

Pate Doozi:

Traditional Iranian Needlework, the story of a living heritage we wear

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Fashion and Heritage, Stories we wear

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Meaning. Pate Doozi is one of the Iranian traditional embroideries. Pate Doozi is a kind of art for artists of Kerman province. In this type of embroidery, different designs are embroidered on monochrome woolen fabrics called “Ariz” with fine woolen threads, which are usually seen in black, green, yellow, orange, red, blue, and white colors. The oldest Pate available is the covering of Shah Nematullah Vali's tomb in Mahan city, which is one of the most beautiful and delicate examples of pate (سیدصدر, 1393, p. 59). "Pat" means the “wool of goat hair” (دهخدا, 1377, ج 1, 12:120) and “Doozi” means “Sewing”. The history of Pate Doozi, like most of the traditional arts of Iran, does not accurate due to the erosion of natural materials used in the pieces which led to having no ancient piece to explore its history (سیدصدر, 1393). in the Qajar period which is known for the renaissance of needlework arts, Pate Doozi started to gain attention with the use of Golabtoon¹ yarn (1390: 317, Golabzadeh) (Picture1).

¹ the silk threads that have a golden or silver cover are called golabatoon (گل‌بازاده, 1390, p. 343)



Picture 1 – Pate Doozi with Golabatoon Yarns Source: <https://www.pinterest.de/pin/82472236917664621/>

About today's Application, Pate is used for decorating more than thirty types of handicrafts, such as wrapping boxes, prayer mats, bed coverlets, carpet coverlets, tablecloths, new year tables, Pillow, Curtain, wallets, etc. also in mourning ceremonies, people use black pate for the funeral table or the surface of the coffin (Sanati, 1978: 3.) .in fact, the rich culture and exclusive art of the people are mixed with pate from birth to death. Artists use six different techniques to make a Pate:

- 1-Khat Doozi (Saghe Doozi / Dor Doozi): that means sewing a line around a shape
- 2-Petk Doozi (square Petk): Is a special kind of knot with thread in Pate Doozi
- 3-Ab Doozi (long Petk),
- 4-Matn Doozi (Ro Doozi): Sewing the background of pattern
- 5-Barg Doozi: sewing leafy waterfall
- 6-Toopor Doozi: sewing patterns in a way that they seem embossed

Patterns as visual communication of collective identity in societies are the most powerful language of people (Bakhtiari Farfard, 2009: 21.). In the past, the Kermani people did not have any ready-made designs for embroidering, and from the bitter and sweet events and nature around them, they embroidered the designs on the fabric and completed this valuable art with their inner inspirations; But also, some known motifs can be observed. Pate's patterns have roots in the Zoroastrian religion (Afrough, 1389: 103). There are two sources that artists are inspired by to find a subjective and objective form (Fisher, 1348: 196) which can be found in Pate Patterns:

1. nature: the symbols that are derived from the environment, animals, and plants around the artists.
- 2- The ideal nature in the artist's mind, which in Pate arises from the shortcomings of a dry environment of the original area. the motifs are the embodiment of paradise by artists in the heart of the desert.

The patterns can be Categorize into the following groups:

1- Plant patterns;

Pate in this style is a garden full of flowers that many of its flowers can be seen in the gardens of traditional Iranian houses. Shrub motifs, the main plant motifs decorating the petals, have the following types:

1-1- Boteh/Bote Jeghe patterns

Persian curved cypress, the pattern has root in Zoroastrian culture, it can be said that it is inspired by the fire of the temple or the sacred cypress. In Zoroastrian times, the fire was the symbol of burning the devil, and the fire was considered an element of the holy god that, is red and a sign of freedom, liberty, dignity, and greatness.

- Boteh Badami

-Boteh Ghahr va Ashti

-Boteh Madar va Bache (picture1)

-Chahar Boteh

(Zakaria Kermani, 2009: 122-124) (Pattern1).



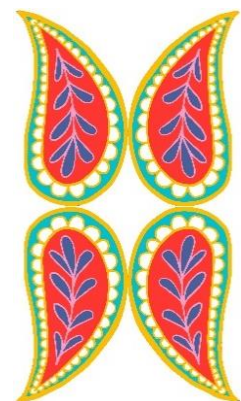
Badami



Ghahr va Ashti



Madar va Bache



Chahar Boteh

Pattern 1 - types of Boteh- Source: www.freepik.com edited by Niloofar Soleymani

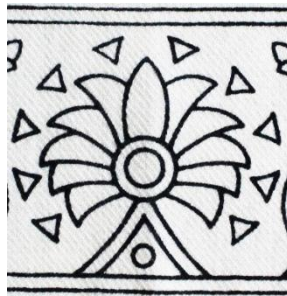
1-2. Flower

In Iran, according to ancient mythological sources, the nature of flowers belongs to the god, and flowers are considered celestial beings (Zakaria Kermani, 2009: 144). Shah Abbasi flower (Pattern2), is a manifestation of the mythical lotus (Niloofer) flower (Zakaria Kermani, 2009: 140). Niloofer (picture2) is the symbol of purity, breadth, power, and happiness (165-166: 1383, Mazdapour). the lotus flower or the famous lily flower in Pate is used many times in

Qajar arts and also can be seen in Darius's hand in the relief role of Persepolis. (Zakaria Kermani, 8: 146).



Pattern2 – Shah Abasi Flower
Source: <https://image.tebyan.net/Image/20900/>



Picture 2 Lotus Flower
Photo: Niloofar Soleymani



Picture 1- Madar va Bache Boteh Pattern-
Artist: Ramina Ghafari- Photo by:
Niloofar Soleymani

1-3-The vase pattern:

an image of a flower vase which mostly is the product of the artist's imagination (Nasiri, 2006, 42) (Picture3)



Picture 3 vase Pattern- Artist: Hamide Shourabadi - Photo by: Niloofar Soleymani



Picture 5 Tree of Life- Artist: Ramina Ghafari- Photo by: Niloofar Soleymani



Picture 4 Bazoband Pattern in Margins-
Photo by: Niloofar Soleymani

1-4- Tree of life

One of the deep-rooted customs of the people of ancient Iran is the celebration of tree planting in Avesta, the book of the ancient Iranian religion, damage to plants and trees is a great sin. (Ittihad, 1379: 121). The design of a tree in the Pate includes a tree of life or a cypress tree, which is usually seen with the altar in rectangular frames. the cypress tree in some eras becomes a symbol of sovereignty and absolute power (Afrough, 1389: 108) (Picture5)

2 - Geometric and Abstract patterns:

2-1-Bazoband

It is a frame based on the picture of an old wrestler's armband and it has geometric shapes. The bazooband pattern in Patte Doozi is a marginal design. An important point in the implementation of the armband design is to create elegance in its corners (Picture4).

2-2- Toranj Pattern

1-2-2- Hosi Toranj

A toranj that tends to be oval (Picture7)

2-2-2 - Khorshidi² Toranj

Circular Toranj (Picture 8)

2-2-32- Lachak and Toranj (Hosouri, 1381: 42) (Picture6).

It is called the set of margins patterns in addition to the middle toranj pattern (Mohammadinejad, 2022)



Picture 8 Toranj Khorshidi- Artist: Ramina Ghafari- Photo by: Niloofar Soleymani



Picture 7 Toranj Hosi- Artist: Fariba Abolghasemi- Photo by: Niloofar Soleymani



Picture 6 Lachak va Toranj - from Shahnaz Motahari Collection- age: 25 years- Photo by: Niloofar Soleymani

3- katibe Patterns:

The motifs that are used on the altar, and its roots go back to the ritual of Mithraism. An altar is a place of worship, prayer, or religious and ritual practices (Hosouri, 1381: 55) (Picture 9 and10)



Picture 9 Katibe Pattern- Artist: Neda Ghanooni-Photo by: Niloofar Soleymani



Picture 10- Katibe Pattern- Artist: Ramina Ghafari- Photo By: Niloofar Soleymani



Picture 11 Patterns of Birds- Source:<https://roostatish.ir/product>

² Solar

4 - Patterns of birds:

The bird in Iran is a transmitter of revelation. In ethnic and mythological beliefs, the bird, in the sense of revealing the secrets of the gods, is the guardian of the tree of knowledge or tree of life (Serlo, 2010: 219).

4-1-The peacock: the "Venus bird" (water god). sacred bird in Zoroastrianism. the snake destroyer, so it is considered a factor in the fertility of the earth. In Islamic culture and literature, the peacock has been considered a bird of paradise (Khazaei, 2007: 8).

4-2-The rooster: symbol of the sun. Rooster solar symbolism means light and resurrection (Shavaliéh and Gerbran, 2008: 91).

4-3-Parrots, messengers, and like other animals are the symbol of the soul (Serlo, 2010: 558). Wishing to fly to the mainland and join the helper (Picture11).

In coloring, Despite the differences in region methods, traditional dyeing has a specific formula. Silk or wool that is dyed with vegetable materials has a kind of attractiveness and beauty that over time and as a result of use and exposure to light and alkaline substances, etc., not only its value does not decrease, but its stability and Its brightness is also increased. (Mohammadinejad, 2022). In addition, Traditional colors (vegetable and animal) are the result of hundreds of years of experience of the hardworking people of the land who have always added color to their lives by adapting to nature; For this reason, they are very difficult in terms of spiritual and material value.

According to the source of their extraction, natural dyes can be divided into the following three groups:

1- Pigments obtained from plants such as Nile, Ronas³, etc., which are obtained from the roots, flowers, leaves, fruits, and skins of plants.

2- Pigments obtained from animals such as red bean and purple oyster

3- Those obtained from mineral materials such as red soil

At the end of the Qajar period, several dyeing workshops had a prosperous activity next to the carpet weaving workshops. In these workshops, plant products such as runas, spark⁴, walnut shell, and pomegranates were used, and the exporting traders also exported vegetable dyes that

³ Rubia tinctorum

⁴ Reseda

were more than domestic consumption, which were packaged in dye production workshops (اکبری, 1391, p. 18) .

In terms of Colors in Pate, in original Pate's of Kerman, dark colors are usually used more that might indicate the hardships of the lives of Pate's artists; But besides, many Pate Doozi artists tend to bright and cheerful colors. Pate Doozi has special principles in color combination; For example, in a white scarf, the square Petk sews in blue, black, green, yellow, and red. And in another case in the red scarf, square Petk sews in yellow, green, or blue; and when it comes to the green scarf, white or yellow ones are used, and in the crimson shawl, White or green pistachio sews. Also, to fill the background fabric, its edge is filled with red or black thread that fastens it. A principle is that the stem or lines that are the initial pattern on Ariz, if it is white, the stem is sewn in orange, or if it is red, the stems are sewn in black, and then the color of flowers, leaves, and twigs can be Chose (Shahrokhi, 2022).

Stories. People who are in relation to this art, have their perspectives and stories about that. while the majority of artists have worked on Pate Doozi as a family-run business, a few have chosen to work on it without being originally attached; And the story of this research is about one of them. Ramina Ghafari is a Pate Doozi Artist and handcraft enterpriser based in Isfahan who was born in 1975 in Tehran. she studied Persian literature in university and started to learn different embroidery at 20 years old. Her first encounter with needlework arts is back in her childhood when she used to see her grandmother making different pieces of art through embroidery and knitting. her story is illustrated in the following part:

*“Once upon a time
When She was in mid of the 20s
she found a colorful beautiful piece of art
“Pate Doozi” was what is called!
she was during an excursion to Bazaar
to buy materials for her embroidery artworks
Suddenly, she was fascinated by a tablecloth
in the corner of a really old antique shop
it was her first encounter with this kind of art
no surprise! since it belonged to
another state of the vast country, Iran*

*far from the places, she used to stay in her life
 the table cloth was way expensive to buy
 so, she decided to find someone to learn from!
 after almost two months she found the one
 though it was hard to convince the master
 to teach her the secrets of the art!
 there was no internet and google,
 no book and no article
 the only way
 was winning over the master's heart!
 After all, she achieved her aim
 and went through all the mysteries
 beyond the techniques, material,
 patterns, colors, and all
 well, honestly it was not that hard
 since she already was a talented artist
 in other kinds of embroidery arts!
 soon she found the traditional arts are extraordinary nice
 what is the use, when the youngers have left them behind?
 hence after she conquered all the aspects of Pate Doozi Art
 she started to create a new innovative style
 she stepped into the revitalization of this art
 by making it more practical
 and using minimal patterns for young's
 she gathered all the artists that she knew them
 and after all, she designed a bag
 a Supernatural beautiful one
 which was standing on the old roots created by artists of all time” (Picture 12)*

The special feature of her artworks is using Isfahan Carpet threads in Pate Doozi, special Coloring with her signature, and the combination of Pate with other materials like leather and wood. She has prepared a free shared workspace in her gallery for artists to gather together, share experiences and produce new forms of art. One of the important aims of these gatherings is to find new ways to bring traditional arts into the daily life of the new generation to prevent forgetting them. She states that the special quality of Pate is its infinity horizon in creating

patterns and meanings; and for her, it is a way to express her inner thoughts and feelings. Nowadays, she works in creating artworks to exhibit in exhibitions and she accepts just a few orders due to the back and neck pain caused by working for years in this field; the orders that she accepts are not pre-organized because she believes that the artist should unconsciously show herself in the artwork. Although she believes this art runs in the spirit of the Kermani People, she thinks there is no border between art and artists. the interaction between the artists would result in flourishing and growth in revitalizing the art and producing a new form of art based on original identity. Original artists in Kerman both encourage and criticize her; yet, the biggest pain that she feels is that although she is an Innovator in the country, she is kind of an outsider in her city when it comes to the origin of arts. She indicates that the pattern of “Botte Jeghe” which is a curved Cypress is the most repetitive pattern of Pate Doozi and also her beloved pattern which she thinks is like the story of herself and other artists who have resisted learning, conservation, and sharing arts. For that reason, she tries to teach her student to think beyond the borders while having an eye on regional matters. During the Corona Pandemic, more people gave attention to learning pate Doozi and she assume that it works for people as a meditation. About her students, she thinks that the new generation of artists has more cultural concerns in parallel with economic concerns. They try to change the use of art to spread it in everyday life. The artworks she is currently working on are a combination of Persian myths and literature with Pate Doozi. She tries to show the philosophical meaning in Persian historical literature with her patterns and creativity (Ghafari, 2022) (Ghafari, 2019).



Picture 12- Photo Collection of Ramina Ghafari's artworks – Photos by: Niloofer Soleymani

Challenges. challenges in Pate Doozi can refer to the all challenges in handicraft fields in Iran in relation to in national and international issues. in total it can be divided into 4 main areas which will be addressed in the following.

1)human resources

Traditional Artists who are the original masters of the Pate Doozi mostly live in the countryside and poor neighborhoods, while even the ones who live in big cities suffer a lack of job stability due to economic fluctuations resulting in economic stagnation in Iran (عبدہ تبریزی, 1401-2022). This situation has made them leave their jobs as artists and find more stable jobs. additionally, the lack of knowledge in modern has made the situation hard to compete with foreign markets due to the government's Economic Rent and the Unlimited import of goods from China (کشوری, 1396). Every year, many students in Iran graduate at the academic level of handicrafts, but they do not attract to the market and the country loses a lot of educated people who can be effective (نویانی, 1398). The confrontation and cooperation of traditional artists and graduates of this field can lead to more creative solutions and suitable marketing for this art, and the lack of communication between artists and experts causes the loss of many potentials in Again, the traditional arts of Iran, including Pate Doozi (حیدریان, 1400).

2) Production and Packaging Challenges

Limited mass production availability due to the high expenses and few modern devices in comparison with the extent of the country, monopoly of facilities in the hands of a few, Tough competition in marketing, and product offering without sponsors are the problematic issues that should be tackled (Ghafari, 2022).

3) Management

Absence of long-lasting large-scale and small-scale planning for traditional and academic artists to grow and thrive, communication and coordination between handicraft schools, universities, and bazaars, has caused rich profits for art dealers and hard life for artists (Ghafari, 2022).

4) Sales and Export Challenges

Foreign competitors in the Iranian market with lower prices makes Iranian handicraft less marketable. Although there are still special Iranian and foreign customers who are willing to spend money on the fine art of embroidery. The sum of the problems mentioned earlier moreover the economic sanctions imposed against Iran have led to missing a big number of opportunities like the tourism industry and international markets.

To talk about the **Future** of Pate Doozi, it should be considered that it is an art that has been existing for centuries, and like other traditional Iranian decorations such as Balochi needlework, Golabtoon Doozi, and Zoroastrian embroidery, it is used to Decorate the smallest everyday objects to the most practical ones because, In Iran, the connection with handicrafts is Inseparable since it is a part of cultural identity. However, the fact is that it will be conserved for the future generation in terms of making it up to date related to the taste of the new era while trying to keep its authenticity. this process has been taken always in the art history of Iran. Due to the decrease in people's purchasing power due to economic problems, handicrafts have become a luxury item and the general public can't use them. Therefore, one of the ways could be: implementing the designs in a smaller and more simple way which needs less time and material to be spent; and as a result, its final cost is lower and the other solution could be using it for more practical stuff, like bags, because people nowadays can't spend money to decorate their houses but at least they buy bags once a year. Encouraging people to support regional artists which led to conserving the arts in danger of erasing and forgetting instead of buying foreign goods can be helpful too. otherwise, it would be difficult to keep the handicrafts, specifically here Pate Doozi, alive. It should be mentioned that lots of artists, including the artist that we interviewed, have already started this process by attracting young people's attention, making job opportunities for them in local businesses, has made innovations in usages and patterns and they already compete with the machine-made products. Above all these experiences through sorrows and love, resistance and innovations, to revitalize this art, if the door of world arenas opens to Iranian artists, they can play a crucial role in the future of fashion. like Haute couture dresses that are usually designed with delicate time-consuming embroidery, and pate doozie in its original way or even with the Qajar style way (silver and gold threads) can become one of the latest trends in this style.

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