetics will be the science of ontology. Perception of beauty, union with beauty, manifestation from the inside to the outside, an invitation to beauty, invitation of the audience to walk away from appearances, avoiding forms contrary to the identity of the Islamic society, simplicity. (Sadeghi et al., 2016)	<b>Emam Khomeini</b>
The book of the nature of the philosophy of ethics	Truth-seeking, ethics, love and worship, beauty and art, creativity, and initiative are among the particular desires of human beings. (Sadeghi et al., 2016)	<b>Ostad Morteza Motahari</b>
Art and spirituality	From the Uyghur point of view, such as mercy, love and peace are among the divine attributes in Islam. It is one of the indicators related to aesthetics. (Sadeghi et al., 2016)	<b>Seyed Hossein Nasr</b>

According to the results extracted from Table 1, diagram 1 indicates a deep relationship between the components and characteristics of art and aesthetics of spirituality and tourism. In other words, this diagram shows several common points in the structure of the three axes of this research: art and aesthetics, spirituality, and tourism. The influential role of elements and components of art and aesthetics on urban spaces is also investigated.



**Diagram 1: The relationship between the elements and characteristics of the three axes: art and aesthetics, spirituality, tourism.**

#### 4. Beauty and perfection

In Iranian mystic thought, the desire for beauty and perfection is deposited in the human body to be known as the attraction to beauty. The action towards beauty and perfection is an innate and eternal gift. The mystic

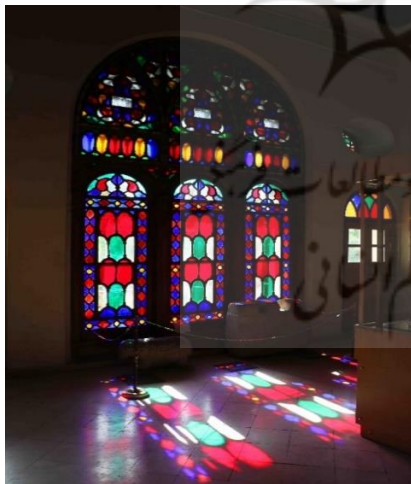
architect creates a mysterious world through art so that the inside of the viewer can be cleansed by observing it (Pourabdollah, 2010, p.76).

### **5. Color and light**

Color and light are among the most important and influential elements used in traditional and Islamic architecture of Iran and decorate work, living and spiritual spaces. The role of light in Islamic architecture is based on the principle of manifestation; so that on the one hand, it prevents the fading and dissolution of light on the wall surface, and on the other hand, it has been reflected by using the polished surface of the tile and mirror. With the radiance and reflection of light, the surface, and utterly material concept, distances itself from its materiality and becomes an epiphany for the immaterial concept of light due to abstract geometric and plant motifs. So that in the mosque, which is the house of God, the symbol and perfect manifestation of "Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth." The play of light and color as symbolic concepts in the Islamic architecture of Iran enhances the quality of the space inside the mosque so much that the person is fascinated by the environment. Mogharnas is a way of attracting and scattering light to precise and narrow degrees. By using Mogharnas, the architect turns the building into a manifestation of the levels of the universe and the reflection of the light of truth within it.

Due to the rule of the principle of manifestation of the building in Islamic architecture, divine unity must be shown. According to Burkhart, there is no symbol or expression like the light that reveals monotheism. Hence, the artist decorates other surfaces with embossed and lattice patterns to use light. With three items of geometry, weight, rhythm, and light, the artist can chart the idea of the unity of existence. Geometry is a tool to express unity in spatial order. The weight of rhythm reveals unity in the worldly order as well as indirectly in space. Also, light is the ratio of visible forms such as absolute existence to finite beings (Balkhari, 2005, p.509). On the other hand, color can be considered an irreplaceable companion of light and multiple forms of a single light. In this way, color is formed by the decomposition of light and reveals the symbol of the allegory of the manifestation of plurality in unity. Color is the same as light (unity), and on the other hand, light is found according to the analysis of various manifestations (plurality). In other words, the transcendent essence is abstract and colorless, and light, which is itself a perfect symbol of unity and is embodied by color and becomes a colorful and colorless

manifestation. (Balkhari, 2005, p.510). Colors have a psychological aspect and have a significant impact on the human emotional and spiritual life. Colors can be a source of pleasure or joy and confusion. Clear and bright colors evoke freshness and radiance, while dark colors evoke sadness and unhappiness. Colors also affect the human pituitary gland. Green color has a healing effect that if it turns blue, its spiritual quality will increase. Also, the soothing blue color and the turquoise blue color evoke a kind of vitality and lightness of the soul (Pourabdollah, 2010, p.282). Colors and lights in Iranian painting are not part of the work but the whole work. The discovery of this aversion to color and light, as well as its inner understanding and otherness, is underway in Iranian painting (Balkhari, 2005, p.484). According to Ibn Haytham, color and light have the power of stimulation, meaning that these two factors can create an effect on the soul that makes a face look beautiful. He also added a third factor to the power to create beauty, namely fit and coalition. According to Ibn Haytham, light creates goodness, and for this reason, the sun, moon, and planets appear excellent and beautiful, although there is no factor in them except bright light. Based on this view, color can also be a factor in creating goodness. Color can play the look, and bright colors make the viewer happy. Pure and bright colors and designs look better if they have a regular and uniform order (Pourabdollah, 2010, p.85).



**Figure 5. Sash and colored glass of Chehelston Mansion Source: Author.**



**Figure 6. View of sash and colored glass on the second floor of Chehelston Mansion Source: Author.**

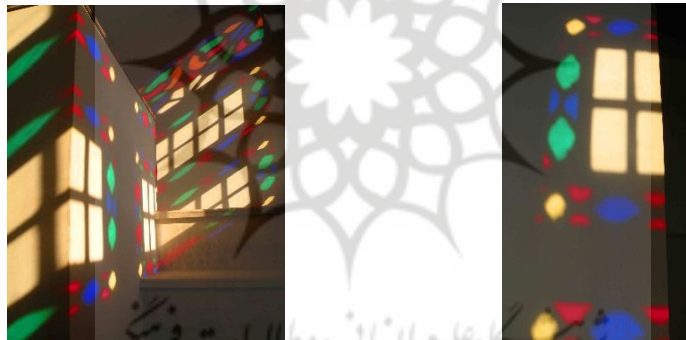
## **6. Geometry and its application in sacred art**

Geometry is the language of Iranian architecture and has shed a very bright and radiant ray on various aspects of Iranian art. Although precise geometric designs and patterns have a simple appearance, they have a complex interior. Wisdom and prudence have been used in all and parts of geometric designs, and there is no coincidence news. Geometric patterns link the cosmic order and system and strengthen the viewer's emotional aspect (Pourabdollah, 2010, p.206). On the other hand, proportion as one of the pillars of Islamic aesthetics is a factor in establishing a link between organic light and existence in Islamic optics. Suppose we consider manifestation as the emergence of the light of existence. In that case, it is proportionality or as much as its structure and form, and for a logical reason, it is a manifestation in a harmonious and proportionate system that flows. In other words, this harmony and proportion manifest unity in the vast dimensions of plurality and narrates two meanings with a particular order and great simultaneity. First, the infinite manifestation of unity manifests itself in the geometric order because order itself is unifying, and second, the unique proportion and symmetry that turns plurality into unity. If there is a disturbance in existence and presence of such a balance, the plurality will certainly not represent and symbolize unity. Therefore, unity cannot be considered as multiplicity and plurality as unity. In the same way that all forms come from a point and all numbers come from a unit, every plurality of the Creator of the universe comes into being, which is the unit itself. Accordingly, according to Masoom (AS), geometry is same with a form full of order and beauty that has a spiritual nature and comes from meaning. Therefore, the format in Islamic art has an intrinsic relationship with the content and is never examined separately (Balkhari, 2005, p.528).

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**Figure 7. Covering and decorating the porch at the entrance of Saad Al-Saltanah Palace, geometric order, proportion, and unique symmetry, while being repetitive and centralized, beautifully narrates the manifestation of unity. Source: Author**



**Figure 8. Sash of Chehelston mansion. Reflection of colored surfaces from stunning wooden windows and colored lattice that these colors in archeology express the four seasons of the year. Green symbolizes spring; red symbolizes summer, yellow symbolizes autumn, and blue symbolizes winter—source: Author.**

### **6.1 Geometric code of the circle**

The circle starts from the width of the point. The point is the first unit from which the line is obtained, from the surface line and the volume surface. In other words, the point as a center with a center that determines the motion and from the width of the circle and the continuity of the line is obtained; a quality of beauty appears in geometric shapes and patterns that represent a



range of totality the world starts with it. Such thinking is rooted in Islamic thought and knowledge, which attributes everything to the Creator of the universe as the source of things. From Burkart's point of view, the circle is the end extended, and the fact is the absolute code or supreme substance. Circles, triangles, squares, and other geometric shapes are not mere shapes but contain truths that, through interpretation, lead one to the world of example and pure truth. In terms of meaning, the circle is a sign and symbol of the infinite sky and the infinity of perfection and integrity (Balkhari, 2005).

### **6.2 Geometric code of the triangle**

When three circles touch each other at their furthest points, the first triangular polygon is formed. Because the triangle is one of the simplest shapes, all objects are based on a triangle. In terms of meaning, the triangle is the threefold code of soul includes "Amara," "Lavameh" and "Motmaenneh."<sup>1</sup> Human beings must go through these three essential and fundamental stages to achieve perfection. In other words, the triangle represents the three worlds of The World above, Worldly, and Hell and corresponds to the three categories of man, soul, and body.

### **6.3 Geometric code of the Square**

The square is an earthly symbol and represents quantities that contain the meaning and feeling of stillness, strength, fence, perfection, and establishment. The square is the formal example of the number 4, the figure of divine perfection and completion of manifestation. The square refers to concepts such as the mystery, the divine throne, and its bearers, the four angels, the four beings, the four memories, the four deaths, the four truths, the four elements, and the four natures. Therefore, in Islamic cosmology, squares and cubes are symbols and signs of matter and embodiment. Square and cube geometric shapes are the most suitable form for presenting buildings that are supposed to be a symbol of stability, considering that the Kaaba is in the shape of a cube (Balkhari, 2005, p.558).

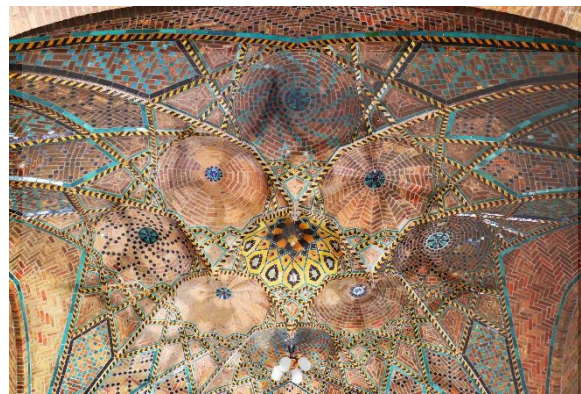
## **7. Geometry in Eslimi decorations and motifs**

Geometry in Eslimi decorations and motifs has created works full of wonder. The spiral motions of the knot, with vigorous twisting around various

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1. According to Islamic philosophy, the soul has different ranks: commanding soul (Nafs-e Ammareh), accusing soul (Nafs-e Lavameh) and the soul of peace (Nafs-e Motma'enneh).

centers of symmetry, act like attractive magnets, leaving no place for deep and precise gaze. Every time a vain gaze tries to establish itself in these overlapping geometric shapes or to analyze hidden underlying designs results in the manifestation of a new role for him. These polygonal star motifs with motionless and restless geometric shapes violate the principle of the viewer's point of view being fixed and turning their attention to a limited frame image that forms the basis of the Renaissance perspective. These roles require a moving, indomitable, and restless gaze that continually delays understanding the order that constitutes the plan to evoke a sense of astonishment. This sense is itself the prelude to the intellectual work of the thinker.



**Figure 9: Decorations of the porch of the eastern entrance of Jameh Mosque of Qazvin. Source: Author.**

### **7.1 Knot**

The principle of the roles is called knots. There is a circle and a code hidden under the knots. The knots change shape every time and represent a complex and diverse world. The presence of knots emphasizes the existing order. New knots are created from the knots so that the eye cannot recognize shapes. By making such an astonishing atmosphere, the architect frees humans from the world of role to not see a part and set foot in another direction. In other words, a journey takes place in another place and the world and in a timeless and placeless world (Pourabdollah, 2010, p.137).

### **7.2 Eslimi**

Eslimi is a kind of dialectic in the decoration category in which logic is associated with the living continuity of weight. Eslimi has two essential

elements: the complexity and entanglement of patterns and the role of plant motifs. The first element goes back to geometric theoretical reflections or game theory, and the second element represents a kind of weight draw. In other words, it is a combination of spiral shapes and twisted leaves and may have originated more from exclusively linear cryptography than from plant patterns (Burkhart, 1990, p.139).

### **2.7.3 Shamsa**

The Shamsa in Eslimi is a kind of decoration method with precise geometric shapes and simplified plant motifs. It far from abstract nature is very evident in Islamic art, which is more reminiscent of the sky. The lattice of circular concentric circles under the role of star clusters is reminiscent of stellar orbits. The distance between the Shamsa is the same as the rays that shine from the stars in the starry sky. Shamsa is the central point of all the decorations of the Mogharnas (Balkhari, 2005, p.481).

### **2.8 Form and structure of Islamic art**

The form in the structure and format that Islamic art has chosen for itself should include concepts such as essential and critical elements of the Islamic worldview, including absolute existence, the fundamental unity of existence, intuition, light, the emergence of light in the world of existence, the world of examples and light forms. In the Qur'an, as the main source and reference of Islamic thought, the physical and structural arrangement of the universe is in the form of one of the critical words of the Islamic worldview, namely predestination. The word Qadr has two basic characteristics, according to which it is the most appropriate option to explain the formal identity of Islamic art. The first characteristic is that it has a profound and close connection with concepts such as light, creating goodness and beauty. The second feature in Islamic traditions is equivalent to sciences such as mathematics and geometry, which are the designers of the physical structure of Islamic art, especially in Islamic architecture, which is the manifestation and bedrock of the dimensions of Islamic art. On the other hand, dimensions such as inscriptions, gilding, Mogharnas work, mirror work, mosaic work, Islamic motifs, etc., on the other hand, have an identity that is entirely equivalent to the world of examples. The word Qadr has vast meanings in the Qur'an. Gratitude has the meaning of destiny, size, and measurement. Qadr means dignity; according to the interpretation of Qadr, it is not only the expression of the number of tangible

objects but also used for intangible meanings. In this regard, it means respect, dignity, greatness, and social dignity of human beings (Balkhari, 2005, p.520).

### **2.8.1 Mehrab**

The Mehrab is the most central part of the architecture of the mosque. The architectural form and decorative effects of the Mehrab reflect the spiritual identity and the heavenly truth. Mogharnas is the most beautiful, mysterious, and glorious aspect of the Mehrab and, at the same time, its most prominent decoration, which is the result of delicate accompaniment, color, and light on the architectural bed, as well as a reflection of the beauty of the heavens. Hence, Mogharnas is an allegory of the grace of light in the created world of God, which spreads like a chandelier over the souls of worshipers, the light of spiritual mercy and meaning.

### **2.8.2 Arch**

The wide connection between physics and metaphysics, which is an obvious manifestation of the broad relationship between face and character, appearance and interior, matter and meaning in the text of Islamic thought and art, has another prominent form in mosque architecture. The arch is an integral part of mosque architecture. The architecture of top of the mosque, inner porches, domes, altars, naves, and other components are based on arches according to their spiritual function. The Latin equivalent of the arch is the word arch and archi, which means bow, which is called arch in Arabic. In other words, it means architecture, construction, house and roof with a throne in Arabic and ark, esteem, currency, and value in Persian, which in all of them implies structure, sanctity, glory, height, and purity, and indicates elevation, height, purity, architecture and mosque building (Balkhari, 2005, p.503).

### **2.8.3 Dome**

The dome is a symbol of the sky and expresses perfection and quality. The dome represents the whole of creation through the sky. This issue corresponds to the meaning and concept that the circle is a symbol and sign of integrity and perfection (Balkhari, 2005, p.514). The dome is adorned with a golden sun pattern on top of it, and with a very strong geometry and twisted Eslimi flowers and shrubs, with magnificent colors of azure, turquoise, etc., which together make it attractive. The dome guides man towards perfection and creates a better and more beautiful world dream (Pourabdullah, 2010, p.155).



**Figure 10.** The south porch of the Jameh Mosque of Qazvin with all kinds of plaster and carved tile decorations attached to the mausoleum and an inscription in Kufic script made of gypsum mortar on the stem of the dome. Source: Author.



**Figure 11.** Tiled dome of two shells of Al-Nabi Mosque in the city of Qazvin. Source: Author.

## 2.9 Transcendent values in Iranian-Islamic art designs

Iranian architectural motifs in the abstract structure and format are ambiguous and concise and are far from appearance and form. The origin of architectural motifs has been in the ancient wisdom of Iran and the symbolism of the old universe and the spiritual worldview. Iranian art has a deeper meaning: connecting with transcendent values and liberation from low values (Pourabdollah, 2010, p.62). In architectural motifs, items such as simplicity, elegance, a tendency towards delicate work, harmony, and tranquility are manifested (Pourabdollah, 2010, 154). Seeing unique and innovative Islamic motifs that expand with the celestial rhythm, the eternal spring, and the constant whisper of the stream take the viewer's mind from the surrounding material world to the home, break the structure of time and place, and provide high levels. Slowly and constantly repeats the attributes of monotheism, mercy, and love (Pourabdollah, 2010, p.60). The geometric shapes used in Mogharnas contradict each other, but despite this contradiction, they have calmed down together and complemented each other, making the space light and wavy. Pendants are stretching and acting and searching for their half to finally reach perfection and unity from multiplicity and dispersion and show that existence is formed only by balance and agreement between all elements of the universe (Pourabdollah, 2010, p.279). The mystic architect seeks perfection, creates a spiritual transformation, and adorns the inside of the

viewer to turn their gaze from the outside to the inside. The mystic architect tries to guide the viewer inside the horizon instead of on the horizon and seeks another world and flies to the infinite with the heart (Poor Abdullah, 273, 2010). Simple shapes, while complex, have meaning and are not just for decoration. These forms reveal an extraterrestrial beauty to enhance the emotional aspect of the audience through spiritual influence. In this way, humans get closer to the attributes of perfection and the doors of heaven open to them, as if they pass through this world and walk in the holy sanctuary (Poorabdullah, 2010, p.202). Geometric patterns are associated with order and rationality despite their simplicity and scatter. The geometric patterns refer to the center of the ceiling as if it is not central, and all the multiplicity and dispersion are gathered in a hidden order and appear in a form at every moment. These cryptic motifs cause the expansion of spirituality so that human reaches a position where the eye gains insight and the soul moves in search of perfection and towards perfection (Poorabdullah, 2010, p.207). Along with unique and powerful motifs that look original every moment, they display a treasure trove of perfection, skill, and mastery and convey the kingdom's secrets to the audience with sign language.

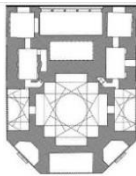
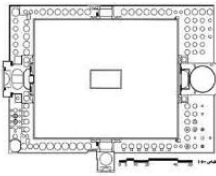
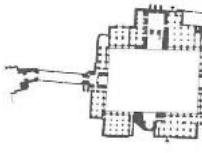
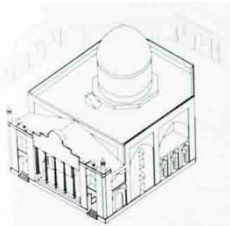
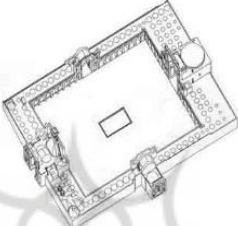
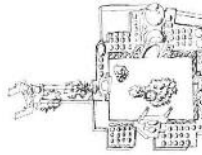
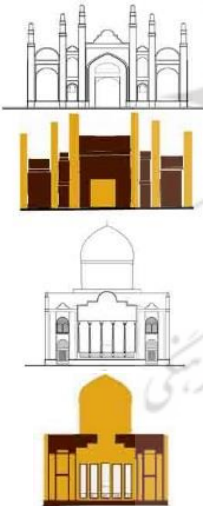

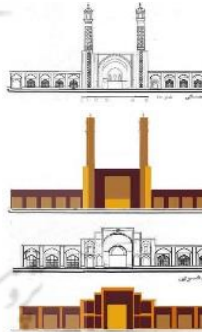



**Investigating the characteristics of selected samples in terms of geometry, volume, the morphology of shape, and general form**

In the present study, first, with the help of documentary studies and descriptive-analytical method, the components, indicators, and elements of art and aesthetics, spirituality, and tourism have been extracted. After defining, interpreting, and analyzing each, the selected samples have been studied and evaluated. Based on identified cases, we will discuss how the chosen samples are effective and what causes some of these samples to be used as focal points and urban landmarks. As monuments and examples of historical and cultural architecture with a very high historical value are still shining in different areas of the city after years and are essential in terms of impact, it is worth considering and evaluating. In Table 2, Saad Al-Saltanah Palace, Chehel Sotun Pergola Mansion, the entrance of Aali Qapo Mansion and Darb-e-Koushk Gate, and in Table 3, Jameh Mosque, Al-Nabi Mosque, and Imamzadeh Hussein (AS), have been investigated based on the typological analysis of the plan, urban morphology and the study of the physical structure of the main parts and general shape of the facade and the spatial volume of each building in general.

**Table 2. Analysis of plan view and volumes of selected samples. Images of the plan, section, and volumes: (Mohammadzadeh et al., 2006)**

Selected examples				
Darb-e Koushk Gate	Aali Qapo Mansion	Chehel Sotun Palace	Saad Al-Saltanah Palace	
				Plan typology
				Overall volume
   	   	   	   	Form morphology
				Selected view of

**Table 3: Analysis of plan view and volumes of selected samples. Images of the plan, section, theory, and volumes: (Mohammadzadeh et al., 2006)**

Selected examples			
Imamzadeh Hussein (AS)	Al-Nabi Mosque	Jameh Mosque	
			Plan typology
			Overall volume
			Form morphology
			Selected view of the



According to Tables 2 and 3, by dividing the spaces based on morphology, shape, and form, in each volume or form, we encounter divisions based on the main lines in the form of halves, thirds, and quarters and joining shapes from one of these divisions which creates a logical, thoughtful and unique rule and order in the creation and formulation of Qazvin architecture. The prevalence of this logic in micro and macro sizes and samples causes the revelation of fractal geometry in Qazvin architecture (Mansouri, Javadi, Maraghi, & Aghabzorg, 2016, p.274). Considering the complete and profound use of geometry in Iranian architecture and the need to establish a geometric relationship between architectural components and their volumes, designers tend to use volumes with single geometric connections. Due to their similarity to the energy and force distribution method in the building, Geometric links make it possible to create a corridor door window in each of the volumes. The effectiveness and unpretentiousness of the volumes have caused these elements to play a fundamental role in construction from the beginning until now (Mansouri et al., 2016, p.151). The use of Platonic volumes and their combination as the primary and fundamental elements in the architecture of the studied samples can be considered. The predominant volume in the main spaces and mezzanines is often a rectangular cube in the studied samples. In palaces and mansions, the importance of a rectangular and octagonal cube is used, and the cylinder of the pyramid and the cube are combined with the rectangular cube, which is the volume of the main spaces. The volume of the tomb of Imamzadeh Hussein (AS) is less elongated than the volume of mosques, and the rectangular cube is an octagonal plus. The selection of complete and mostly rectangular forms can be seen in the views. Large surfaces are divided into small geometric shapes (Mansouri et al., 2016, p.156). Many ancient examples of Qazvin architecture narrate the similarity of the foundation and the basis of geometry in part and the whole works. In other words, this similarity is called fractal geometry. In other words, fractal geometry is the obedience to the entire system of existence and creation, in which the parts and the whole are interconnected and connected in an organization. Also, in the different decorations and arrays used in the selected samples, this geometry, and beauty based on monotheism in Qazvin architecture has been used accurately and beautifully (Mansouri et al., 2016, p.274). In figures 12 and 13, some features of fractal geometry in the decorations of some specimens have been investigated.



**Figure 12.** The use of branches in a coordinated geometric structure. Part of the roof covering and decorations of the Qazvin Pergola Mansion. Source: Author.



**Figure 13.** The Aali Qapo entrance to a height of seventeen meters from the buildings of Shah Tahmasb I Safavid with unique decorations and bedding. Continuity, coherence, and rhythm in the levels of connections in organizing the arches covering the entrance, with geometric expansion concentrated to the center. Source: Author.

## Conclusion

In this research, by applying an analytical-descriptive approach based on library documents and by using Content Analysis and inferential method, the role of art and architecture in strengthening the spiritual dimensions of tourism with emphasis on aesthetic elements has been investigated. For this purpose, seven examples of ancient historical and religious buildings in Qazvin, including Saad Al-Saltanah Palace, Chehel Sotun Palace, Aali Qapo Mansion, Darb-e Koushk Gate, Jameh Mosque of Qazvin, Al-Nabi Mosque, and Imamzadeh Hussein (AS), have been studied. Also, influential parameters such as environmental psychology, the importance and impact of the environment and urban landscape, art and perception of aesthetics, beauty and perfection, color and light, geometry and its application in sacred art, geometry in Eslimi decorations and patterns, format and structure of Islamic art and transcendent values in Iranian-Islamic art designs have been discussed. Suppose urban landscape creates a sense of lively and memorable place and space that has a visual identity. In that case, it can provide human interaction with the urban environment as better and more. Today, more than ever, the sense of place has faded behind the lifeless and repetitive body of structures, and it seems that everything originates from the pen and mentality of a planner

and designer. The identity of the place is threatened in today's turbulent world, which is like a village with vast tensions, actions, and connections, and human living places in cities become closer and more similar. Cities have lost their readability and appropriateness due to their complexity and lack of unique identity, which originates from the interference of foreign architecture with the native environment, and have brought astonishment and confusion to the actors. The uniformity and repetition of new structures and buildings, as well as the uniformity of the body in most cities of Iran, lead to the departure of urban tourists from a repetitive and anonymous environment. In such circumstances, if one refers to the old urban contexts, values such as identity, spirituality, the spirit of God-seeking, belonging, a sense of empathy and vitality can be re-inhaled. Urban tourists are looking for a place to share these values. Values such as the feeling, and spirit of spirituality, and God-seeking are rippling in the historical contexts of Iranian-Islamic cities, and it seems that these buildings have accepted the land of Islam in the company and sympathy of the Iranian people. The historical context of the remaining buildings, which are historical and cultural heritage, has created pleasant and beautiful memories of the space for tourists. Because the Iranian-Islamic spirituality hidden in the body of historical and religious buildings is manifested more and more in the minds of tourists and expresses the feeling of being with God, the connection between religion and thought, and the body of the city. The basis of motifs in Islamic art and its beauties is derived from monotheistic thinking, in which bylaws and relativity put the components of a work of art in a position corresponding to the spiritual truth. In the present research, the study of elements of aesthetics has been analyzed by typology of the plan (typology) and morphology of form (morphology) with emphasis on the importance of the role of art and architecture in strengthening the spiritual dimensions of tourism. The results show the complete and deep use of geometry among architectural components, volumes, and forms. By analyzing spaces based on morphology, the shape and form in each volume or form with divisions based on main lines and joining shapes from one of these divisions, a logical, thoughtful, and special rule and order in the formulation of Qazvin architecture has been created. The prevalence of this logic in micro and macro sizes and samples causes the revelation of fractal geometry in Qazvin architecture. Many ancient examples of Qazvin architecture narrate the similarity of the foundation and the basis of geometry in the part and the whole works. In other words, this similarity is called the fractal nature of geometry.

In other words, fractal geometry is the obedience to the whole system of existence and creation, in which the parts and the whole are interconnected and connected in an organization. Also, in the decorations and arrays used in the selected samples, this geometry, and beauty, which is based on monotheism in Qazvin architecture, has been used very accurately and beautifully. The purpose of Islamic architecture is to reveal the essence of art, i.e., beauty, which is always compatible with the spirit of Islam, i.e., monotheism. For this reason, preserving and strengthening aesthetic components and elements as memorable factors is a tool that connects people to tourism environments and deepens the sense of belongingness to them.

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