

Manifestation of Ethical Teachings in Illustrations of Lithographic Manuscript Called ‘Expressing the Story of His Highness Solomon’

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Abstract

Holy Qur'an that is replete with historical stories pertaining to the prophets and their nations and aims at transferring revelation teachings and human guidance drew the attentions of the experts from the early Islamic centuries. Historians engaged in narrating the stories of the prophets' lives in their writings. However, such writings lacked pictorial expression. Thus, in order for the literary-religious concepts of these writings to be better revealed, the miniaturists from the later centuries were assigned to decorate them with images. One of these is the lithographical manuscript called 'expressing the story of His Highness Solomon'. The present study was based on the credible library-electronic resources and pictorial data collection through a field of research and sought finding an answer to the question as to what visualization principles and regulations can be applied in the aforesaid manuscript so that the ethical teachings latent in its story can be better expressed.

Keywords: *Lithographic Manuscript, Structure, Illustration, Miniaturist, His Highness Solomon.*

INTRODUCTION

‘*Fa Aqses Al-Qesas La Allakom Yatafakkarun*’ meaning ‘retel the stories to the people so that they might start thinking’ (Q. 7: 176). One of the most effective methods of influencing the proposing of verdict-related, instructional and ethical issues is expressing them within the format of a story. The stories of the prophets and the real adventures and fates of their nations possess such a feature in a very special form in the holy Qur'an. Amongst these stories, the story of His Highness Solomon which is full of wise sayings in its entirety can be pointed out. The story is declared ponderable by the interpreters because his highness Solomon is per se introduced as a saeg in this story and he has been described by God as ‘wise’ in the holy Qur'an; he has also been recounted as being gifted with all the prophetic knowledge types, knowledge of religion, canonical verdicts, judgment, understanding and truth. Thus, thinking about the life of his highness based on the ĀYĀT in the holy Qur'an as the main basis of recognition would not only reveal the existential aspects of this chaste person but a reasonable life can be imagined for him in the audience's mind due to the story's being replete with advisory verdict-related, educational and ethical teachings¹. Based thereon, many books like fortune-telling books, Qisas Al-Anbia'a and biographies have expressed the story of His Highness Solomon in the course of long historical centuries. One of the most important of these books having independently dealt with the written and visual narrating of this divine prophet's life is the pictorial manuscript called ‘expressing the story of his highness Solomon’ which is attributed to Mirza Ali Gholi Khou'ei, the miniaturist, and contains special pictorial properties including strange creatures like jin, devils and angels. This manuscript incorporates various sorts of religious literature that was published in lithographical form and made available to the general public in Qajar Era. But, there are two copies of this lithographic manuscript at hand, one of which, is kept in Iran's national library and the other one in Britain's museum library. The current research focused on the manuscript existent in Iran's national library. It has been published in d. 1266/ 1850 and contains forty one illustrations². These are illustrations that meanwhile encompassing aesthetical elements in their general structure, narrate the stories of his highness's life.

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Thus, reading of such a collection is well indicative of the present study's importance for it intended to analyze the structure of fourteen images and illustrations therein through adopting a deep approach towards the visualization principles and regulations applied in compiling the book; in the end, the study explored the images' storytelling significations and concepts, i.e. Qur'anic ethical teachings, based on their structural patterns. Based thereupon, it is generally assumed by the author that the structures of the aforementioned images have been delineated so as to express the story's purports in connection to the functioning of the whole work. To prove or reject this assumption, the related works and study background were investigated and it was figured out that no independent research has been conducted so far in this regard. Of course, numerous studies have been undertaken regarding the lithographically published books from Qajar Era such as the book named 'narrative illustration in Persian lithographed books' by Marzolph³ and the book 'investigating the illustration method of the lithographed books from Qajar Era and its application in the current illustrations' by Shiri⁴ who generally deals with the explication of the illustrations and images published in Qajar Era. As for the Qur'anic stories, analytical studies have been conducted based on various literary criticisms including by Muhammad Ahmad Khalaf Allah⁵, Sayed Qotb⁶, Abolfazl Horri⁷ and Bashir Salimi⁸ all of which have examined the Qur'an's stories relying on the principles of the story and narration whereas the thing that makes the present study's subject more distinct is that there has been made for the first time a discussion and investigation about the method of representing the ethical teachings in a story of the Holy Qur'an (the story of his highness Solomon) based on the illustrations of an Iranian historical manuscript and the illustrations have been analyzed from the artistic-religious perspective.

The Story of His Highness Solomon

His Highness Solomon was the third most powerful king and prophet from Israel's offspring and the fourth son of his Highness David from Bathsheba. Nathan, the prophet, changed his name from Jeddedi (God's beloved) to Solomon (meaning full of health) by the God's command because the earth was spending time in peace and comfort under his sultanate and reign⁹. The name of this prophet has been mentioned 17 times in such SŪRAHs as Q. 1, 4, 6, 21, 27, 34 and 38. After reaching the prophetic rank and sultanate, he asked the God to bestow him the glory and magnificence nobody has ever had¹⁰. The God granted his petition and provided him with a lot of gifts and blessings. Wind was under his command so that it might become sometimes stormy and extreme and other times calm and mild by his order. Ogres, jinns and a group of devils worked for him. He could understand the voices and languages by all the animals and birds obeyed his commands. Solomon had a wonderful God-given knowledge and sagacity and demanded the God in the beginning of his government to help him rule the world justly. The Holy Qur'an, as well, begins speaking about his highness by exemplifying his knowledge and insight and orders that 'we endowed a considerable deal of knowledge to David and Solomon'; however, the important thing that has also been pinpointed by Ayatollah JavadiAmoli is that Solomon had been given the gifts and presents not through the ordinary or unusual and weird sciences like sorcery and talisman but through guardianship that is only bestowed upon the guardians and prophets. So, the group thinking about reaching this rank through magic and things like that and/or performing harmful actions via sorcery was denounced by the God and His Highness Solomon's scientific and practical way of conduct was exonerated from that¹¹.

In spite of all that, the specialists and holy Qur'an's researchers believe that the thing that made God grant him such an unprecedented wisdom and power and embody him as a perfect human being in the Qur'anic ĀYĀT was his highness's excellent ethical virtues that considerably influenced his ruling during forty years of his reign and paved the way for the actualizātion of a religious government. Based on the ĀYĀT in the holy Qur'an and the researches performed in this line, these excellent moralities are humbleness and humility, counseling and advice-seeking, justice and respect to the others' rights, decisiveness along with feelings' control, piety and virtuousness, the representation of which, has been dealt with in the images of the lithographic manuscript 'expressing the story of His Highness Solomon'.

Humbleness and Humility

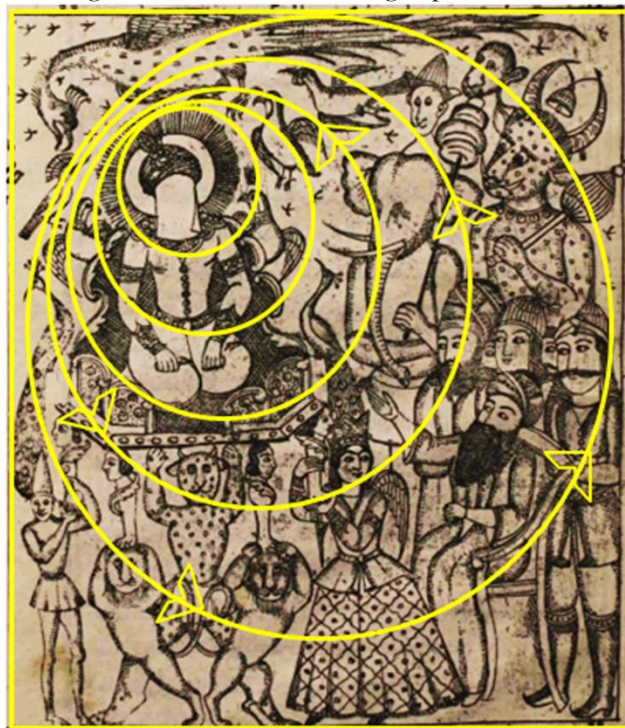
According to Q. 38: 35, Solomon implores the God to grant him such a government that nobody would deserve



his courtiers, source: National Library of Italy

after him. Some have considered such a petition as a sign of His Highness' proudness while prophets are clean of any sort of immodesty and impiety. This demand by his highness Solomon has not been out of pride and haughtiness and he did not even want to use his government as a means of pampering himself, indulgence in his wishes and gathering material properties rather he knew the risks of governing a territory due to the fact that he had reached a state of perfectness. From his perspective, there is no test and exam more difficult than sultante and governance. Therefore, in order to deserve such a type of government, one should be bound to humility and entreatment as prerequisites of servitude so that s/he might go beyond the world's deceitful color and form and its apparent attractions and cease attachment to them¹². Based thereon, use has been made of such a visual element as configuration by the miniaturist who has attempted to depict the universality and pervasiveness of his highness's government, on the one hand, and his humbleness and humility on the way to the achievement of such a rank and all those blessings,

on the other hand. Configuration is the most important and the most complicated stage of an artist's work. This stage marks the artist's thought position and is enuemrated as the most significant index of artworks'



source: The Author

evaluation and includes the combining of the forms, images and signs and coordination between them¹³. In illustration, configuration has always been laid on the foundation of curved shapes, circle, spirals and soft forms. Thus, configuration based on illustrative rules of Islamic art as well as based on spiral patterns has been followed in fig 1. This pattern that is usually used in arabesque designing features sacred aspects and signs of the underworld and somehow creates such a quality as unity in the configuration and gives rise to a balanced and harmonic motion inan artwork. Therefore, the most beautiful visible form of unity finds meaning in spiral forms in case that the concept of unity in multiplicity is amalgamated with the beauty of curved motion¹⁴. In this illustration, as well, the most important sources of his highness's power are birds, angels, ogres and genies that are placed aligned with human signs (the prophet and his royal court's functionaries) in a spiral motion for creating a sense of softness. Amongst the other properties of configuration in this work, the dual dividing of the cadre can be pointed out. The bottom of the cadre is a proper

locus for placing the elements and attaining balance because the mind, visual memories and physiology of the

human body have habituated in the daily life experiences to see residence, stability and balance on the ground level. Due to the same reason, the focus in this illustration is also on the functionaries guarding the government (in the form of combined signs and blending of human images with angels, ogres and genies) at the bottom so as to signify the importance of each of the creatures in Solomon's governance system meanwhile contributing to the balance of the artwork and preventing the audience from concentration on one spot. Based on this same logic and empirical sense, the left half of the illustration has been devoted to the initiation of configuration and movement (the sitting place of his highness) and stretched to the upper right section (where birds are shown) (fig 2). Of course, attention has also *inter alia* been paid to the other special properties of Iranian illustration (numerosity of the bodies in rhythmic form, avoidance of blank spaces, decoration of surfaces and orientation of the configuration towards a direction or another). These characteristics have caused the audience to feel the visual pleasure and satisfaction in mind through sensing the balance existent in the whole artwork thereby to discern the depth of the spiritual meaning and nature governing it.

In Q. 27: 44, as well, although reference has been made to the crystal palace of his highness as an indicator of his wealthiness, the miniaturist has depicted a simple view of the crystal place that is also found devoid of any decoration and exciting setting due to the fact that he has intended to showcase his highness Solomon's existence as a pattern of spiritual sultan free of any Pharaonic haughtiness and pride (fig 3). In this regard, many of the interpreters believe that Solomon has been given such a huge property due to his possession of servitude before the God and also for his practicing of humbleness and humility before the God's servants¹⁵.



Fig 3: A simple minimal illustrating of Solomon's magnificent crystal palace,
Source: National Library of Iran

Counseling and Advice-Seeking

The same way that counseling and advice-seeking have been realized as a good virtue and given a particular significance and position in Islam, Solomon, the prophet, as well, always sought ideas from his proficient minister and other functionaries in his royal court while he was well-known for being an educated politician, a chivalrous warrior and a competent manager and, as it is stated in the history, the kings of the world attended his court to learn wisdom from him (fig 4)¹⁶. He asked solution and counseling from his companions in the case of carrying Belqis's throne from Territory.

Solomon wanted to show the God's power to Belqis so he told his functionaries that who is ready to bring Belqis's throne here before she arrives¹⁷. An ogre named Efrat volunteered seminally to bring the throne but it was eventually Asef, the minister, who said I will bring it here before you glimpse an eye. He called out the God's glorious name and Solomon instantly found Belqis's throne present before his eyes.



Based thereon, the miniaturist has made efforts to display his highness always in a direct linear relationship with his minister and other functionaries in his royal court in portraying the scenes of counseling and consultation.

Fig 4: Illustrations of Solomon deliberating and consulting with his courtiers, Source: National Library of Iran

In other words, in configuration pattern, they have been drawn in front of one another in a continuous line connecting the view of angles to one another. Of course, each of them has been designed in proportion to position and prestige. Solomon, the prophet, has been embodied with a veiled face and a halo of light all around his head (indicating the chastity rank of his highness) using linear etching design method while in a sitting position like a statue in one side of cadre. The minister has also been depicted in front of Solomon on the other side of the cadre with his hands on his body which is indicative of humbleness, respect and nobility; the other

functionaries like angels, ogres and birds are spread in the story setting in respect to their possession of good or evil character (face profile) (fig 5).



Fig 5: Configuration of illustrations' fictional characters during deliberation and consultation aligned on a straight line,

Source: The Author

However, such a good and favorable characteristic as counseling with others is so important that it has been stated in Q. 27: 20- 45, for expressing his highness Solomon's invitation of Belqis, the queen of Sheba land, that:

after Solomon's letter was handed over to the queen of Sheba, she read it several times and asked ideas from the country's head about it and addressed them for consultation and said Solomon has asked me "to become obedient". Some of the royal court's attendants who owned power and splendor were not willing to give up and suggested war. But, the queen of Sheba believed that war is not always a zheba did not know His Highness Solomon very well and was not familiar with the domain of his power and domination. Due to these two reasons, she preferred to be cautious and avoid hasty and snobbish decision and sought opinions from the attendants of her royal court' (fig 6)²⁰. Such an instant of collective decision-making is so notable that the miniaturist tried not to ignore the embodiment of such a space. He showed Sheba's queen on the sultanate throne with an inlaid crown on one side of the cadre and delineated the minister and the army troopers on the other side of the cadre with one of their hands enveloping the other in front of them. Moreover, all of these characters have been drawn in a continuous linear configuration pattern like in the previous illustrations while avoiding giving their bodies' perspective superiority so that he can correctly induce an identical space in taking advantage of the group's ideas and wisdom (fig 7).



Fig 6: Illustrating on deliberation and consultation of Belqis, the Queen of Sheba with her courtiers,
Source: National Library of Iran



Fig 7: Configuration of illustrations' fictional characters during deliberation and consultation aligned on a straight line
Source: The Author

Justice and Respecting the Others' Rights

Serving justice has been one of the virtues of His Highness Solomon²¹ in such a way that many of the interpreters know the well-calculated and assessed judgment he made in his youth about a vineyard and the sheep that had wasted it as the cause of his succession²². This judgment has been pointed out in Q. 21 and it is stated that a divine order was revealed to David after this judgment. David was commanded by the eminent God that 'the judgment is the same one made by Solomon'^{23,24}. It can be possibly stated that the most distinct common aspect of Solomon's wisdom and knowledge is stated in the holy Qur'an to have been his just judgment; although the Holy Qur'an gives a brief account of this judgment and trial and suffices to a succinct reference for such a reason as the moral result that can be made from it, it has been explained in details in the interpretational texts as well as in the book 'Qisas Al-ANBIĀ'A'.

A herd of sheep enters a vineyard on a night and eats the grapes and the vines' branches and wastes the grapevines. The owner of the orchard complains to David and he rules that all of the sheep have to be given to him for compensating the damage. At this time, the young Solomon tells father that 'O' the great apostle of the God, change the verdict and exercise moderation'. Father asks that 'but how?' Solomon answers that 'the sheep has to be given to the owner of the vineyard so that he might benefit from their milk and wool and the garden has to be given to the sheep's owner so that he might endeavor to repair it. The orchard can be given back to the owner once it is restored and the sheep can be subsequently returned to their owner ...'²⁵



Fig 8: An illustrating on destruction of a vineyard by the sheep and the judgment of Prophet David and Solomon in the presence of the plaintiff and the accused,

Source: National Library of Iran



Fig 9: Different configurations of one fictional scene in a illustrating based on their subject,

Source: The Author

his story which is represented in the fig 8 conveys his highness Solomon's knowledge and smartness and simultaneously expresses the good and pleasant virtue of justice-seeking that causes him to be appointed as the prophet to govern the offspring of Israel and at the same time remind of the veneration of the others' rights. In line with this, the miniaturist has taken advantage of the interrelated triangular configurations where the sheep are wasting the vineyard so as to be able to showcase the invasion and the risk of the vineyard's wastage because triangle has taken an invasive and a contending shape due to its sharp angles and it is expressive of certain dangers due to the existence of apical point which outwardly projects the energy and force of the shape. However, such a shape that has been granted an invasive, incising and explicit personality in the visual arts is realized to be interlaced with the sun and wheat hence symbolizing fertility²⁶. The point that his highness Solomon considers in moderating his father's verdict by expressing that it has to be given to the owner of the sheep so that he might render it productive again is that the vineyard has not been completely destroyed and can be still re-fertilized and rendered productive again. The miniaturist, as well, follows the lead of the Prophet Solomon's just utterances to take into account such a configuration of the sheep's shape and movement in the illustration with the difference being that the judges (his highness David and his highness Solomon), plaintiff and culprit have been delineated in a direct linear row inside the lower cadre so as to be able to represent judgment and fair trial and absence of superiority-seeking amongst the judges. Use has also been made of rectangular cadre so as to express a sense of residence and calmness in the session away from any sort of quarrel and violence in a combination of vertical and horizontal background lines (fig 9). Of course, the miniaturist has also paid attention to the fine ethical issues and has drawn his highness Solomon behind his highness David with a little smaller body to show his respect for the prophet of his time. He has also refrained from using any perspective and embodied the plaintiff and the culprit both on one side of cadre and in the same rank.

Decisiveness Along with Emotions' Control²⁷

One of the manifestations of His Highness Solomon's wealth is his domination over the rebellious ogres and genies and harnessing them to service. The interesting point is that the *ĀYĀT* in the holy Qur'an about this prophet have most frequently pointed to his communication with ogres and genies^{28,29,30}. Ogres and genies are realized as the symbols of oppression in the story literature and the contents of some of the narrations signify that they can transform into the shapes of such animals as snake, dog or even a human being with a peculiar appearance. Supernatural creatures featuring will and intellect and bodies made of smokeless fire (Q. 55: 15) are not visible to the mankind's senses due to their natures and they sometimes appear in an incarnate and visible body. Although these creatures appear in the story of his highness Solomon in the role of his rivals for taking the command position and truly in a conflicting and contesting relationship such as the one between the good and the evil³¹, his highness uses them as functionaries of his royal court through exercising patience and contemplation and forces them into such tasks as brick-laying, diving and construction of temples and treats them decisively and chains them where they withdraw from performing their tasks³². In this regard, the interpreters believe that because ogres and geniees are originally considered as the examples of suppression, it was necessary for his highness Solomon to have control over them and even chain some of them so as to showcase his firmness in ruling and serve justice completely.



Based thereon, in the illustrations of the studied manuscript, ogres and genies have been mostly delineated as described in the following words in the scenes they are shown as the servants and troopers of his highness: in a combination of human body and countenance with short gowns on and feet like hoofs and ridiculous faces. The miniaturist has embodied them behind the prophet Solomon and other functionaries of his royal court in a corner of the story scene so as to narrate decisiveness along with compassion and kindness of the prophet Solomon in accepting the ogres and genies for advancing the country-governance affairs (fig 10). In cases that the miniaturist intended to show his highness's decisiveness in chaining the ogres and genies, the setting has been depicted without the presence of the prophet Solomon and other functionaries with ogres and genies being illustrated in the form of human beings having monkey head and chained inside a prison-like space (fig 11).

Fig 10: A illustrating on Solomon's compassions and sympathy when hiring angels and demons in advancing statesmanship,

Source: National Library of Iran

Decisiveness along with emotions' control in His Highness Solomon can be also seen in respect to such functionaries as birds, as well. In a story scene, his highness asks other functionaries of his court about the whereabouts of hoopoe and reacts to its absence upon not finding it amongst the other birds and does not simply ignore this. He wishes to know why hoopoe is missing and reminds others of its unjustified absence beforehand. But, at the same time with this rapid and angry reaction, he controls his feelings and says 'unless he presents me with a clear-cut reason'. This statement is indicative of his highness's decisiveness along with smartness and cleverness and, in the meantime, his compassion and emotions' control³³. In fact, meanwhile

showing the necessity of threat in cases of violation justification, his highness exhibits that he gives up to proof and logics and would never rely on coercion and bullying even before a weak bird.

The first manifestation of hoopoe in the holy Qur'an as stated by the interpreters is at the time that his Highness Solomon was wanfering about in search of water in Sana'a. Since hoopoe was famous for sharp sight in finding

water in the depth of the ground and from far distance, it always guided the prophet towards water springs and it had been given a particular position in the prophet's court amongst the other birds. Thus, the Prophet Solomon became angry when he began asking about its whereabouts and did not find it amongst the other birds^{34,35}. Hoopoe returned to Solomon after a while and said I found out something that



Fig 11: A illustrating on Solomon's compassions and sympathy when hiring angels and demons in advancing statesmanship,

Source: National Library of Iran

you are not aware of. I saw a woman governing her tribe that possesses everything. I saw her and her tribe worshipping things other than the God, the sun, and Satan has made their actions appear good to them and he has deviated them from the right path³⁶. Solomon decided to verify the accuracy of hoopoe's utterances. He gave a letter to hoopoe to deliver to the Sheba's queen. He asked her in the letter to step on the right path. In the end, Solomon asked hoopoe to hide somewhere near there and see what would Sheba's queen and her tribe do after reading the letter ...³⁷.



Fig 12: A illustrating on Solomon's decisiveness while controlling emotions, his tactfulness and intelligence against his courtiers

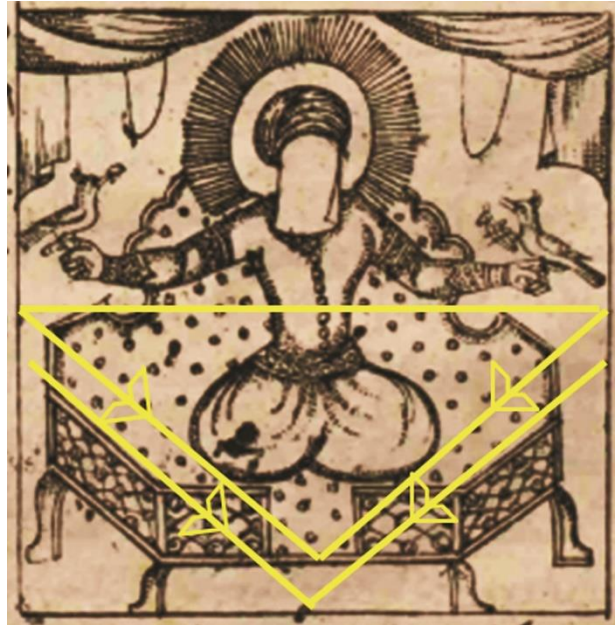


Fig 13: Configuration of the illustrating based on one point perspective in the middle of the painting

Source: The Author

In line with this, in order to showcase such an informative ethical virtue in the prophet Solomon's character, the miniaturist has taken advantage of two perspectives (fig 12-14). He has concentrated on Solomon's hands' movement so as to objectify his different behavior in every scene of the story in such a way that the prophet has been delineated with open arms in an illustration to show his feelings and attentions towards the birds that are sitting on both of his hands, the closest position for consultation. To soften the story setting, the miniaturist has also made use of a single-point perspective in the centre of the illustration (fig 13). In another illustration, he has depicted hands' movements of his highness Solomon to show his decisiveness in such a manner that he appears as if he is giving a command to the birds. The story setting has also been transferred in line with hands' movement towards the single-point perspective in a corner of the cadre where the birds are exclamationarily addressed in a position lower to the throne (fig 15).



Fig 14: A illustrating on Solomon's decisiveness while controlling emotions, his tactfulness and intelligence against his courtiers including the birds,

Source: National Library of Iran



Fig 15: Configuration of the illustrating based on one point perspective on one side of the border,

Source: The Author

Piety and Deliverance

Piety or abstinence that has been favorably recommended in the Islamic narrations does not mean ceasing to benefit from the divine gifts and blessings but not feeling attachment to corporeal possessions in heart. The pious person has faith in the God's proprietorship and divinity and divine determinism and predestination and knows everything acquired by him or her as being sent by the God. Although His Highness Solomon, as well, had a government and vast facilities, he always lived a simple life, observed piety and expressed thankfulness to the divine gifts in such a way that he asked God to make him succeed in expressing gratitude to him for all the material and spiritual gifts and blessings like the possession of the rank of a prophet and kingship, knowledge and wisdom, taking control of the ogre and genies, domination of the wind and capability of talking to birds³⁸ and he even knew the gifts as the means of testing himself for expressing thankfulness^{39,40}. As for his abstinence, as well, it only suffices to say that he earned a living through knitting mat and went to the poor to eat food with them and sat on a dining table with them. Such a piety and deliverance that is in consistency with the principle of his highness's domination and insight as a perfect human being over the entire universe has been manifested in Q. 38: 30 where the God admires Solomon as a rightful servant and introduces him as a praising servant who is always pleading to the One God's court⁴¹. In line with this, in order to embody the prophet Solomon's lack of attachment to the world and magnificent means of power and sultanate, the miniaturist has depicted the death scene of his highness because death is realized as a thing that plays a very important role in exercising piety and virtuousness.

One day, Solomon sees a plant growing in Bayt Al-Moqaddas when performing seclusion therein. He asks its name and characteristics. The plant answers that I am carob and the place wherein I grow will be destroyed⁴². Solomon finds out that he will die soon. So, he petitions to the God that 'O' my God, hide my death from the ogres and genies so that they might not stop constructing the building that is about to be completed within a year; this way, the human beings would know that the ogres and genies know nothing about the unseen world⁴³. Then, he picked up his cane and went to the highest point of the building's roof and leaned on his cane and started looking at his kingship realm happy about what had been granted to him. All of a sudden, his eyes were captured by a goodlooking and handsome person who had approached him from a corner of the building. Upon bearing witness to him, Solomon asked him 'who are you?' He said: 'I am the angel of death'. Solomon said: 'you have come for what?' He said: 'I have come to take your life'. Solomon said: 'do your mission, for today is my happy day and the great God does not want me to have any other cheer and happiness except meeting Him'. So, the death angel took his life with him leaning on his cane and he remained leaning on

his cane for a long time and the people who saw him thought that he is alive. They became doubtful about him and discrepancies arouse. Some said it is for many days that Solomon is still leaning on his cane and he has not even become tired and he has not also slept; he has neither eaten any food nor drunken any drinks. Some others said Solomon is a magician and he makes our eyes see him leaning on his cane by enchanting us but it is not so. The believers said Solomon is the servant of the God and His prophet and the God administrates and manages his work as he wishes. Upon the emergence of such discrepancies about Solomon, the magnificent and glorious God sent a termite to eat Solomon's cane. It did so and the cane broke and Solomon fell down on the ground. It was right here that the ogres and genies who had become aware of Solomon's demise wished to know the unseen world for it was in this case that they did not make a mistake about Solomon's death and did not remain in that humiliating chastisement uselessl.

His Highness Solomon's death along with his piety and deliverance has been demonstrated in two illustrations. In the first illustration, the sultanate throne has been delineated without the presence of a body of his highness Solomon but with all its glorious decorations alongside the wild animals and birds ready to serve so as to clearly showcase his journey from this temporary world (fig 16). The linear configuration pattern of this illustration is indicative of the setting's specifications in a completely symmetrical and balanced form (fig 17). That is because the miniaturist had intended to depict his highness's spiritual tranquility in getting separate from the material belongings. In the division patterns, as well, the visual elements and the entire inscriptions of the prophet's royal court pivot about a circle that is considered as the most compelte geoemtrical shape symbolizing the conenction between the soul and the deity (fig 18). In the second illustration, his highness Solomon has been depicted on top of Bayt Al-Moqaddas's building along with Azrael while the ogres and genies are busy completing the construction. The Angle, Azrael who is a messenger of the God and the intermediary between Him and the mankind as well as between this and the other world has been depicted with the face and clothing of Qajar aristocrats but with wide open wings and a crown on head and a bell in hand. This winged creature (that has separated feathers) that is manifested as a supernatural force in possession of taking the human beings' soul has been designed with a 3D.



Fig 16: A illustrating of the throne with magnificent adornments including wild animals and birds on call, Source: National Library of Iran



Fig 19: A illustrating of Solomon with Angel of Death on top of the Jerusalem Building,
Source: National Library of Iran

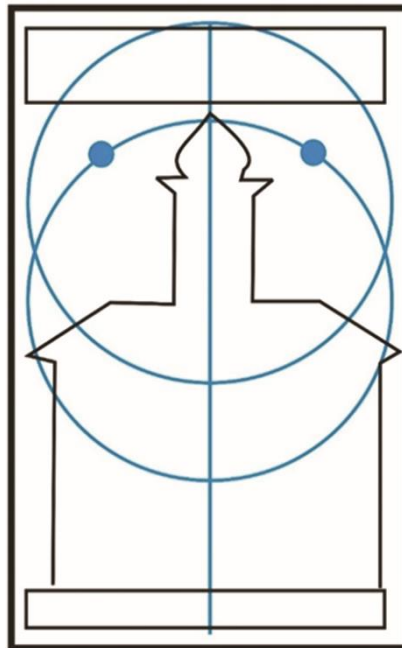


Fig 20: Configuration of illustrating based on alignment of Solomon with Angel of Death,
Source: The Author

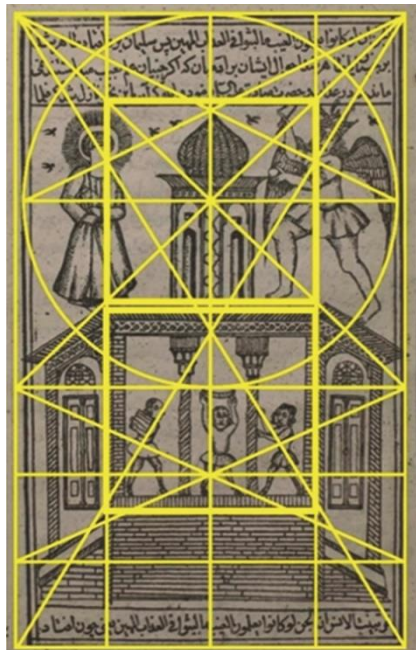


Fig 21: Pattern of the illustrating's golden divisions with two prominent squares at the top and bottom of the border,

Source: The Author

CONCLUSION

Studies suggest that the painter, Mirza Ali Gholi Khou'ei, has been bound to the Qur'anic stories when illustrating the story of Solomon in the lithographic manuscript. He abstained from employing any daydreaming, lies, and exaggeration, and follow vulgar superstitions, since he knew that the Qur'an does not employ storytelling for amusement. Rather, the holy Qur'an uses narrative with the aim of giving lessons, presenting didactic solutions, and narrating moral teachings and providing guidance. So, following the Qur'an and a visual approach (one of the methods to attract the audience to have a deeper influence via fictional messages and theme), he utilised the elements of visual arts, including:

Using a spiral pattern in configuration and starting a spiral movement from the protagonist's image to other fictional characters.

Aligning the protagonist's figure with other characters along a straight line.

Using triangular or circular compounds.

Simplifying some concrete signs mentioned in the story.

Putting good characters and the protagonist in the prominent square on top of the golden divisions of the border.

Putting evil characters and the antagonist in the prominent square at the bottom of the golden divisions of the border.

Using a bright halo and covered face in homage to good character and the protagonist.

Considering facial expressions, gestures and clothing of all characters.

Abstaining a perspective in some fictional scenes while emphasizing its application in other scenes.

Dividing the work into right and left or up and down and putting characters in these divisions based on their figure to create balance in the scene.

Applying these cases explicitly or implicitly allows the miniaturist to visualize deep contents, inward learning and moral teachings, i.e. Solomon's good traits such as humbleness and humility, counselling and advice-seeking, justice and respecting others' rights, decisiveness with controlling emotions, and piety and deliverance while narrating the story of his life.

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- Davari, 'Philosophy of Solomon's Story', p. 116.
- Marzolph, Fictional Illustration in Persian Lithographic Books, p. 51.
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- Khalaf Allah, Al-Fann Al-Qisas Fi Al-Qur'an Al-Karim.
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- Hekmat, 'Reflection of Prophet Solomon's Qur'anic Image in Rumi's Mathnavi Based on Allusion', p. 108.
- 'Qāla RabbEqrerli WaHab Li Molkan LāYanbaqi Li Ahaden Min Ba'adi Ennaka Anta Al-Wahhāb' (Q. 36: 35).
- JavadiAmoli, Thematic Exegesis of the Qur'an, p. 437.
- Hekmat, 'Reflection of Prophet Solomon's Qur'anic Image in Rumi's Mathnavi Based on Allusion', p. 110.
- Esmati and Rajabi, 'Comparative Study of Visual Elements in Heroic and Mystic Paintings', pp. 7-8.
- Pourja'afar and Musavilar, 'The Study of Circular Movements of Arabesque as a Sign of Sanctity, Unity and Beauty', p. 195.
- 'Wa Wahabnā Li Davūda Solaimāna Ne'em Al-Abdo Ennahū Awwāb' (Q. 38: 30).
- Heydari and Kardoost, 'Solomon's Wisdom, Rule and Error in the Old Testament with a Focus on the Holy Qur'an', p. 60.
- 'Qāla Yā Ayyoha Al-Mala'o Ayyokom Ya'atini Bi Arshehā Qabla An Ya'atūni Moslemin' (Q. 27: 38).
- 'Qāl Al-Lazi Endahū Elmon Min Al-Kitab Ana Atika Behi Qabla An Yartada Elayka Tarafoka ...' (Q. 27: 40); the interpreters state that the person mentioned in this ĀYA is Asef Ibn Barkhiā'a, the wise and sage minister of his highness Solomon. In the literature, this minister is considered as a symbol of intellect and it is pointed out in Tabari's interpretation that he had been commissioned to the administration of the expenditures of his highness's family and proctoring the house affairs of him.
- Zamani, A Full Narrative of Mathnavi-ye Ma'navi, p. 284.
- Sharafi, Khosravi, and Kiyani, 'Recognizing Significant Managerial Values in Solomon's Personal Life', p. 123.
- Reference has also been made to His Highness Solomon's serving of justice in Torah in such a way that Sheba's queen has the following words upon meeting his highness: 'blessed be Jehovah, your God who has chosen you to enthrone the Israel's governance. Since the God eternally likes Israel, he has appointed you for the kingship so that you may serve justice and make judgments'. The story of Solomon's first judgment which has been realized as a proof to his smartness and justness is as stated in the following words in Torah: 'two women each of whom had a son were disputing over a boy child. One of the children had been kidnapped by a wolf and both of the women believed that their child is alive and the other one's son has been murdered. They go to his highness David for judgment. David finds the older woman as the mother of the child. But, His Highness Solomon makes a different judgment about the two and tells them to bring a knife so as to cut the child in half and give any of them a half of the boy. At this moment, the younger woman asks Solomon to stop doing so and says that the child belongs to the other woman. His Highness Solomon finds out that this younger woman is the real mother of the son' (Moghaddasi 1970, 83).
- 'Wa Davūd wa Solaimāna Ez Yahkomāne Fi Al-Harthe Ez Nafashat Fihe Qanamon Al-Qawm wa Konna Li Hokmehem Shāhedīn' (Q. 21: 78).
- 'FaFahhamnāhā Solaimāna wa Kollan Ātaina Hokman Wa Elma' (Q. 21: 79).
- Hekmat, 'Reflection of Prophet Solomon's Qur'anic Image in Rumi's Mathnavi Based on Allusion', p. 109.
- Tabari, Translation of Tafsir al-Tabari, p. 1049.
- See <http://www.article.tebyan.net/330158>
- Amongst the scenes, that show His Highness Solomon's decisiveness along with emotions' control is the story of the great many of the gifts sent by Sheba's queen to his Highness Solomon who rejects them and this is reflective of his decisiveness and strategy in governance and prophetic mission.
- 'Wa Min Al-Shayatine Man Yaqqūsūna Lahū Wa Ya'alamūna Amalan Dūna Zāleka Wa Konna Lahom La Hafezin' (Q. 21: 82)
- 'Wa Hoshera Li Solaimāna Jonūdahū Min Al-Jinn Wa Al-Ins Wa Al-Tayr Fahom Yū'zaūn' (Q. 27: 17)
- 'Wa Li Solaimāna Rih Qadovvohā Shahron Wa Aslana Lahū Eyn Al-Qetre Wa Min Al-Jinn Man Ya'amalo Baina Yadaye Bi Ezne Rabbehi Wa Man Yazeq Minhom An Amrenā Nozeqho Min Azāb Al-Sa'eir Ya'amalūna Lahū Mā Yashā'a Min Mahārib Wa Tamā'eila wa Jefāna Kaljavābe Wa Qodūre Rasiāte E'emalū Āl-e-Davūda Shokran Wa Qalilan Min Ebādi Al-Shakūron FaLammā Qazaynā Alayhe Al-Mawt Mā Dallahom Alā Mawtehi Ellā Dābbato Al-Arz Ta'akolo Minsa'atahū FaLammā Kharra Tabayyanate Al-Jinno An Law Kanū Ya'alamūna Al-Qaiba MāLabethū Fi Al-Azābe Al-Mohin' (Q. 34: 12-14).

In this regard, the competition between his highness Solomon and the ogres pertains to his highness's being driven away from kingship position by the ogres and their stealing of his ring and this, though not being documented in the holy Qur'an and Torah, has been posited in the majority of stories, interpretations and Persian literature.

Sahrāyi, 'Solomon's Image in Religious Texts and Comparing it with Solomon's Image in Persian Literature until 8th century AH', p.131.

Sharāfi, Khosravi, and Kiyāni, 'Recognizing Significant Managerial Values in Solomon's Personal Life', p. 127.

'Wa Tafaqqad Al-Tayra Fa Qāla MāLia LāArā Al-Hodhoda Am Kāna Mīn Al-Qā'ebīn La Azzebannahū Azāban Shadidā Aw La Azbehannahū Aw La Yatīni Bi Soltānīn Mobīn' (Q. 27: 20-21).

Khaza'eli, Signs in the Qur'an, p. 365.

'Fa Makātha Qaira Ba'eid Fa Qāla Ahat-to Be Mā Lām Tohet Behi wa Je'etoka Mīn Saba'e Bi Naba'e Yaqīn Enni Vajadto Emra'aton Tamlekohom wa Utiat Mīn Kolle Shay'en Wa Lahā Arshon Azimon Wajadtohā Wa Qawmahā Yasjodūna Li Al-Shamse Mīn Dūn Allah Wa Zayyana Lahom Al-Shaytāno A'amālahom FaSaddahom An Al-Sabile FaHom LāYahtadūna Allā Yasjodū Lellah Al-Lazi Yakhrej Al-Khab'e Fi Al-Samāvāt Wa Al-Arz Wa Ya'alamMo Tokhfūna Wa MāTo'lenūn Allah LāElāha Ella Howa Rabbo Al-Arsh Al-Azim' (Q. 27: 22-26).

Hekmat, 'Reflection of Prophet Solomon's Qur'anic Image in Rumi's Mathnavi Based on Allusion', p. 115.

'Rabbe Awze'eni An Ashkora Ne'ematak' (Q. 46: 15).

'Hāzā Mīn Fazl Rabbi Li Yablovani A-Ashkor Am Akfor' (Q. 27: 40).

Ghera'ati, Tafsir Noor, p. 428.

Davari, 'Philosophy of Solomon's Story', p. 144.

Seyf, 'Solomon in Mathnavi-ye Ma'navi', p. 154.

Hekmat, 'Reflection of Prophet Solomon's Qur'anic Image in Rumi's Mathnavi Based on Allusion', p. 119.

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