



IDEOLOGICAL CONNOTATIONS OF THE INSCRIPTIONS OF JUMA MASJED OF ISFAHAN

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ABSTRACT

This paper refers to the role of sacred texts in defining a building by using some texts more than others, by highlight some issues in a context while skip others, or by adopting references from the Quran or Hadith to bolster certain beliefs. The sacred texts in this mosque depend mostly on the Shiites Imams' speech, some from Hadith of Prophet Muhammad, and the minority of the sacred texts is taken from the Quran. Minority here is not in terms of quantity but in using the context to confirm the Shi'a ideology in contrast with the Sunni ideology, by depending on the interpretation of the sacred texts in Quran. The reasons for this clearly appear in the influence of ideologies using sacred texts from the same religion, among Sunni and Shi'a, to attract people to a certain ideology and to simultaneously stand against the other which was the method used in the middle age. In this paper, the focus will be on tracing the meanings that characterize this mosque in the Islamic world by reflecting on its history, architecture, and arts element. This mosque was first established following the Sunni ideology, then, it was transformed to belong to the Shi'a in the Safavid Period to spread their ideology.

KEYWORDS: Shi'a, Sunni, Iran, Seljuk period, Safifed period, Saah Abbas

1. INTRODUCTION

Before beginning, there are several points that are worth mentioning to make this paper clear. Most of the inscriptions in this mosque have been read by two famous Iranian historians at the Saah Behalves period (Honarfar, 1350, 53-167) (Mehrabadey, 1352, 526-591), so the purpose of this paper is not to re-read the inscriptions or modify them, but to analyze the sacred texts written in the mosque since its establishment.

Analyzing such texts is much similar to reading ideological, political, and social books making it needless to visit the library or to search for any extra texts from books. Because it reflect the life aspects in Safified period; by reading this inscription we be able to know the political and economical situation while it represent the role of the government to facilitate people life by many Farman to limitation taxes from businessmen; at the same time by reading this text it's easy to identify the ideology of the country

The religious dispute between Sunni and Shi'a appeared in 4th A.H. /10th A.D. century because of political reasons. During that time, the Abbasids ruled the Islamic world and the Shi'a utilized and enforced the ideological differences between Sunni and Shi'a as a means to escalate the conflict in order to rule the whole region.

It is clear that both of the Sunni and Shi'a read the same holy book, the Qur'an, have the same Prophet as a model to follow, and worship Allah according to the same practices. The main division among them lies in the difference of explanations, the interpretation of Qur'an verses, and in the context because of "Velayat" or Caliphs of the Muslims.

The reality of the religious division is the political conflict because the source of Sunni and Shi'a is the same, but the politicians add to it another dimension. That is, the dispute between Sunni and Shi'a is nothing more than their vision about the head of the regime and the relationship between the ruler and the ruled. Also, because of political reasons the disagreement and con-

trovsky continued and lasted until now, transforming into religious hostility.

The paper will start by a brief history of Shi'a and the difference between them and Sunni, then it will present background information on the Juma Masjid since its construction until the Safavid Period. The mosque will be archeologically described with a discussion of the way in which its inscriptions were utilized and politically and religiously manipulated by various rulers, whether Shi'a or Sunni, by emphasizing certain sacred texts.

The Shiites are divided to different sects; however, this paper focuses on the Iranian Shiites, which believe in the twelve Imams since the Safavid Empire until the present day. Thus, the sacred texts under analysis draw from both the Quran and Hadith, and some other sacred texts are taken from the twelve Imams' speeches, which are sacred only for the Twelver Sect.

Juma Masjid of Isfahan reflects the ideology of Muslims in Iran, since its foundation in 2nd A.H. / 8th A.D. century, becoming the official governmental mosque. Within its walls, it holds the ideological political system of the regime, in which they used many tools in the construction of the mosque to represent the ideology of the regime; like the inscriptions, colors, and some architectural elements. In fact, in time these tools became samples of the traditional Shiites mosques. Every color has its meaning, and each architectural element is literally significant, inscribed with quotations from Quran to connect the function of the element with the sacred texts written in it, like the writings on the dome, the Mihrab, or the Cingab [1] (Dadmher, 1378, pp. 107-109)...etc.

This historic, geographic, and religious analysis will shed light on the period, its conflicts, and the thoughts, which constituted the mosque.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

This study is concerned with how the religionization of politics and the politicization of religion influence architecture and

art, and the way they take part in the rise of an ideology and the denial of another in this mosque. Moreover, the article reveals the role of the sacred texts in displaying the plan of the politicians by using the power of religion.

3. CASE STUDY:

The Juma Masjid is a unique religious structure because of its history and distinguished context. It is located in the old city surrounded by bazaar sand shops that influence its shape, entrance and outside façade. The mosque is a result of continual construction, reconstruction, additions and renovations on its site from around 2/8 century but we know nothing about its first contraction unless some columns and fragments from the site beside what we can know from historian the mosque’s plan was simple and from Mud; while the excavation can give us some clue about the Mosque’s plan during 5/11 century, thus, the mosque is re-build as a new building but on the fragment of an old mosque It was re-built by Seljuk in 5th A.H./11th A.D. century and was converted to be a Shi’a mosque in the Safavid Period in 10th A.H./16th A.D. century, especially since Shah Abbas the First (1571-1629), who chose Isfahan to be his new Capital.



Figure 1 The location of the mosque in the old city, Google earth, 3/2/2012

Shah Abbas built a new mosque in the new Capital Isfahan, in Naqsh Jihan Square Fig (1), although he was determined to modify every detail to convert Juma Masjid from Sunni to Shia’a through the inscriptions [2] (Machesney, 1988, vol5, pp .128-134). (El-Gemaiey, 2003, p.325). This was

done by editing some inscriptions by depending on the same “Arabic” language from the “Quran” or from Hadith (AL Asqallaani, 2006, vol.1, pp. 25-40) in order to be able to convert the ideology of the mosque.

The question that arises here is why he aimed to convert the front and the ideology of the mosque. That is due to the importance of the location of the mosque for being built in the old city, in which it was surrounded by Sunni inscriptions following al-Shafi’i and Abu Hanifah. He believed that changing the context of the sacred texts, by providing a new interpretation of Quran and Hadith and by using the speech of Twelve Imams, would enable him to change the ideology/identity of the mosque.

This does not mean that the mosque was not introduced to the Shia’a inscriptions before Safavid Period, as there is an old inscription written by Sultan Oljeitu in the 8th A.H./14th A.D. century, but it represents an individual personalized case, not an official or governmental one.

4. THE OBJECTIVE:

The paper aims to answer many questions about the role of the sacred texts in the political and social life by studying Juma Masjid of Isfahan

If the sacred text in the mosque brings harmony to the society, is it randomly used for itself or is there a hidden agenda behind it?

Why do Muslims use the mosques, which are very valuable to them, in the political context? Was this for the benefit of Islam or did it negatively affect the soul of Islam, the soul of unity?

How did they use the sacred text –same sacred text- to foreground some issues; to establish divergence instead of unity?

Is the division evident in the texts on beliefs and rituals, or is it manipulated to serve politics?

Are the sacred texts adopted according to their meaning or according to the religious leaders’ point of view and politicians’ wills?

What is the role of translation or interpretation of the texts in dividing Muslims?

While the mosque was under the authority of Shia'a for a long time, did that affect the original Sunni texts that were written by the builders of the mosque?

Why are Sunni sacred texts in the mosque mutual between Sunni and Shia'a, while the Shiites texts represent only the Shia'a ideology?

5. BRIEF HISTORY OF SHIA'A IDEOLOGY IN IRAN:

It is clear that it will take more than 10 volumes to discuss the Shia'a ideology and its division, but the focus here will be on Imany Shia'a only, which ruled Iran since the Safavid Period and its basis. The first point to discuss is Imam-ate or Velayat (Al-Shehrestaney, N.D, v.1, p.13); as the Imam should be selected by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) not by choice, election or any other way (Al-Amele, 1989, pp. 32-33) It requires the lineage with Ali (Al-ASowed, 2000, second vol., p.364), and infallibility [5] (Al-Shabby, 1980, p.115)

Which means that the Imam is never mistaken. The Imam is like the Prophet, who is always right and people have to obey him. This led people to believe that the Imam is the only link between Allah and His worshipper, so they had faith in the Imams and asked them to facilitate their prayer to Allah.

At the same time, the position of the Caliph is a position bestowed from God directly, and the Caliph is connected to God, taking his power and his order from God. This meant again that people have to obey the Caliph, for by obeying him they obey God (Al-ASowed, 2000, second vol., p.365).

Sunni did not believe in Imamate or Velayat, neither in infallibility concept, nor in the sacred Caliph [6] (Ibn Hisham, N.D, second vol., pp.656-666) (Mahmoud, 2003, p. 340)

Hence, it is quite clear that the difference between Sunni and Shia'a was about the Velayat, not about practice or worship. Yet, after a while, the clergyman along with the

politicians broadened the difference between the two tribes and converted it into a religious conflict.

6. BRIEF HISTORY OF ISFAHAN:

Isfahan was always a very significant city for many reasons, which led the Kings and Sultans to settle in it before the Seljuk Period. The city was peaceful in terms of the ideology, but by time many ideological sects appeared, like Ismailia, which governed Isfahan before Safavid. The Ismailias were Shia'a but they believed in the seven Imams (Al-Shehrestaney, N.D, vol.1, p.170). After that, Isfahan and many other cities and villages around it were governed by Ilikhanid which have no basic ideology, as they had a Sunni Sultan for a period of time then came Shiites Sultans like Oljeitu (Toques, 2007, p.67).

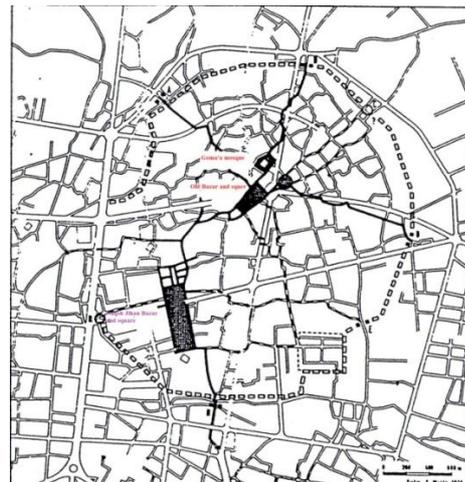


Figure 2 Old square and Juma mosque "the old city", Naqsh Jihan square and Saah Abbas mosque

At that time, the government's ideology was not established on solid basis, but people were Sunni following al-Shafi'i and Abu Hanifah (Chardian, 1376, pp. 154-155). Yet, with the Safavid Period, it was obligatory to convert to Shia'a; otherwise they would be killed or sent to exile at the border. Hence, the city ideology converted forever to the Shia'a ideology (Al-Kholey, 1976, pp. 202-205). Nevertheless, after the Safavid, the ideology was not of major importance to the government like it was be-

fore, but it began to gain importance to Mullah which were able to make a huge difference in the social life and at the same level in the political life (Shamem, 1374, p. 87)

7. JUMA MASJID HISTORY AND LOCATION:

The mosque is also known as Cohan Isfahan Mosque, which means the oldest mosque in Isfahan. It represents the history of architecture in Iran, as it holds many traces of different periods between its Ivans.

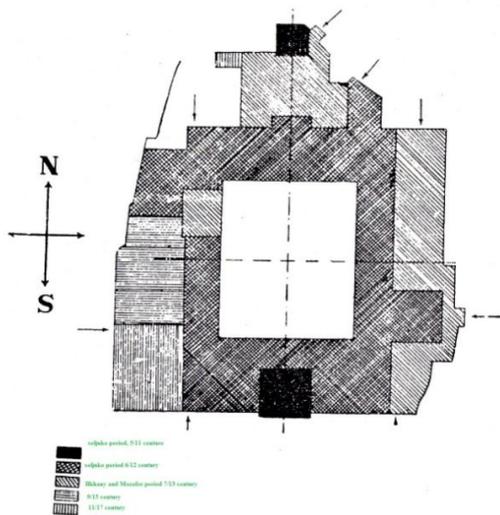


Figure 3 The stage of construction the mosque, from culture heritage of Isfahan

Historians refer to the first construction of the mosque in 2th A.H./ 8th A.D. century (Mafrokhey, N.D., pp. 84-86), while the complete shape of the building, which is close to what is found now, is related to 5th A.H./11th A.D. century in the Seljuk Period. It consists of four Ivans with two main domes; Dome of Nizam El Mulk of 485-465 H., and Dome of Taj El -Mulk of 481 H. The main façade was built in 515 H. and So’fat Shaker, Sahib, and So’fat Der-vish were decorated in the Safavid Period. At the Ilkhanid Period ruled by Oljeitu, the Shiites Sultan, he built a mosque with a great Mihrab named after him in 710 H. In Muzaffar’s Age in the 9th A.H./15th A.D. century, many architectural constructions were modified in the mosque, the most

important element of which was So’fat Omar “Omar arcade” (Organization of culture and art in Iran ,1378, pp.66-67) (Me-hrabadey,1352, pp.527-290) (Pope, 1976.53) (Pop, ,1981, pp.106-107) (Honarfar,1353, pp.235-236).

The construction of the central courtyard dates back to Saah Abbas the First (1571-1629). By the Safavid Period, the mosque completely belonged to Shia’a in its elements and the inscriptions. However, it is difficult to ignore the role of the weakness of the Safavid Period in the 11th A.H. / 17th A.D. century which led to the survival of some traces of Sunni inscriptions in the mosque. While the construction and decoration of the mosque in the Safavid Period was mainly located in the South West Ivan “Qiblah” and the courtyard “Shan”, the restoration work in Ashraf Afghan Period in the 12th A.H. / 18th A.D. century was in North Ivan and So’fat Omar, which as the researcher believes it is an arcade pure of any Safavid change or modification.

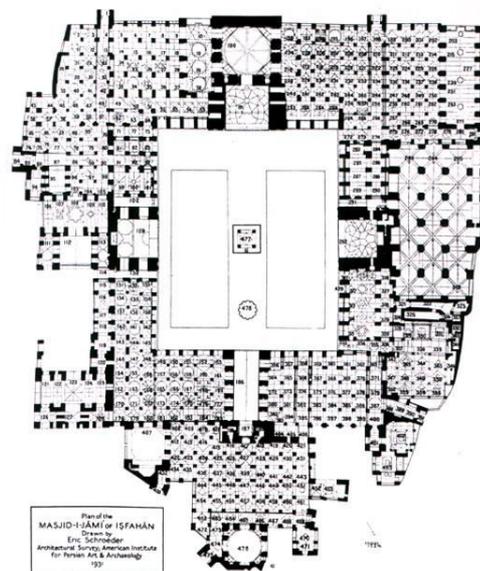


Figure 4 Juma mosque in Safified period

8. THE LANGUAGE

Most of the inscriptions in the mosque were written in Arabic, while some were written in Persian, especially the inscriptions which represent Farman “edict” from Saah or poem verses.

9. READING OF THE SACRED TEXT IN THE MOSQUE:

The study will focus on the sacred texts inside and outside the mosque, with no repetition of the same inscriptions that are used many times in the mosque, but with reference to the different places of repeated occurrence and significance.

10. SOUTH IVAN:



Figure 5 The southern Ivan and the open courtyard

10.1 The Dome of Nizam Al Mulk:

This dome was built by Nizam Al Mulk, the most famous Minister in Seljuk Period. On this dome, whenever there is a Shiites inscription, it says: "The Prophet said; I am the city of science and Ali is the gate of the city. Whoever wants to enter the city has to come through the gate". This Hadith was always written inside and outside Madrasas, and is used here on an old Seljuk structure referring to the upper hand of Shi'a in a Seljuk Sunni mosque, by referring to the value of Ali. In other words, the meaning employed here is that to reach the Prophet, one must come through Ali. This Hadith is much similar to many others used on Shiites religious buildings. It is repeated again on the Sahib Arcade and the Ousted Arcade.

One of the Seljuk texts in the dome is an adaptation of its function, as it is located behind the main Ivan (Qiblah Ivan) and because of its location, the calligrapher wrote in it verses from Quran. Thus, the inscriptions have two functional perspectives; as the text is an adaption of the function of the Qiblah, as well as a representa-

tion of the ideology of the city in: "Allah His Majesty said: the foolish of the people will say: What hath turned them from the qiblah which they formerly observed? Say: Unto Allah belong the East and the West. He guideth whom He wills unto a straight path...We have seen the turning of thy face to heaven (for guidance, O Muhammad). And now verily We shall make thee turn (in prayer) toward a qiblah which is dear to thee. So turn thy face toward the Inviolable Place of Worship (The Ka'bah in Mecca), and ye (O Muslims), wheresoever ye may be, turn your faces (when ye pray) toward it. Lo! Those who have received the Scripture know that (this revelation) is the Truth from their Lord. And Allah is not unaware of what they do" (Holy Qur'an, Al- Baqarah, verses 142-144)

10.2 Sahib Arcade "Ivan":

This arcade is related to Nizam Al Mulk Dome, as through the arcade one can pass to the dome. Hence, it is rich with Shiites sacred texts due to the superior power of Shi'a over Sunni. It presents a Farman written on stone issued by Saah in 911 H. It begins with "In the name of Allah the most Gracious, the most Merciful, Almighty Allah said: "O ye who believe! Obey Allah and obey the messenger (Muhammad) and those of you (Muslims) who are in authority..." (Holy Qur'an, An-Nisa' verse 59). This verse is used to raise the authority of religious leader "Imam", who is known as the Infallible in the perspective of Shi'a. On the same arcade, there is a stone panel on which is written the name of Prophet Muhammad along with the Twelve Imams. There is another stone panel with many titles of Imam Ali, that the Shiites like to call him with, written on it. The inscription says: "O Hoj'at Allah (the proof), O Arm of Allah, O Sword of Allah, O Lion of Allah, O Esm'a of Allah (the infallible), O Elite of Allah, O Vali Allah (the custodian)". Before this, the Twelve Imams names were mentioned, and on the eastern mihrab was written in projecting tulut calligraphy "No God but Allah, Muhammad the Messenger

of Allah, Ali the Custodian of Allah, al-Hassan and al-Hussein, the tribe, the ancestor, the messenger of Allah". Also, in the stalactites of the Ivan appears "No God but Allah, Muhammad the Messenger of Allah, Ali Vali Allah (the Custodian of Allah), Subhan Allah, Alhamdulillah (Thank Allah), La Illah Illa Allah (No God but Allah) and Allahu Akbar (Allah is the Greatest) , O Valuable, O Guide to the Confused, O Server of the Needs, O Supporter of the Missions, O Ali from Paradise, O Separator of Heaven and Hell, O Guardian of the Prophet, O Imam of Human and Jinn". All those names belong to Ali, given to him for his help and support. Such names are not from Qur'an or Hadith, but are solely from the tradition of Shi'a. In fact, even Prophet Muhammad does not have that many titles, nor does any other Prophet, for through such names, they try to connect Imam Ali with Allah.

In the Mihrab, "No God but Allah, Muhammad the Prophet of Allah, Ali is the Custodian" was written, along with another inscription saying, "No God but Allah, Muhammad the Prophet of Allah, Ali is the Custodian, al-Hassan and al-Hussein are the tribes of the Prophet".

On the entrance of the arcade of the dome is written "Call Ali, the magical, you will find him supporter to you in difficulties, every worry and distress will disappear by your rule, O Ali, O Ali, O Ali". This sacred poem is written on many sides, sometimes by itself and at other times with the names of Twelve Imams, with the name of the daughter of Prophet Muhammad "Fatima" or without her name. This is evident in, "Peace be upon our Prophet Abu al-Qasim Muhammad al-Mustapha (Call upon Ali, the magical), peace be upon the gallant guardian of the Prophet Imam Ali al-Murtada (the supporter in calamities), peace be upon the lady of women the virgin the mother of pious Imams Fatima al-Zahraa (all worry and distress shall disappear), peace be upon the ancestor of the Prophet and the delight of al-Murtada al-Hassan al-Mujtaba (upon your rule O Ali, O Ali, O Ali), peace be upon the sanctuary

Imam and the guide to the mistaken Imam Abu Abdullah al-Hussein (call upon Ali, the magical), peace be upon the master of the pious and the light to the believers Ali Zain al-Abedein (the supporter in calamities), peace be upon the Imam of flourishing light and the glamorous Abu Jaafar Muhammad al-Baqer (O Server of the Needs), peace be upon the knower of the east and west Imam Abu Abdullah Jaafar al-Sadiq (worry and distress shall disappear), peace be upon the worshipper the fasting the genuine Imam Moussa al-Kadhim (upon your rule O Ali, O Ali, O Ali), peace be upon the master of guardians and inheritor of prophets' knowledge Ali ibn Moussa al-Reda (call upon Ali, the magical), peace be upon the master of guidance and direction Imam Muhammad al-Taqi al-Jawad (the supporter in calamities), peace be upon the inheritor guardian and father of clear proof al-Hassan al-Askary (upon your rule O Ali, O Ali, O Ali), and peace be upon the rising awaited Imam Abu al-Qassem Muhammad al-Mahdi al-Hujja ibn al-Hassan, ruler of the age". Also, at the bottom of the marble columns on the left is written "hasten praying before late" and on the right "hasten repentance before death".

11. THE MINARET:

On the minaret, the name of Ali is mentioned with Muhammad and Allah, for it is used in Shi'a Azan for all the prayers, "truly Ali is the custodian".

12. NORTH IVAN:



Figure 5 the Northern and Eastern Ivan

12.1 Farman

Jumaa Masjid is full of Farman "edict" for people and princes in the city. Most of the edicts talk about the distribution of the money and the taxes, and they are usually written in Persian since they are related to the people. In fact, it is quite clear that using Farman in this mosque with its location being in a commercial area made them addressed to the businessmen who had stores in the Bazaar. The mosque also witnessed various edicts, among which the repentance edict for Shah Tahmasp on the right of the mihrab of Nizam al-Mulk Dome, written in Persian tulut calligraphy. Within the inscriptions on it was "Kissing a high heavenly threshold upon its entrance are prayers and greetings believing in Allah Almighty's saying of seeking a sincere repentance from Allah, as I seeked repentance from all earthly matters and I shall follow and obey all the orders". In addition to this, there were some edicts banning the entrance of certain people to the mosque, as well as food.

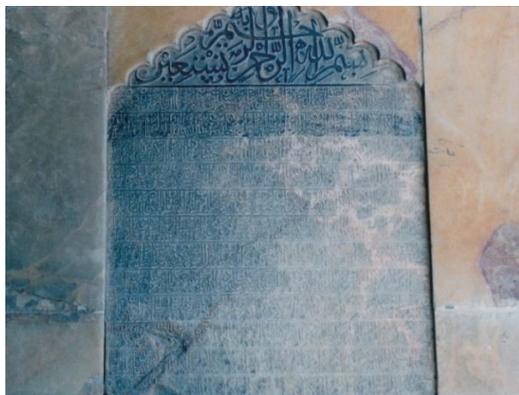


Figure 7 Models of Farman at Juma Mosque

12.2 Norther Ivan, Sofat Hakim and Other corridors

By the side of north corridor, there is small Ivan written on its stalactites "Allah bless him (Ali) said the mosque is the home of the believer". On a stone panel, the inscription "Call Ali, the magical, you will find him supporter to you in difficulties, every worry and distress will disappear by your rule, O Ali, O Ali, O Ali, its obligatory

on who is here and who is absent to love Ali Bin Abi Taleb, in 935 H." is found. In the south corridor after the Korse (Chair) Verse, "Allah gives me what I want from life, forgives me because of the family of the Messenger, and waters me through the hand of the master of custodian, husband of the virgin" is added.

12.2 Cemetery of Maglesy [7]

Attached to the northern side of a corridor, at the main façade, there is a cemetery that belonged to one of the important Mullah, written on it "In the name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful, peace be upon Muhammad and his family, and peace be upon us by appearance of the Imam of our Age, by whose existence life still exists, by whose right hand the people are feed, by whose entity the earth and the sky are still there, by whom Allah will spread justice in the land where injustice and unfairness once prevailed, written by Hajji Muhammad Mo'amen Al- Kazemey in 1092 H., the weaker Hajj Imam Qoley, who ask people to read Fateha and pray for him".

It is clear that this inscription is written in a cemetery due to the kind of words chosen, the prayer which is used here for the dead body, and the demand for the interference of the absent Imam for safety of the dead person to pass in peace to the other world.

12.3 The Dome of Taj El-Mulk:

Most of the inscriptions here represent the Shi'a Ideology, for they are about Ali and his family, which is a reference frequently repeated throughout the mosque. The sacred inscriptions here also express the usage of the unit and its function together, which will noticed. Inside the Dome, the Verse "In the name of Allah the most Gracious, the most Merciful, indeed your Lord is Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth in six days, and then He rose over (Istawa) the throne, He brings the night as a cover over the day, seeking it rapidly, and (He created) the sun, the

moon, the stars subjected to His command, Surely, His is the creation and commandment. Blessed is Allah, the Lord of the Alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists)" is found (Holy Qur'an, Al-A'raf verse 54).

There is a similarity here between the dome and the sky, for the dome is a sample of the latter, thus, there are stars, the sun and moon in the text. Although generally the dome is decorated and colored, it has verses from the Qur'an, which are lighting inside the mosque.

13. THE WESTERN IVAN "OUSTED ARCADE"



Photo (4) the Northern and Western Ivan

In geometrical calligraphy at the outside façade of the Ivan, the Qur'an Verse is written, "In the name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful, Allah Himself is the witness that there is no God save Him. And the angels and those having knowledge (too are witnesses). Maintaining His creation in justice, there is no God save Him the All Mighty, the Wise" (Holy Qur'an, Al-'Imran, verse 18)

This verse honors the knowledgeable, and it is usually used on the Madrasa. Thus, this shows that this verse can be used to identify the function of units in the mosque.

Inside the Ivan itself, there is a move from Quran verses to another type of inscription in, "In the name of Allah the most Gracious, the most Merciful, by Ibn al-Maghazi, by Anas bin Malik, said while we were with Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) he said now the Master of Muslims, the Prince of the believers, the best Guardian, the most fundamental of all

prophets will come; then Ali bin Abu Taleb peace upon him came; the Prophet peace upon him said now come to me, Ali sit next to the Messenger of Allah peace upon him, and he started to wipe the sweat off of Ali's face to put it on his face; Ali peace be upon him asks Prophet Muhammad have you had an oracle about me? The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family replied would not you be satisfied to be to me in the same status of Aaron to Mosa, there is no prophet after me but you are my brother, and my minister, and the best creature after me, you complete the religion, and carry out my promise, written by Ibn Muhammad Mohsen Ali Naqie al-Emami in 1112". In the middle of this panel, the name of Saah Hussein is written.

In front of Ivan Ousted at the north side, there is another inscription that says, "The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, said my family is like the Noah's ark for whoever rides it is rescued and whoever misses it drowns, by an Arab Prophet, a civil Messenger, and his brother Asadu Allah (the Lion of Allah), by Ali, by virgin Zahraa, by a mother who gave birth to her, by Sptih, by Hiblih, the good sons, by Sijad, by al-Baqer, by al-Sadeq, by Moussa, Ali, Taqey, by military costume, and proof, and by the fair who eternally rules by the sword", which includes the name of Ali, Fatimah and the twelve Imams. Noah's ark is used as a symbol of safety and security to the people who ride it, and as seen in this text it is used in reference to Prophet Muhammad, his family, his daughter, and his grandsons. In the Sunni world, like in Egypt, in the Ayyubid Age, they used the same symbol to refer to the religious leader al-Shafii, as above his dome, from the outside, there is a model of a ship to symbolize Noah's ark. That is, those who believed in al-Shafii and his method are thought to be safe, while the non-believers in his method will lose. Hence, as it appears here, both Sunni and Shi'a adopt the same texts for the benefit of the regime.

In the south side, a speech of one of Imams is written, "The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, said the

love of Ali is a good deed with which one will never be hurt by sin, while hating him is a sin with which no deed would be worthy, written by Ibn Sheikh Mohsen Muhammad Hassan al-Jazayeri in 1112".

13.1 Oljeitu Mosque, and Muhammad Sawi Mihrab

At the north of Ousted Ivan there is an arcade known as Oljeitu mosque (Emani, 1374, pp.147-150) , which has the most beautiful mihrab [8] among Iranian mosques. This mihrab belongs to Sultan Muhammad Khodabandeh known by Oljeitu, who was Christian then Sunni and finally turned into Shi'a. This mihrab was established while he was a Shiites and wrote around the arch "By Jaber Bin Zaid Aljafee said I heard Jaber Bin Abdullah al-Ansare saying: when the Prophet, peace be upon him, was inspired by the verse said "O you who believe! Obey Allah and Obey the Messenger "Muhammad" and those of you "Muslims" who are in authority". I said to the Messenger of Allah, we know Allah and we know you, but who are those in authority we have to obey, whose obedience is compared to that of Allah and His Messenger? Then, Muhammad, peace upon him, said: They are my Successors and the Imams of the Muslims, the first of which is Ali Bin Abi Taleb then al-Hassan then al-Hussein then Ali Bin al-Hussein, then Muhammad Bin Ali who is known as al-Baqer and you will meet him Jaber, when you meet him send my regards to him, then al-Sadek Ja'afar Bin Muhammad then Moussa Bin Ja'afar, then Ali Bin Moussa, then Muhammad Bin Ali, then Ali Bin Muhammad, then al-Hasan Bin Ali, then the bearer of my name, the proof of Allah in the land, and his successors of believers in Bin al-Hassan Bin Ali, upon whose hands Allah will conquer the west and the east of the whole world". The names of the twelve Imams are written here, for the Shiites believe that those Imams represent the authority of all of the Muslims, and accordingly Muslims have to obey them as they obey Prophet Muham-

mad. At the edge of main mihrab, in tulut calligraphy, on the mortar is written "In the name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful. The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, said Allah creates a house in heaven for whoever builds a mosque. The Prince of Believers Ali Bin Abi Taled , peace be upon him, his Prophet and his angels, whoever consistently visits the mosque will benefit of one of the eight deeds; a brotherhood divine love, beneficial knowledge, a verse of wisdom, a long awaited mercy, a word that protects from evil, a word that reflects good deeds or to leave evil-doings for fear or shame".

13.2 Ivan Dervish:

The most significant inscriptions in this Ivan are written inside it, with length of about 1, 50-2, 00 m, dated 1098 H., in tulut calligraphy, saying "It is not for the idolaters to tend Allah's sanctuaries, bearing witness against themselves of disbelief. As for such, their works are vain and in the Fire they shall abide. He only shall tend Allah's sanctuaries who believeth in Allah and the Last Day and observeth proper worship and payeth the poor-due and feareth none save Allah. For such (only) is it possible that they can be of the rightly guided. Count ye the slaking of a pilgrim's thirst and tendance of the Inviolable Place of Worship as (equal to the worth) him who believeth in Allah and the Last Day, and striveth in the way of Allah? They are not equal in the sight of Allah. Allah guideth not wrongdoing folk" (Holy Qur'an, Al - Taubah, verse 17-19).

It has been said in the "Principles Collector" (Jamei El Osoul) from Bukhari that Talha Bin Shaibh and Abass were famous for their duty in Kaaba before Islam, so Ali said I prayed toward Qiblah six months before people, and I was doing Jihad, so this verse was inspired as an affirmation of him peace upon him. Told by Muslim and Tirmidhi by Saad Bin Abi Waqas that he said I heard three things from Muhammad the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, about Ali if I have one of

them it will be better than the red camel (it was worth wealth at this time), then I heard him, peace be upon him and his family, when he left Ali in one of his war that Ali asked him why did you leave me with children and women? The Messenger of Allah, peace upon him and his family, replied would you not like being to me as Aaron to Mosa, for there is no Prophet after me. Then, I heard him, peace upon him and his family, saying in Khayber War I will give the flag to a man who loves Allah and his Messenger and whom Allah and his Messenger love him. We all wanted the flag but the Prophet asked for Ali and gave it to him and he won. When the verse of "O Mohamed come, let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves; then we pray and invoke -sincerely- the curse of Allah upon those who lie" (Holy Qur'an, Al-Imran, verse 61) so the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, called Ali, Fatima, al-Hassan, al-Hussein peace upon them and he said this is my family. By Ibn Omar Bin Hussein said that some people complain Ali to the Prophet, peace be upon him, then he came to them in anger asking what they wanted from Ali. Ali is from me and I am from him, and he is sire of all of the believers after me. By Tirmidhi the Prophet said Ali is from me and I am from Ali, and no one represents me except myself or Ali. By al-Nessa'ey that the Messenger, peace upon him and his family, had a bird and he prayed to Allah to send him Allah's most loved beings to eat with him the bird, so Ali came. By Muslim and Tirmidhi by Aisha, she said that the Messenger of Allah went wearing a black gown, so al-Hassan came in the gown then al Hussein then Fatima then Ali. He said, peace upon him, "Allah only wishes to remove Ar-Rijs (evil deeds and sins) from you, O members of the family of the Prophet, and to purify you a thorough purification" (Holy Qur'an, Al-Ahzab, verse 33). By Tirmidhi that the Messenger of Allah, peace upon him, was passing by Fatima's home for six months approximately

saying this verse whenever he went out or called them to pray".

This kind of inscription was used in many cases to prove the similarity between Sunni and Shi'a, by using the same interpretation, by relying on Hadith Sahih from Bukhari, Tirmidhi and "Aisha" wife of the Prophet Muhammad whom the Shiites do not like, but to confirm the importance of Ali. Yet, at the end of the whole text, they use their own interpretation of the purification verse, which even in its name is different than the Sunni name in which it is called the garment verse. This verse, as the Shiites think is only about Ali, Fatima and their sons, while the Sunni have another interpretation about the same verses due to the context with which the verse begins "O wives of the Prophet! You are not like all other women ...". So, it means that the speech is not only addressed to Fatima's family but to all the Prophet's women; wives and daughters. Most of the verses used here are repeated many times in the mosque.

14. EASTERN IVAN" SHAGERD IVAN"

This Ivan is highly important because it is one of the few places in the mosque have the names of the companions of Prophet Muhammad, the four Caliphs "Abu Bak-er", "Omar", "Othman" and "Ali", who the Shiites did not believe in, except certainly for Ali. In fact, such inscriptions are sided by some texts and names of Ali and his family presenting them as a sacred family. It is situated in front of Ostad Ivan, on the outside façade, in which "No God but Allah who is the King, the clear right...Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, the honest and faithful" is written in plain kufic calligraphy. This simple inscription is a sample of the Sunni text and calligraphy in the mosque. Also, there are some verses from the Qur'an that refer to the importance of the mosque.

Inside the Ivan there is a long text written by Muhammad Mohsen Imamy in 1093 H. at the time of Saah Soliman, but only the mentioned part serves the purpose of the

study, as follows "...Tirmithi said in his Sahih by Amir al-Moa'mnien (Prince of the believers) Ali that he said the Messenger of Allah held the hands of Hassan and Hussein, peace upon them, and said whoever loves me and love both of them, their father and their mother will be with me at the same level in Paradise. By Zaid bin Arqam who said that the Messenger of Allah said to Ali, Fatima, Hassan and Hussein, peace upon them, I am a fighter against anyone you are at war with, and I am peaceful to anyone you have peace with".

One of the early texts written at the Safavid Period is on marble mihrab in tulut calligraphy says, "No God but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, Ali is the Custodian of Allah truly truly, who makes Jihad in the way of Allah, and never fears the blame of the blamers. That is the Grace of Allah which He bestows upon whom He wills. And Allah is all-Sufficient for His creatures' needs and the all-Knower" (Holy Qur'an, Al-Ma'idah verse 54) truth with Allah the Great, written by Nezam al-Asfahaney in 992 H.". As it appears, the role of the sacred text here is to confirm Ali's right in the Caliphate followed in succession by his sons, along with the loyalty of Shi'a to Ali and his sons.

15. EASTERN IVAN: SOFAT OMAR:

Located at the end of the Eastern side, next to the main entrance of the mosque is Sofat Omar, which is named after "Omar Ibn Abdel Aziz". In the 8th A.H. / 14th A.D. Century, it was known as "Mortada Bin al-Hassan al-Zayney" who reconstructed the Ivan in 768 H., which is also distinguished by the name of Caliphs. It gains its superiority due to the fact that since the time of its construction until Ashraf Afgani Period all the inscriptions and texts were Sunni, as there is no trace of the twelve Imams or of Hadith to highlight the role of Ali and his family. This was rather normal before the Safavid Period, but here the whole text focuses on the reference to the Caliphs and the importance of the mosque in Islam.

In 1139 H., Mawlawy [9] wrote "Thanks to Allah, the Sole One and the all-Existent, the Holy above having a model like Him, and above the qualified, this testimony is true, and his Prophet is the Messenger of Allah whom He sent for the mercy of the people in the land and in the sky. Allah bless him, his family and his companions, the best of people, who believe and fight for Allah; especially Imam Ali who is a model of faithfulness, and devotion as ordered by Qur'an, and Ameer El Mo'ameneen "the Prince of all believers" Abu Bakr al-Sedeeq, who is as strong as the Messenger of Allah order, also bless the Imam who is a model of justice, who eliminated atheism and delusion by spreading Islam, successor of the Messenger of Allah Omar al-Farouk, and Ameer El Mo'ameneen Othman the Nourein (holder of lights), and the great Imam Successor of the Messenger of Allah Ameer El Mo'ameneen Ali al-Reda the generous, the loyal, and peace be upon them".

In the corridor next to the arcade, in the third line, on top is written "The believer in the mosque is like the fish in the water", in the middle "In the name of Allah the most Gracious the most Merciful, in Whom I have faith", and at the bottom "The hypocrite in the mosque is like the bird in the cage".

On a stone plate of 55cm length and 52cm width is written "Peace be upon Muhammad al-Mustafa, Ali al-Murtada, Hassan al-Reda, Hussein Karbala martyr, Ali Zain al-Abideen, Muhammad al-Baqer, Ga'far al-Sadeq, Moussa al-Kadhem, Ali Ibn Moussa al-Reda, Muhammad Al-Tahey, Ali al-Naqey, Hassan al-Askari, and Muhammad Al-Mahdy", added to this is "God grant me what I demand of life and pardon me by name of the Prophet's family and water me by the hands of Ali, the Master of the Custodians and husband of the virgin".

This Ivan represents a mysterious relationship between the Shiites government and the Sunni people, as it is the only one which has the names of the unloved Ca-

liphs to Shi'a, and has Sunni inscriptions inside and outside. At the same time, these inscriptions put the four Caliphs at the same level without prioritizing any of them above the others. Thus, this arcade is unique by its inscriptions. Moreover, one of the most significant issues in this arcade is using the Arabic language all over, even if the inscription is a poem or to reflect the architectural work in the mosque, which is different from what was noticed before in the other sides of the mosques.

16. STONE BASIN: "CINGAB"

Through this unit [10], researchers can identify any building and know its ideology, because it reflects the tragedy of Hussein, and how he was mainly killed by draught; besides other causes of death. So, all the inscriptions in this unit talk about the murderer of Hussein, and the curse bestowed on all the people who killed or help to kill him. At some points, the text is taken from the speech of the twelve Imams.

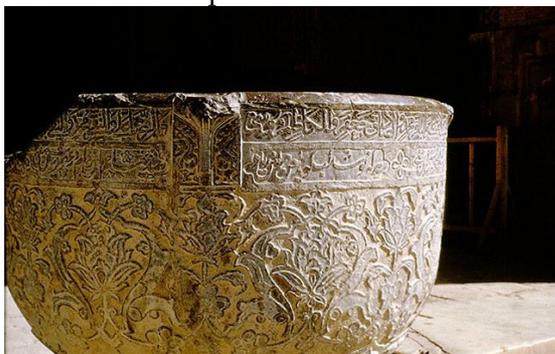


Photo (5) Detail of stone basin (Cingab) decorated with carved inscriptions and floral designs

17. DISCUSSION

At the end of the paper, it is quite clear that the sacred texts, which were used in Sunni and Shi'a period in the mosque before the Safavid Period, were from Quran. In fact, they are mostly the same, except for a small amount of verses, which are interpreted differently according to different situation that Shi'a and Sunni believe in it. Shiites want to confirm the Velayat, and the rights of Ali and his sons to be the only Caliph of the Muslims. But, Sunni believe in choose their own Caliph, they believe in election according to a verse in Quran and

they use this method after Mohamed death until the Umayyad period whom believe in bequest contrary of the principle of Islam. Besides using text from Quran and Hadith they used also text told by the twelve Imams speech, which is sacred to Sunni according to the narrator. In fact, to ensure that the Sunni will believe in this kind of speeches, they used many quotations told by "Sahih Bukhari and Muslim" to confirm the speech of twelve Imams. By doing so, the Sunni cannot deny the claim of Shi'a of Velayat Ali, and the most interesting point here is that the Sunni never denied the rights of Ali, but, through these texts, the Shi'a wanted to deny the rights of other Caliphs. Hence, this shows the main problem between both of ideologies.

Quran says in many verses that Allah created different tribes and that there is diversity; and isn't important who you are or where you are from, but the most important thing is the devotion to Allah. Yet, the main problem between Shi'a and Sunni is that the fundamentalism clergymen used the scriptures for hatred and disharmony, which created war and set borders, although the first message of Islam was calling for peace for all humans.

After studying most of the important sacred texts written in the mosque, it is quite clear now that there is no special Sunni text to confirm or deny anything, as they love and respect all of Prophet family and companions. They used the text, which helped in serving the function of the mosque. The Sunni believed that they have to say "May Allah be pleased with them" when referring to all the family and companions of Muhammad the Prophet, which is contrary to the Shi'a who believed only in the family of Ali as a distinguished family that solely deserves to be blessed and honored.

The sacred text, "Quran", was inspired to Prophet Muhammad for about 23 years, ending in 11 H. /632 A.D., but the difference in the interpretation of the text appeared at the Abbasid Period at about 3rd /9th century [11] which means that this happened when policy interfered with the

religious life. Hence, the need for a new adaptation of the text appeared and spread.

Omar arcade is the only place in the mosque that has no modification from the Safavid Period, as it does not have any inscriptions signed by Safavid calligraphy, which makes the arcade unique in itself. It raises the question that as long as this arcade is completely pure from the Safavid traces and has the names of the Caliphs repeated many times, how there are no traces of the Caliphs names in any other arcade or Ivan except Ivan Sahib which is located also in the eastern side. This brought up the thought that in the Safavid Period, they intentionally demolished and erased any memory of the Sunni mosques by erasing the names of Caliphs, in hope that people would forget the mosque's initial ideology by time.

Neither Quran nor Hadith were the only common feature, but also the interpretation of the text by art and architecture are to confirm the ideology for both the Sunni and Shi'a, like the use of Noah's ark symbol.

The calligrapher used the Arabic language when he talked about the mosque, its value, and when he used texts from Qur'an, Hadith, and Imam Speech, but when the Saah wanted to give an order or announce for increasing or decreasing of taxes Persian language was used, because it represents the language of elite; the language of pure Iranian and it was one of the steps which had been taken for raise nationalism since 3/9 century [12]

18. CONCLUSION

One of the text problems is in the interpretation not in the divine discourse the sacred text is interpreted according to the believe of each sects not according to the context. That is, the problem is not in the text itself, which represents the idea and the methodology, but in how people manipulate it to attach their beliefs to the contents.

The interpretation problem begins with the language, for to understand and ex-

plain Quran is quite a different operation that requires more than a native Arabic speaker. Thus, explanation is complicated, as the reader is faced with various conceptualizations of certain notions in the text. The explanation difficulty also is due to the richness of the Arabic language and many of the Muslims at the beginning of Islam were not from the Arab world [13]. Hence, it was a difficult mission for them to explain individually Qur'an. That is why Prophet Muhammad sent many of his companions to teach non-Arabs the Quran and its meaning. However, in time, religious leaders started to interpret the texts from their point of view to adapt it to their wishes.

Juma Mosque is a good example that confirms that whenever clergymen interfere in politics, they mingle the sacred texts with their interpretation, which leads to the de-contextualization of the text.

Juma Mosque of Isfahan was a mirror for the political power and weakness, by presenting the rise or balance of the ideology which is represented in Ali Molavi's inscription in the eastern Ivan.

The names of the tenth promising companions of Prophet Muhammad were written in Sunni mosques only, accompanied by the names of four Caliphs also, which means the ideology of the mosque can be defined from its inscription even if the historical background of the mosque is unknown.

The kind of calligraphy used in the mosque helped in documenting the ideology of the mosque, as while the Sunni countries mostly used tulut and naskh for inscriptions on religious buildings, Iran used taleeq and nastaleeq to distinguish its political ideology. However, that does not mean that other calligraphies cannot be found in the Shi'a mosque, but the majority is nastaleeq.

The mosque play a big role by reflect all the life aspects; it is a mirror of the country's ideology, that is clarify at Sofat Omar which still keep some of Seljuk Sunni inscription; if we looking for the reasons for

that it will be easy to know by the date on Sofat Omar that the government was very weak and lost interest in dominate people ideology at this time. Text also used as an announcement for any economic issues because of Mosque location within the commercial area –Bazaar-

19. NOTES:

[1] It's an architecture element use as water basin to save water in it drinkable for public

[2] many historian talk about the wish of Saah Abbas I to demolish Juma mosque, but wise people advice him that he will create many enemies from both side Sunny and Shiatt if he destroy the mosque because its value as a place of pray; it's a sacred place; it's the similar to the house of Allah, so he decide that he will attract the commercial work, religion leaders, tourist, prince and princess to his new city, in his new square which named by his name and build a huge mosque and madrass in this square, and to reinforce his idea he built the governmental palace in front of the Madrass and joint it with the palace by tunnel under the street, for the same motive he call many religious leaders from everywhere to teach isfahanin people the Shiatt ideology, to make Isfahan the central of Shiatt around Iran.

[3] Muslim believe that Qur'an is unchangeable, and its safe and preserved by Allah so there is no doubt in Qur'an, but Hadith "prophetic traditions" which is the speech of the prophet which being transmitted orally for generations, Muslims have many opinion on it, for Sunny Hadith is the most authentic book after Quran and to be correct, and trusted it should be tell by numbers of people like Bukhari, Muslim, Sunan Abu Dawued, and Tirmidhi, Sunni Muslims view those is the most trusted collections of Hadith; because they combining between what would be considered Sahih and Hasan and that many of them included da' if Hadith, thus Hadith didn't come through Bukhari and Muslim will be week and untrustworthy, like many

Hadith in this mosque known for Sunny as a week and Mawdoa'a Hadith.

[4] it's the greatest conflict between Muslims since the death of Mohamed peace upon him, while no war based on religion reasons like what happened in the Islamic world cause of Imamate.

[5] It is sort of kindness from Allah to people profit against the Corruption.

[6] Abu Baker sermon at 11 H. when he take the Caliph position after the death of Prophet Mohamed" O people, I'm your Caliph but I'm not better than you, if you find me doing the right thing help me, if not advice me and fix me, truth is integrity, lire is betrayed. The weakness among you is strong to me as long as he is oppressed until I bring his rights, and the stronger among you is weakness to me until he re-give the rights to its owner...obey me as long as I obey Allah and his Messenger in you, whenever I disobey Allah and his messenger you haven't to obey me anymore"

[7] one of the important religious leader, wrote one of the famous book titled by "the light of the seas" or "Bihar Al- Anwar" because of his importance he buried at the Goma mosque, at the west- north corner ,(Honarf, 1350, p.158)

[8] he was one of the famous men in Mahmoud Gazan period, work as minister ,his full name is Khaju Saed El Din Mohamed Mostawfey Swage ; Honrfar, Lutfallah, (1350), p.116

[9] One of important calligrapher at the 12/18 century, one of the most famous writing was in this mosque; for that he knows as the calligrapher of fourth Caliphs. Sarmdey, 1379, p.475)

[10] for more details El Gemaiey, Ghada (2012), Holy Water In The Islamic Civilization By Studying Sabil And Cingab Unite In Iran" International Conference On Traditional Knowledge For Water Resources Management, Yazd, pp.142-156

[11] The historical context in which Persian written in Arabic script, as a literary and official language, evolved from the 9th century onwards has been described va-

riously as one of an "Iranian renaissance," "national rebirth," and thus laid the foundation for a later cultural renaissance that was bound to a language and identity separate from the Arabic one. By national rebirth at Samanid time 3/9 century, which where the time of raise Iranian nationalism. At the Samanid court in Bukhara, Persian flourished as a language of poetry, ancient Iranian epic traditions were collected, and historical and scientific texts were translated from Arabic to Persian. When the Saljuq Turks conquered Iran from the Ghaznavids and Buyids in the mid-11th century, they found Persian as a fully developed language. Early New Persian is the first phase (8th-12th centuries CE) of the Persian language after the Islamic conquest of Iran.

[12] meaning here the Arab form Arabian Peninsula (shibh al-jazīrah al-'arabīyah); The Arabian Peninsula is located in the Asia continent and bounded by (clockwise) the Persian Gulf on the north-east, the Strait of Hormuz and the Gulf of

Oman on the east, the Arabian Sea on the southeast and south, the Gulf of Aden on the south, the Bab-el-Mandeb strait on the southwest, and the Red Sea on the southwest and west. Britannica Online Encyclopedia. Retrieved (2011), vol. 5, p.21

[13] historian and religious leader have many different opinion about when exactly the Shiatt terminology was appeared in Islamic world, and what it mean but this time, it was different in ritual and script than the Sunny or it was the same but they have demand of political seats at the Islamic government; as this issue will be so far and more wider than my paper I just refer that the terminology of Shiatt mostly appear after the massacre of Housien bin Ali, but at this time it refer the people who ask him to interfere in political issue then they left him facing the Omaued army by himself which ended by killing him and many person of his family, from this point the name of Shiatt

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