

Exploring the Cultural Significance of Mural Paintings in the Tombs of Gilan, Iran: Evaluation of Drawn Figures

Authors : Zeinab Mirabulqasemi, Gholamali Hatam

Abstract : This article discusses the significance of mural paintings in Iranian culture, particularly within the context of religious tombs known as Imamzadehs. These tombs, dedicated to Shiite imams and other revered religious figures, serve as important religious and communal spaces. The tradition of tomb construction evolved from early Islamic practices, gradually transforming burial sites into places of worship. In the Gilan region of Iran, these tombs hold a revered status, serving as focal points for religious observances and social gatherings. The murals adorning these tombs often depict religious motifs, with a particular emphasis on events like the Day of Judgment and the martyrdom of the Imams, notably the saga of Ashura. These paintings also reflect the community's social perspectives and historical allegiances. Various architectural styles are employed in constructing these tombs, including Islamic, traditional, local, and aesthetic architecture. However, the region's climate poses challenges to the preservation of these structures and their murals. Despite these challenges, efforts are made to document and preserve these artworks to ensure their accessibility for future generations. This research also studies tomb paintings by adopting a multifaceted approach, including library research, image analysis, and field research. Finally, it examines the portrayal of significant figures such as the Shiite imams, prophets, and Imamzadehs within these murals, highlighting their thematic significance and cultural importance.

Keywords : cultural ritual, Shiite imams, mural, belief foundations, religious paintings

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