

# Iranian mosques, the milestone of Islamic architecture: a case study of ShaikhLotfollah mosque

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**ABSTRACT:** The mosques as the most important built structure in all historical eras of Islamic architecture has a special place in research and investigation. Researching the Iranian architecture and querying its blind spots of its transformation can be a proper context to investigate and analyze the role of Iranian architects in Islamic architecture. The present study using a descriptive-analytic method embarked on recognizing the importance of mosque structure in Islamic architecture and distinctive features of Safavids as milestone of Iranian architecture. Finally peculiar features of ShaikhLotfollah mosque was compared with Tabriz Kaboud mosque. Certainly ShaikhLotfollah mosque of Isfahan is one of the most prominent Iranian-Islamic structures built in the eastern side of NaqsheJahan square causing the emergence of different hypotheses on building of these exceptional states due to its peculiar features. The results showed that kaboud mosque is not Iranian regarding design features having Turkish adaptation. Finally after the comparison it was known that however ShaikhLotfollah mosque was built in Safavids in Isfahan style, since Safavids were of Turks, they renew their old tradition of mosque building style in Shaikhlotfollah mosque.

**Key words:** Islamic architecture, descriptive-analytic, Shaikhlotfollah Mosque, Kaboud Mosque.

## INTRODUCTION

The mosques structures as the most important built structure in all historical eras of Islamic architecture have always had a special place in research and investigation. On the other side researching the Iranian architecture and querying its blind spots of its transformation can be a proper context to investigate and analyze the role of Iranian architects in Islamic architecture. It seems that nowhere else in the world such a mass of beauty, art and architecture has not been accumulated as it indeed has in ShaikhLotfollah mosque area.

This mosque which was built in the eastern part of Naqsh-e-Jahan by Shah Abbas the first was the place of teaching and pontification of ShaikhLotfollahAmeli a Lebanese jurist and scholar. The mosque building has a simple and small plan including a dome, hibernal seraglio, corridor, entrance portal and enriched tailing ornaments. Unlike other famous mosques, it doesn't have a courtyard, veranda and minaret.

Due to its peculiar features, this mosques have caused the emergence of different theories on the building of these exceptional states. Kaboud mosque is similar to this mosque rom many aspects. Using descriptive-analytic method and comparative approach, survey and library studies were done to understand more these tow valuable mosques of Safavids in Isfahan Qaraqyunlus in Tabriz.

### **Features of ShaikhLotfollah mosque**

When implementing the plan and the map of ChaharBagh street and HezarjaribBagh and Allahverdikhan bridge and other palaces were being built, in the corner of Shah square and in forn of Teimurid era palace, a mosque was building called Sadr or Fathollah mosque known today as ShaikhLotfollah mosque (Gedar, 278, 1991). This mosque locates in the eastern side of Naqsh-e-Jahan square. After changing the capital city form Qazvin to Isfahan in 1007 Hegira, this square was selected to build some structures which become famous later on.

This square was beside a garden called Naqsh-e-Jahan later called Shah mosque after building ShaikhLotfollah mosque, Shah mosque and Qaytarieh bazar. The area of this square includes 70000 square meters with a 140 meters width and a 500 meters length (Najmabadi, 6:2003).

### **The mosque building**

Before Lotfollah mosque in this place, there was Jelokhan alley mosque (Jaberi Ansari, 128:2000). This mosque was built in 11<sup>th</sup> century on the ruins of an old mosque (Amirhussaini, 111:1990, RafieiMehrabadi, 693:1974). There is a controversy on the accurate building date of this mosque. The oldest history in the mosque is a tile-work piece installed in underground seraglio and the date 1011 has been mentioned. The compiler of "Isfahan historical works treasure" considers 1011 mentioned in old tiles as the start of the mosque. But in "national works of Isfaha" referring to the phrase " " in the text of portal inscription, the start of the mosque is announced 1012 9Honarfar, 402:1972; RafieiMehrabadi, 694:1972).

The building of the mosque was started by Shah Abbas command for MollaAbdollahShushtari. After MollaAbdollah became the pontiff of the mosque, it was submitted to ShaikhLotfollahAmeli (Jaberi Ansari, 128: 2000). Then this mosque became known as ShaikhLotfollah mosque.

### **the building of the mosque**

The mosque building has a small simple plan but magnificent and dexterous including under-dome seraglio, hibernal seraglio, dome, corridor, entrance portal and enriched tiling. Unlike other prominent mosques of this era, it doesn't have a courtyard, veranda and minaret. The glory and elegance of tiling work of this mosque and structure style and its geometrical proportions have aroused the wonder of archeologists, architects and foreign orientalists. Due to its peculiar characteristics this mosque has aroused different hypotheses on building of these exceptional states. Specially its propinquity with Shah mosque with its flaring beauty and magnificence causes every visitor to find some reasons for forma and structure styles, the application and the existence of this and Shah mosque in one square.

ShaikhLotfollah mosque in the eastern part of the square is small but splendid. This mosque is unique among other Safavids mosques including a dome (19 meters every side) surrounded by service sections located in a dome of the same size. Its form is more like to elongated tradition of Iranians in building big domical tomb. The inscriptions verify that this structure is a mosque but its use is ambiguous yet. Sometimes it's been considered as royal prayer house (Blerr and Bloom, 479-480: 2003).

This mosque is lided built in a strange form. All its space is inside an enclosure with a dome on top. The diameter of this mosque is not less than Shah Mosque diameter but its height is less. A basement has been made under it (Muhammad Mahdi Isfahani, 65: 1980).

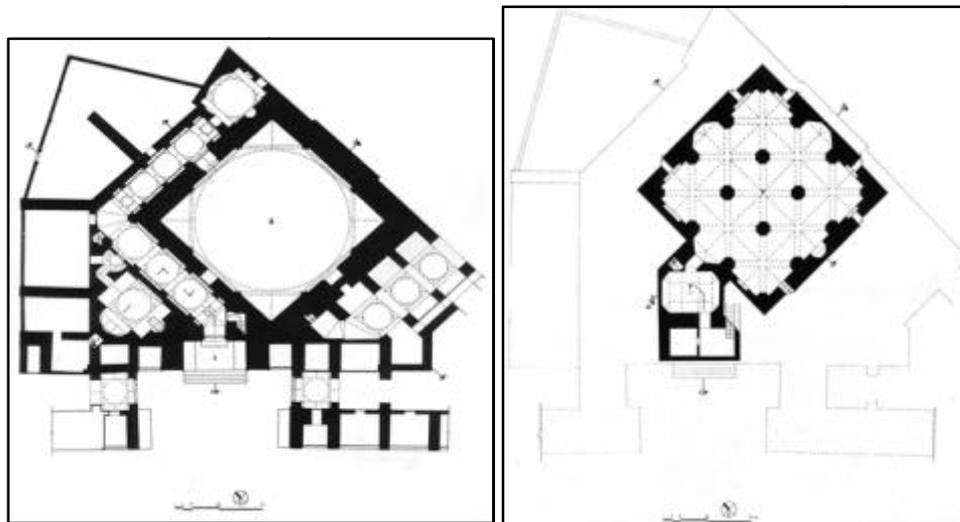


Figure1. ground floor plan of ofShaikhLotfollah mosquePicture2. Underground plan of ShaikhLotfollah mosque  
ShaikhLotfollah mosque has some basic difference with other mosques of Isfahan. It hasn't a courtyard and a minaret but other mosques have a big courtyard and one or some minarets. Its dome is different from other domes being two continuous coverings. Unlike other mosques this one is not so big and in fact it's a small prayer house ((Dehmeshgi, 243:1988). In fact a square with magnificent Aliqapou palace in one side needed other one in front and possibly because of this Shah Abbas built this highly splendid structure to complete the beauty of the square (RafeiMehrabadi, 694-695:1974. Cited in investigation of Iran's art, Arthur Pope).

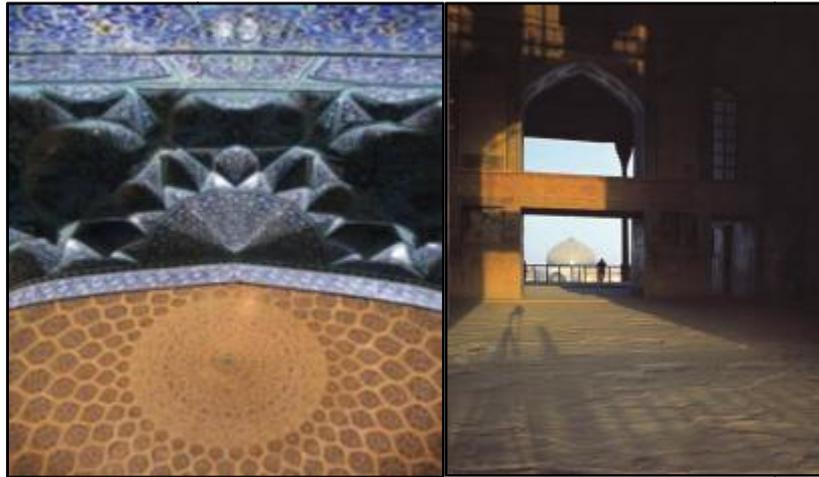


Figure2. The building of Shaikh Lotfollah mosque Picture 4. A façade of dome of Shaikh Lotfollah mosque

### ***the frontage of the mosque***

The mosque building is connected through a magnificent frontage to Naqsh-e-Jahan square. This connection has caused the architect to pay enough attention to facades. Regarding the past investigations (proceedings of Iran history of architecting and city planning) it seems that this façade has been designed and made regarding the accurate geometrical principles. The lack of minaret and relatively low height of frontage probably has provided a better opportunity to show the extraordinary dome of the mosque intentionally. (Encyclopedia of historical structures in Islamic era, 86:2000).

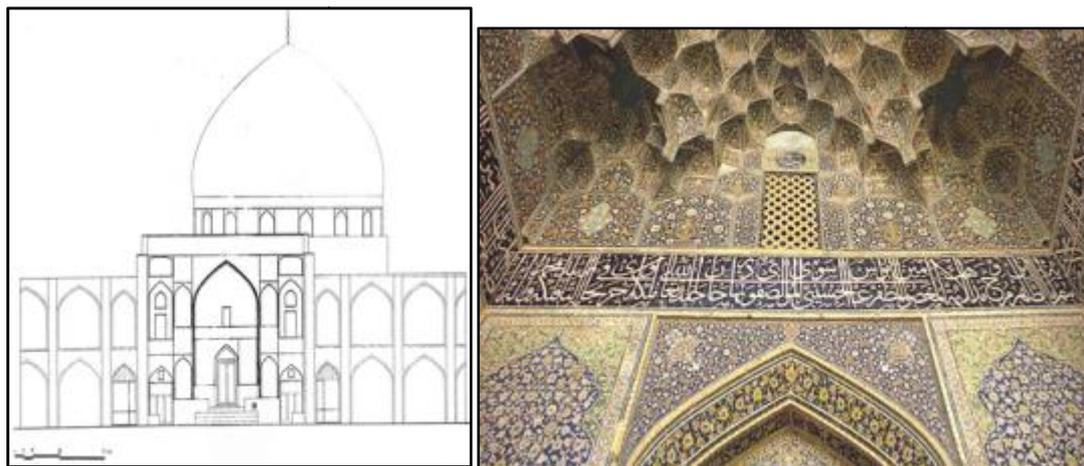


Figure3. A façade of the entrance portal of Shaikh Lotfollah mosque Picture 6. A façade of frontage of Shaikh Lotfollah mosque

The frontage is started with going back from eastern side of Naqsh-e-Jahan. The mosque is exactly placed in front of Aliqapou palace in western side of the square. The entrance of the mosque is higher than the square as much as 6 stone stairs. After going up for 4 stairs we come to frontage enclosure. The frontage plinth has been covered with yellow marble. Both sides of the platform have also been covered with yellow marble. An integrated stone window is seen beside the entrance stair which has remained with a special inscription. The wooden door is 10 cm in diameter, 3 meters long and 1 meter wide. The doublets are the same made up of buttonwood not having any crack or decay after 400 years. The main frontage inscription has covered all three walls like a strip. Under the inscription the walls have been covered with seven-color tiling with vase and flower inscriptions. Above the inscription in the arch curve a splendid mogharnas with diaphoretic tiling work is seen. Under the mogharnas in the middle of the frontage there is a reticular window of tiling work is seen.

### ***The corridors***

Among the most strange used arts showing the talent and the mentality of Iranian architects is solving the Mecca direction. Pope wrote" since the mosque is in the eastern side of the square, so the mosque's door would be toward eastern side of the mosque. If the mosque was built in this direction, the direction finding would face with problems. Through making a corridor revolving from the beginning of the mosque to the right side and then to the left, the problem was solved. However the mosque building is in the eastern side and it

seems from the outer façade that its front wall is from north to south, the altar has been made here which is toward Mecca direction. When there is no sign of leaning and angels from outside the mosque we perceive this wonder. As we enter we should accept that the courtyard has a twist in relation to outer facade but the short dome doesn't show any opposite direction or angle due to being circular. Also from inside, due to inscrutable vestibule-like revolving and the corridor, the difference can't be understood easily (RafeiMehrabadi, 695:1974).

After passing the entrance door we enter a vestibule where the corridor guiding to seraglio begins. The length of the corridor is 28 meters having a 90 degree revolving to the right after 14 meters from entrance door. There is a stone window (1 meter in 70 cm) with a 7-centimeter diameter in the angle of this wrist. This light source at the end of the dark corridor is like a lantern guiding a wanderer from distant way. It is a factor encouraging the visitors to continue the corridor and reaching to the mosque's seraglio.

After the wrist the corridor continues for 14 meters and right in the middle of the corridor a window toward north direction is seen. So all the lighting of the corridor is done by these two windows. All the walls of the corridor and its roof have been covered with tiles in seven colors. Green, yellow and blue are the dominant colors in the tiles. The access way to hibernal Seraglio and the roof are through this corridor (BehNajmabadi, 14:2003).

### ***the seraglio and the dome***

The seraglio is among the most beautiful and valuable structures which rivets visitor's attention upon arrival to complement the founder and builder and the resplendence and lighting and tiling. Building proportion, power, architecture technique, beauty and compatibility of the material directs the visitor's attention to faith power and God and mesmerize him (NikzadAmirhussaini, 113:1927). The seraglio door has been made of different geometrical frames.

The effect and visual-mentalresplendence of arriving at the wide colorful room is mesmerizing because probably is one of the most balanced interior space in Iranian architecture. The dome which is one of the unique domes of Iranian architecture has been ornamented with sunlight refulgence especially on the top (Blerr and Bloom, 479:2003).

After entering into the seraglio, firstly a bergamot dome with arabesque charts and a buff color background take the attention. The buff color gives an exceptional state to this mosque unlike other domes with blue background.

The seraglio under the dome has an area of 24x24 meters beginning from angulations from plinth surface changing to octagon on top. The like triangular curves, firmly and to some extent imperceptibly are on top of arches curves. According to Pope" three sharp angles of Part and Sassanid era having an outstanding mechanical aspect are now hidden and covered absorbed in other elements. Every one of the curves of the angles which are in fact big triangles come down to ground instead of becoming like a clarion. These curves have the same plan and dimensions of the four main curves. So the space with four angles has changed to a space with eight angles.



Figure4. A façade of under-dome seraglio of ShaikhLotfollah mosquePicture 8. A façade of walls tile workings ShaikhLotfollah mosque

The octamerous arches of the four middle arches form the northern, southern, eastern and the western parts in order. They have been ornamented with purple screw wicks limited tiling and wide strips with white script of blue handwriting of adept calligrapher Baqernia (Oqabi, 87:200).

The inscriptions around arches of the north, south, east and west walls have been repeated. It is said that the east and west side inscriptions are of the poems of the scholar agnostic ShaikhBahaei.

In the north and the south inscriptions which are the same there are poems for the names of the 14 immaculate (holy prophet Muhammad, his Daughter Fatimah and the 12 Imams) probably of ShaikhLotfollah and one verse include his name (Honarfara, 411-415:1972).

The flat surface of inside the curves shields being on the main axis have been broken with windows and labor-intensive doors. The surface of this collection has been nearly covered with tiles with shining but balanced colors. The middle plinth and curves of every wall have been ornamented with seven color tiles and the shield tiles of the curves have arabesque plans. The other parts of the structure including the entire dome have been covered with diaphoretic tiles. The enamel of these extraordinary tiles is so glaring that the shine of dancing ray on the tile surface erases their color and pattern intermittently.

In different intervals (between every 12 brick) a wood has been embedded between the bricks as big as the close bricks and walls diameter to connect the tile working to framing. This technique has a significant effect on preventing the walls to crack due to the difference of daily and nocturnal temperature (expansion and contraction of bricks) and mosque destruction due to seismological shakes (Najmabadi, 64:2003).

On top of the arches curves, all verses of "Jome'e and Nasr" chapters of Holy Qur'an has been written with "sols" script of AlirezaAbbasi on the first stipe inscription of the structure and the arches and 16 latticed skylights on top of them is the second entire inscription by AlirezaAbbasi in 1205 of Hegira with speeches of the holy prophet and the sixth Shiite imam JaefarSadeq (Honarfara407-410:1972).

Between the two ring inscription there is a dome of 32 arches which 16 of them are latticed windows their elegant nets covered with diaphoretic tiles of arabesque designs. The tiles thickness and the empty space between them is the same size. These windows have diaphoretic lattice from exterior side providing the light of the seraglio (Rafei, 697:1974).

The active presence of light is the first thing understood by the visitor facing with Islamic architecture. The architects have been dominant on using the light in defining the space applying it consciously as one of the important factors of architecture and spacing through structural facilities. As structural systems act differently to make different spaces followed by making different spatial values, the light through an aperture in the roof a with the help of this value difference and its expression sometimes places in highest point of the space to adopt with the circular roof axis and the curve which is the parallel point of the space and sometimes seat throughout the dome sides.

The light culmination is under the dome space where the roof orifice finds a bigger dimensions and more efficient shape pouring the light inside the space. Regarding the structure of dome making in Isfahan style, the stem of the dome is stretched more in brick style domes in relation to short grave protruding like a cervical. One of its most important reasons is guiding the light inside the space, e.g. Imam and ShaikhLotfollah dome. Around the tall neck of the domes some skylights have been embedded to balance the weight of the structure and guide adequate and indirect light inside. In other words, between the carrier parts are covered with filling parts and apertures, openers, arches and other non-carrier elements place in these parts (the second conference on mosque architecture, volume 2. 434:2002).

In ShaikhLotfollah mosque, the ratio of openers surface to entire surface of dome stem is 0.05. so just a half of the dome weight is transferred to plinth through the stem. So half of the heaviness of the structure decreases. Also the total amount of the light shining inside and sky beauty and imagination in every hour of the day give a special grandeur to general ornamentation of the courtyard.

The short and continuously two-layer dome is another exceptional state of this structure. It is compared with Shah dome which is continuously two-layered having a 16 meter interval between the exterior and the interior layer having a main role in preserving and stiffness of the interior layer.

The height of ShaikhLotfollah dome is 32 meters from ground surface significant in relation with Shah dome being 54 meters. Two continuous layer of Shaikh mosque with a dome of 12 meters diameter has a short height causing many issues and accurate skills regarding the building of the structure. The walls of ShaikhLotfollah mosque have been made to tolerate the heaviness and pressure of the dome. The mosque dome with a 70 meter opening is placed on a plinth of nearly 3 meters reaching to 170 cm in skylight surface.

Here the similarity of ShaikhLotfollah dome with Tajilmoluk dome in Jame mosque known as Kharka dome shouldn't be neglected. Certainly when building Shaikh mosque, MuhammadrezaBanaelsfahani used the structural factors of Kharka dome made 500 years ago especially 16 arches which is like 16 windows in ShaikhLotfollah mosque. On top of upper ring inscriptions, 32 lozenge charts are formed in dome. With a simple contemplation the geometry of this structure can be understood where 4 walls have transformed to 8 angles (through arches) and then 16 windows (two windows for every angles) followed by 32 lozenge charts (the number of dome grave arches). These 32 charts gradually reach to the center of the dome and their size become smaller but their number remains the same resulting in lengthy appearance of the dome (Najmabadi, 16-22: 1972). The exterior pattern of the dome is extravagantly beautiful and charming. The golden pole on top

of the dome is 3 meters long with six angles with the biggest one having a two-meter area (NikzadAmirhussaini, 115: 1957).



Figure5. A façade of the arches Picture 10. A façade of geometrical shape of arches

The leaning of the dome from the big bulge point goes inward suddenly forming the top of the dome. This heavy pressure is tolerated by the mosque's thick walls. Interior walls are started from an octagon and the angles made from this octagon form the big curvature base. The dome curvature is connected to octagon angles through kite-like walls. The next section inclines toward the big curvature. All over this curvature is normal and uniform perceived or seen rarely. The interior design and ornamentation of the dome have the same inspiration source with Ardebil's carpet patterns. Also it has a great similarity with Shah mosque. There isn't any weak point in this structure. The sizes are appropriate, the plan very powered and beautiful briefly a proportion between a world of rapture and excitement and a peaceful magnificent tranquility being the exponent of opulent aesthetic liking not being able to have any inspiration except for religious faith and divine source (Rafei, 696-697: 1972).

#### ***Underground or hibernal seraglio***

There is the underground or hibernal seraglio under the dome-included seraglio with the same size. The covering of this seraglio is four thick and short foundations and an arch and dome. Hibernal seraglio is very dim-lighted and the windows connected from the seraglio roof to floor are noticeable. There is a long and wide corridor around the seraglio having connection to eastern part of the mosque in old times (NikzadAmirhussaini, 114: 1957).

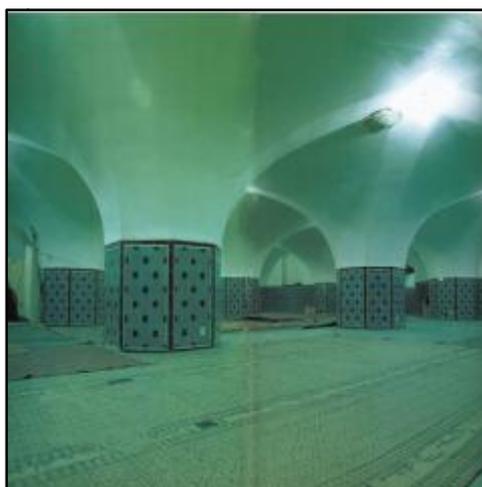


Figure6. A façade of seraglio of ShaikhLotfollah mosque

Regarding this underground seraglio, ShaikhLotfollah mosque is the deepest structure in Naqsh-e-Jahan square. Placing hibernal seraglio of this mosque under the ground refers to Iranian old tradition of seasonal transformation and more climatic adaptation. Like four-season houses in warm and dry areas of Iran

where the transformation of family members was done from north to south or vice-versa, in some of Iran's climates this seasonal transformation

Is done in the floors. During the cold season, most of daily life activities are done in lower floor but in upper floors during the warm seasons. Since air flow has a relatively higher intensity in upper floor, it is a more proper place to live in the summer. In low lower floors, the temperature balance between the exterior and the interior sides of the structure decreases through basing a part of the building in the ground. The ground and the soil like a thermal capacitor decrease the thermal fluctuation and consequently warming of the lower rooms during the cold season (64-134.65:2006).

### **Features of Tabriz Kaboud (Jahanshah) Mosque**

Tabriz Kaboud mosque is swan song of Azari style which is a structure from Tabriz Qaraqoyunlus era being known as IsalmFiroozeh. Due to diaphoretic blue tiling, this old mosque is known as Kaboud (livid, grey).

The founder of this mosque is AbolmozaffarJahanshah, the third king of Qaraqoyunlu family. This mosque was finished with the efforts of Jan BeigomKhatun the wife of Jahanshah.(Teimurdelegated the Azerbaijan government to Jahanshah in 839 of Hegira. Jahanshahwas killed by Uzun Hassan AqQoyunlu in 872 of Hegira (Karang, 281-285:1971).

In the past Kaboud mosque was known as Mozaffarieh mosque and mansion. Mozaffarieh mansion was not limited just to the mosque but including a water storage, alibrary and a hermit for Sufis which all of them have been erased. Based on the remains of the extant inscription, this structure was finished in 870 of Hegira. Due to negligence and inattention, this mosque became a ruin. During 1950-1966, big parts of this mosque including the big dome on top of the central room ( Oqabi, 28: 2000; Wilber and Glembeck, 581, 19996).

Unlike most of other mosques, Kaboud hasn't a middle part and it is of roofed mosque kind which has been made exteriorly due to coldness of Tabriz weather (Pirnia, 266:2006). This mosque is peculiar in Iran which is very similar to Shah mosque in Mashhad city which its application is not clear. Regarding the latency it is similar to primary Ottoman mosques in Burseh. Like those buildings, Mozaffar mosque has been a multi-purpose mosque probably especially that it includes a tomb having memorial aspect. Maybe it is Amir Qaraqoyunlu or one his family members (Wilber and Glembeck, 581:1998).

### **the features of architecture space**

This structure includes a portal, two minarets and a central dome home surrounded by a U shape porch with 9 dome-included mouthpiece in east, north and west sides with a dome-included seraglio toward Mecca direction (south) (Mokhlesi, 91:1994; Bloom and Blerr, 104:2003).

The portal is toward the north. The frontage is two meters higher than the opposite alley. To reach the surface, 5 stone stairs should be passed (Karang, 295:1973). In the past there were two high pipe-like and thin minarets in two sides of the façade where a staircase went to the roof in the middle of them. The entrance portal is opened inside the octagon on dome-included vestibule or the porch. This porch is located in north, west and east sides of the central dome home with a 4.40 meters width. It also has been covered with small domes. This porch is separated from central dome home by big walls and has connection to it through numerous ways.

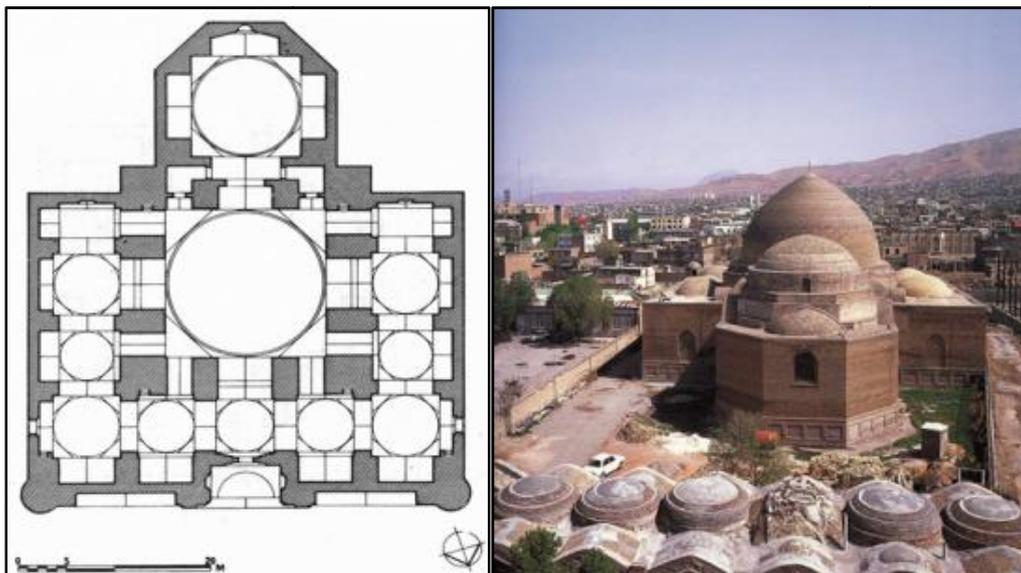


Figure 7. A façade of the plan of Kaboud mosquePicture 13. A façade of the back of Kaboudmosue

The big seraglio is square with a dome on top with more than 15 meters diameter. This dome is on top of the big seraglio in square shape. This dome has been founded on 8 curves and a slim base coming high from 8 thick walls but this octagon has other walls in corners changing it to square with 12 angles. So reaching to multi-dome porch becomes more convenient. The porchs are apparent with a similar openness and the mosque is fully covered roof. There is also adequate air and light (Hillen Brand, 104:2002). The staircase placed in the four walls of this seraglio connects to a passageway in the upper floor. The hole in the middle of the seraglio like other mosques of this era in Turkey probably shows the water source or fountains (Wilber and Glembeck, 581-582:1996).

There is a fully apparent openness goes from central room to a smaller seraglio known as graveyard having a dome of more than 6 meters diameter dome on top and an altar. The special beauty of this seraglio shows that probably it's been designed for special purposes of high rank members of the government. The plinth of this seraglio is of two meters high marble. The top parts of this plinth a Qur'an inscription with sols script and ornamental flowers and ivy have been engraved. The altar has been made of marble.

In different parts of the mosque the firm wood and poles have been used for filature and stability of the structure (Oqabi, 30:2000).

### ***inscriptions and ornaments***

The ornaments in tiling works of this mosque is one of the most beautiful tile ornaments in Islamic-Iranian structures. The color of diaphoretic tiles is seen all over the structure including light blue, full blue, white, green, yellow and brown with the blue color having the highest share. All body of the building has been covered with bricks and diaphoretic tiles (Pirnia, 266:2006).

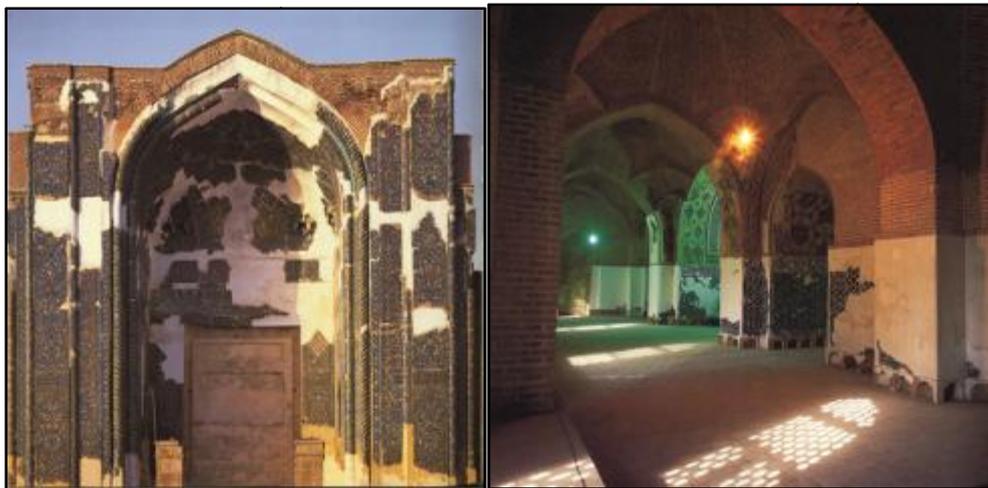


Figure 8. A façade of entrance of Kaboud mosque Picture 15. A façade of vestibule of Kaboud mosque

In spite of beautiful designs and tiles, the surface of the portal has been ornamented with numerous inscriptions, e.g. in the eastern base the phrase " الصلاة على نبيه محمد و آله الطيبين... عمارة المباركة المظفرية في رابع ربيع الاول " من سنة سبعين و ثمانمائة " and in the western base, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> verses of Toube chapter of holy Qur'an (Repentance) have been written with Sols script (Karang, 297-298:1973). These tow verses refer to the buildings of the mosques. The name of "Mozaffarieh" institute in the eastern inscription base has been adapted from Jahanshah's epithet which is Almozaffar. Since the adjectives used for names corresponded to its gender (Masculine, feminine) and the noun and Almozaffarih is a feminine adjective, it couldn't have been used for the mosque, however it (being a mosque) has been one of the applications of Almozaffarih institute regarding the inscription of verses from Tobeh chapter. So this structure has been a school or something like a mansion or monument (Wilber and Glembeck, 584:1996). In the book "Islamic art and architecture", Kaboud mosque probably has had a memorial role for Jahanshah tomb but not any sign of burial has been found yet. Probably it has the role of a mosque from the beginning since in the inscription of its portico there are some verses of Holy Qur'an referring to the mosque (Bloom and Blerr, 194: 2003).

The walls of the vestibules and its ways have been covered with diaphoretic tiles, geometrical ornamentations and numerous inscriptions. The big seraglio has been covered all over with colorful tiles mostly having wonderful design. In the lower part of the seraglio's plinth, marble work of 30 cm with arch-like designs is seen which can be called shoe case. It seems from the remained parts that wide areas had been covered with dark blue hexagonal tiles including the upper levels of the two domes and even the beneath of the domes (Welber and Glembeck, 583-585: 1996).

The structure is full of inscriptions including Divine names, Qur'an verses and holy prophet hadiths. In spite of having ornamental aspect, these scripts make very novel geometrical shapes in their combination. For example with six words "يا معز" form a six-wing star and with four phrases " " form a circle and a four-wing star and a cross inside it. another example is a square with an eight-wing star in made from two "يا حميد" and two "يا غنى". Around all four sides of this square there are " يا مرهوب، يا مرغوب : يا مشكور، يا مذکور " written with Sols script inside the orange oval tiles or with six phrases " الحمد لله " written by Kufic script an eight-wing star has been created inside the overlapping square. The scripts of other four tiles each located opposite of one of the angels of the square include " يا غافر السيئات ، يا قاضى الحاجات، يا مجيب الدعوات ، يا رفيع الدرجات، " (Karang, 301-305: 1973).

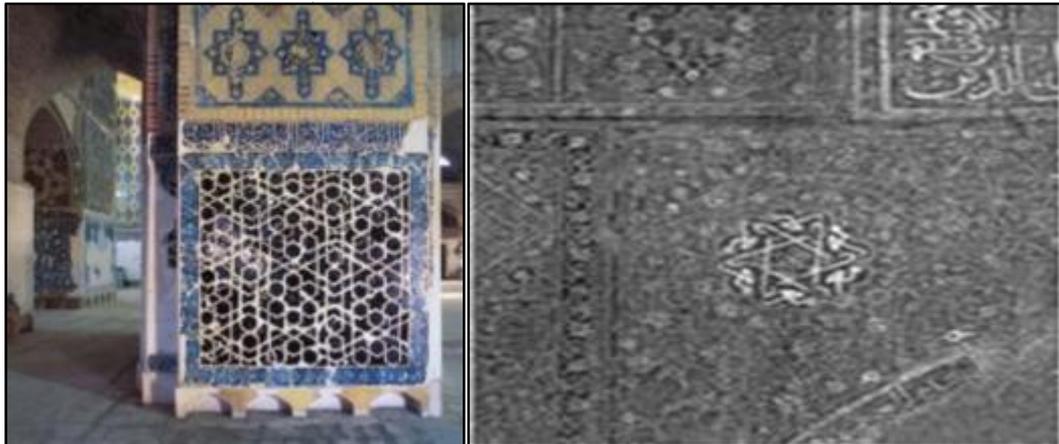


Figure 9. A façade of tile working ornamentalations Picture 17. A façade of ornamental inscription of "يا معز"

In these examples there are some cases where oval bergamot with 45° angle from the horizon have been mixed with other shapes such as square. These shapes are very similar to interior façade of tiling of Isfahan mosque which is related to Aqqoyunlus era (9<sup>th</sup> century Hegira). In Jame'e mosque, these patterns have been made by oval like bergamots of 45° angles in combination with eight-wing stars. In fact these stars are more geometrical forms of the samples of eight-wing stars in Kaboud mosque. Regarding that AqQoyunlus came to throne after Qaraqoyunlus which were the founders of Kaboud mosque, the similarity can be justified due to short time interval and similar architecture styles of two Azari tribes.

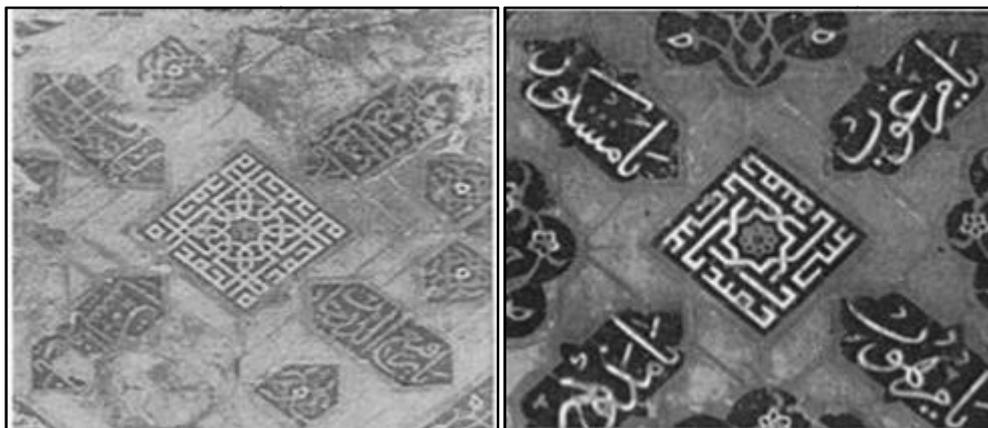


Figure 10. A façade of ornamental inscription of "الحمد لله" Picture 19. A façade of tile working in Kaboud mosque

Kaboud mosque is peculiar in Iran having exterior similarity with primary Ottoman mosque in Burse. It seems to be a multi-purpose structure especially that it includes a tomb having memorial goal. Perhaps it is Jahanshah or one of his family members' tomob (Wilber and glembeck, 1996:581). So the similarity of Kaboud mosque with one of Ottoman mosques in Burse having more similarity with Kaboud is shown.

#### **A brief comparison of Kaboud mosque with some of Ottoman mosques**

The notable point in architectural design of Kaboud mosque is related to its map (however the plan and ornamentation implementation has been derived from Iranian ornamental arts) which is not Iranian regarding design features but an adaptation of Ottoman mosques (Soltanzadeh, 1998:167-168).

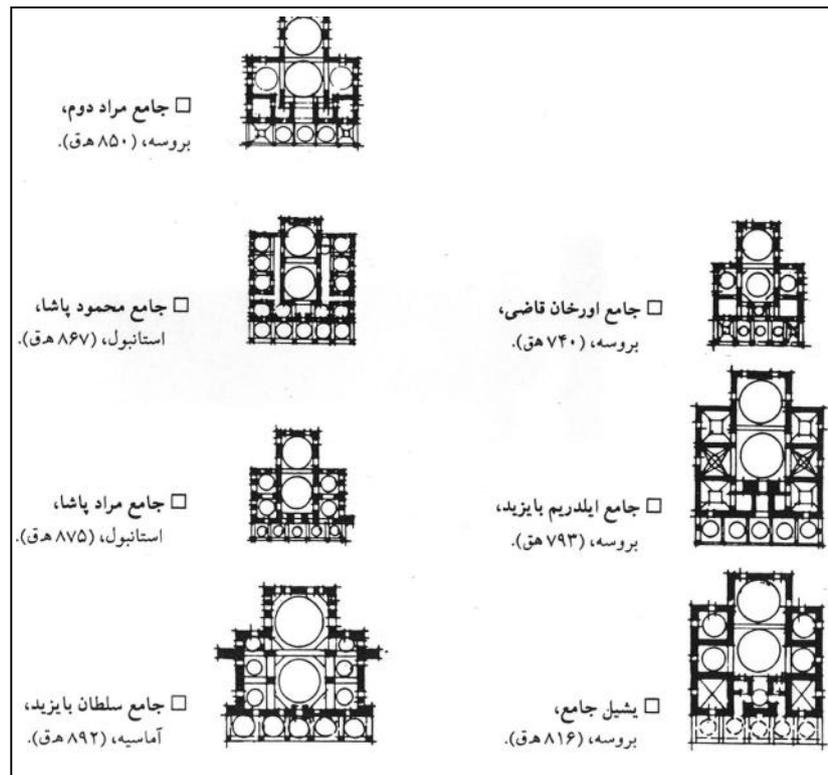


Figure 11. Samples of Ottoman mosque which Kבוד mosque plan seems to be adapted from

### Comparison of Tabriz Kaboud mosque with Burseh green mosque

Roofed mosque has a local aspect in Turkey and a number of Turkish mosque present both before and after Kaboud mosque present plans with two dome-home on the central axis with some elements in the sides. The plan of Kaboud mosque is close to Burseh mosque. Like Kaboud, an octagon from the entrance portal goes into the central dome home. There are two rooms in each sides covered with domes. This part of Burseh is equal to vestibule around the dome home of Kaboud mosque.

The most strange element of these two mosque is partitioned places which can be called shoe case being the rows of open space located under the plinth of central rooms separated by stone dividers.

Like Kaboud mosque, some surface of Burseh mosque has been covered with hexagonal tiles. In Burseh mosque, an inscription on the altar refers to adept Tabrizi (Wilber and Glembeck, 584-585:1996; Blerr and Bloom, 104:2003).

Since Kaboud mosque has been made by Turk tribes and regarding that mosque structuring has been common in Turkey, this style is related to religious attitudes and common Turks rituals of the founders of this mosque to great prospects with this difference that this beliefs have been shown in different cities.

After considering Kaboud mosque and finding the origins of unusual and peculiar roots, it is compared with ShaikhLotfollah mosque to stride another step toward understanding the differences of ShaikhLotfollah mosque with other mosques.

## CONCLUSION

### Comparison of ShaikhLotfollah mosque with Tabriz Kaboud mosque

the first significant point in comparison of these two mosques is the both lack courtyard and are smaller than other mosques. Kaboud mosque plan shows that this mosque is not Iranian regarding planning features and is an adaptation of Ottoman mosques (roofed mosques has local aspects in Turkey)

considering the plans of the mosque another similarity becomes clear which is corridor placed in three side of dome home of Kaboud mosque and two sides of dome home in ShaikhLotfollah mosque.

Kaboud mosque includes two dome home but ShaikhLotfollah has one dome home. ShaikhLotfollah has an underground exactly under the dome home as big as the dome home called the hibernal seraglio but Kaboud mosque lacks such structure.

In Kaboud mosque one of the dome homes being smaller than the main dome homes has the application of the tomb. One reason for the absence of the second dome home in ShaikhLotfollah mosque can be the fact that Shaikh mosque doesn't have a tomb.

Frontage of Shaikh mosque is higher than the square level for six stairs and Kaboud mosque for nearly 2 meters (five tall stairs) from the opposite alley.

There are passageways to the main dome home of Kaboud mosque from north, east and west sides but in ShaikhLotfollah just one door from north of the dome home and a latticed window from the western side goes to vestibule. Maybe it is because of this that the vestibule has only the corridor application in ShaikhLotfollah mosque used to reach to dome home. In Kaboud mosque this vestibule is wider and is usable as seraglio.

ShaikhLotfollah hasn't a minaret unlike Kaboud mosque.

In both of the mosques' dome homes, the way the plan has reached from square to circle is the same. In both spaces, the square has been transformed to octagons at the top with the help of angles and dome base has been placed on plinths on top of octagon arches.

Tile work samples in these mosques include lozenge plans. Lozenge forms have been used in walls of Kaboud mosque but in underside surface of the dome in ShaikhLotfollah mosque with the difference that the background of this shapes is curved. So lozenge form has found a more tender form in ShaikhLotfollah appeared as lozenge- form patterns.



Figure12. A façade of tile working in Kaboud mosque Picture 22. A façade of tile working in sheikh lotfollah mosque

Other similar sample is patterns revolved in 45° angle in relation to ShaikhLotfollah mosque. The patterns which are geometrized forms of these samples have also been used in Kaboud mosque.

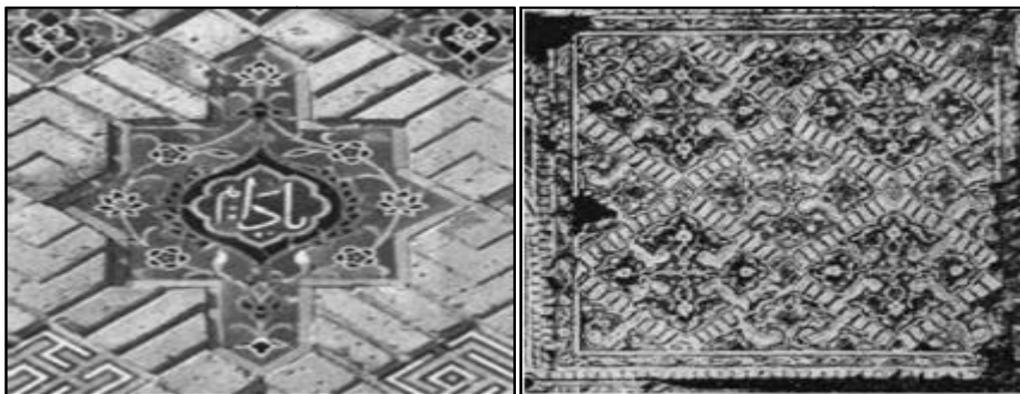


Figure13. geometrized form Picture 24. A façade of tile working in Kaboud mosque

At the end of this article it can be concluded that since ShakhLotfollah mosque has been in Safavids era in Isfahan style but as Safavids like teymurids and their successors have been Turk, they have revived their old mosque building tradition in this mosque. As Pinia said about Kaboud mosque "the base color of this mosque not having courtyard was used later in ShaikhLotfollah mosque (Pirnia, 266:2006). In other words religious concepts have been epitomized in this providing hierarchies for human's presence to feel a travel form material to spiritual world by moving in this atmosphere.

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