

# The Aesthetics of Arabic Calligraphic and Islamic Formations in the Curtain of the Door of Kaaba: A Critical Artistic Study

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## Abstract

The Kaaba's covering carries inherited aesthetics with an ancient historical and cultural character. The curtain for the door of the Holy Kaaba is an integral part of the design of the Kiswah of the Holy Kaaba, as it covers the door of the Holy Kaaba. The door curtain of the Holy Kaaba is considered an immortal and unique Islamic artistic painting in terms of the uniqueness of its design. Therefore, this study aims to apply the Western theory of art criticism (Feldman) to Arabic calligraphy and the calligraphic formations embodied in the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba to demonstrate aesthetic and artistic design values. The approach followed in this study is Feldman's approach to art criticism. Feldman's methodology is considered a systematic and integrated critical methodology for describing and analyzing artworks. In addition, this methodology enhances the aesthetic experience to understand art, its dimensions and value. The tool used in the study is observation. The study population consists of linear and decorative units with multiple styles. The study concluded that the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba is characterized by an abundance of calligraphic formations and compositions and Islamic decorative plant units that appeared on the curtain of the door of the Kaaba according to the aesthetic organization of the art of Arabic calligraphy. Also, this curtain represents a visual centre of attraction within the design of the overall fabric covering the Holy Kaaba.

**Keywords:** Aesthetics; Arabic calligraphy; Islamic formation; Curtain; Kiswah of Kabbah.

## 1. Introduction

During the Saudi era, the covering of the Holy Kaaba received great attention regarding the aesthetics and quality of the Arabic calligraphy and the aesthetics of the Islamic floral decorative units. Where several Qur'anic verses and some expressions of monotheism, glorification, and reverence for God Almighty appear, decorating the kiswah with the most beautiful calligraphic formations, the brilliance of which is visible on the kiswah belt that surrounds the Kaaba from all sides. Also, the Qur'anic verses are embodied within calligraphic formations located under the main belt, in addition to the curtain of the Kaaba door, which is filled with various linear formations and Islamic decorative units embroidered with threads coated with pure gold water. The curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba is considered a unique and special Islamic masterpiece (Al-Thaqafi, 2007, p. 37).

The researcher defines the curtain of the door of the Kaaba in this study as the apparent clothing that covers the door of the Kaaba, which is woven from natural silk dyed black and embroidered with Qur'anic writings and Islamic decorations coated with threads with gold water. This honourable curtain indicates the splendour of mastery, beauty and spirituality of Arabic calligraphy and is drawn over the door of the Noble Kaaba from the eastern side. The door of the Kaaba is located on the eastern side and is 222 cm above the ground. The length is (318 cm), its width is (171 cm), and its depth is approximately half a meter. Nassif Jassim defines calligraphic composition as "a formal organization based on the literal or textual material that takes a specific geometric or non-geometric cover and is produced in the design of the design foundations for written composition and written construction, especially unity, balance and flexibility of the reading sequence according to the direction that has been determined and can also be relied upon in its creation." Multiple methods, including symmetry, symmetry, or horizontal line extension" (Deli, 2013, p. 292). Louay Al-Bayati (2018) defined beauty in calligraphic formations (Arabic calligraphy) by saying, "The expressive image of organization in the structures of calligraphic formations, because of the beauty it reflects to the viewer in the distribution of Arabic letters and words according to equal proportions that give a state of harmony and visual harmony." As for the aesthetics of Arabic calligraphy, which is the focus of the current study, Hassan Al-Basha (1999) defined it by saying, "The beautiful intrinsic characteristics and values that Arabic calligraphy includes that inspire ecstasy and pleasure in those who practice it, are inspired by it, or taste it, as well as the capabilities it contains that help them towards mastery and beauty."

The researcher defines the concept of beauty (the aesthetics of Arabic calligraphy and Islamic decorative formations) in this study as a set of qualities, principles, and values that are concerned with the aesthetic aspect of Arabic calligraphy and its calligraphic and floral decorative formations within its functional and artistic framework and is based on the availability of design elements and foundations in terms of unity, harmony, and integration between the elements. Linear work combines the elements and foundations of artistic design to produce a linear composition that carries aesthetic and artistic features at the same time.

The steps of artistic criticism are based on several basic foundations, including the stage of description, formal analysis, and interpretation, leading to the final stage of judging or evaluating the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba. Since the practice of artistic criticism in aesthetic research is considered an intellectual treatment to search for meaning and what can be behind it in the visual text, artistic criticism is nothing but an attempt to bridge the bonds of visions to expand engagement and open up the taste to the aesthetic achievement (Al-Saadi, 2015, p. 18), in addition to illuminating an aspect of the formations of Arabic calligraphy and the plant decorative units embodied in the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba, which have an artistic and aesthetic nature in a contemporary critical artistic language. These stages that precede the process of artistic criticism of the art of Arabic calligraphy, calligraphic formations, and Islamic decorations of the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba require the researcher to have a deep understanding of the components and standards of plastic and design art. In addition to a deep understanding of the Qur'anic texts, Arabic calligraphy and its creative quality cannot be achieved except within a linguistic-textual scope that carries an absent meaning that can be interpreted and interpreted to receive the aesthetic form (Hanash, 1990, p. 43). This is following a philosophical, cognitive, and artistic critical vision to reveal the formal symbols of Arabic calligraphy within the structure of the various calligraphic formations and to reveal the properties and plastic artistic attributes possessed by the art of Arabic calligraphy that have greatly contributed to enhancing the aesthetics and spirituality of the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba on the one hand.

The description, analysis, interpretation and evaluation process helps the researcher understand the structure of the artistic work of the curtain of the Kaaba Gate and contribute to revealing the internal laws. In addition to understanding the technical and design structure of linear formations. And an understanding of the elements of the composition and the functional and aesthetic relationships of the elements and the design and artistic foundations. Through these steps, the researcher will be able to effectively extrapolate to read the formal and textual content of the artistic work according to the aesthetic context and convey the aesthetic experience through expressive words and expressions that describe the artistic, design, and spiritual values inherent in the linear formations and Arabic lines embodied in the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba, based on the methodological perspective of artistic criticism and in an artistic language. Contemporary.

Artistic criticism has been linked to the aesthetic judgment of artistic works because artistic creativity produces works that possess the quality of beauty. In particular, the steps of artistic criticism are based on verifying the parts of the work, defining them, and documenting them as a reference to obtain information that includes the characteristics of the formal style of the artistic work and then evaluating it, meaning The steps of criticism are careful analysis of the contents of the artistic work to ascertain its origins and qualities to judge and evaluate it (Abdul Hakim, 2016, p. 15). Regarding the steps of art criticism followed in this study, the researcher relied on the Feldman method of art criticism because it is a systematic, sequential, and integrated critical method to describe, analyze, interpret, and evaluate works of art. This methodological method developed by Feldman enhances the aesthetic experience to understand art, its dimensions, and its value. These methodological steps help increase insight into the depth of the artistic work and enhance the aesthetic vision of the content of the work (Feldman, 1993, p. 23). To analyze works of art based on the Feldman method of art criticism it relies on four basic and sequential stages, which are as follows: description, formal analysis, interpretation, and evaluation.

## **2. Previous Research and Studies**

In a study related to the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba during the Ottoman period, presented by Al-Harithi, Adnan Al-Sharif (2019), entitled "A Curtain to the Gate of Repentance attributed to the Gate of the Kaaba." The study aimed to shed light on one of the curtains of the inner Kaaba during the Ottoman period, the curtain of the Gate of Repentance, and to study it as a historical, cultural, and artistic analytical study. To determine the decorative elements and inscriptions included in the curtain, comparing them to some of the curtains of the Kaaba during the Ottoman period. The method used in this study is the descriptive and analytical method, and the study reached a set of results, the most important of which was that the Ottoman era witnessed great interest in the curtain of the Gate of the Kaaba in terms of the quality of artistry and the written decoration. The study demonstrated the extent of the artist's and the maker's skill in choosing the colours used in the curtain of the Gate of Repentance, regarding wonderful colour contrast and precision in selecting plant branches and leaves. The researcher benefited from this study by identifying examples of curtains for the door of the Kaaba in the Ottoman era.

This study differs from the current study in terms of the period and the objectives of the current study, as the researcher in her study will apply artistic criticism based on the steps of artistic criticism according to Feldman on the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba in the Saudi era, specifically in the period that the calligrapher Mukhtar Alam supervised for an aesthetic study Arabic calligraphy and Islamic floral decorative units. They also reveal the aesthetic values embodied in the covering of the Holy Kaaba based on a systematic critical perspective.

## **3. Methods**

Edmund Feldman's method of art criticism is considered one of the methods that is very suitable for the principles of art criticism at the educational and academic levels. Feldman's method is also considered one of the most important contemporary critical methods, as it is an integrated, regular, and sequential critical method for analyzing works of art

in all their aspects. Also, many critics, artists, and researchers agreed that criticism of works of art must pass through four stages, as Feldman summarised: description, formal analysis, interpretation, and evaluation. On the other hand, Edmund Feldman's method is one of the most widely used methods by academic critics.

Musa Al-Khamisi (2010) says, "The critic must benefit from the methods of Western criticism in analysis and study." Based on what was mentioned above, the researcher will benefit from the methods of Western criticism in describing and analyzing the study samples (linear formations and plant decorative units in the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba) based on the Feldman method of artistic criticism in particular. Samir Farouk Hassanein (2010) pointed out Feldman's method of artistic criticism by saying, "It provides the critic with an opportunity to trace the parts of the artistic work and focus on its various aspects, which calls for contemplation, and leads the critic and the connoisseur to awareness, and then develops his cognitive side, and heightens the feeling." With places of beauty, with a scientific approach based on subjective and objective aspects." Despite the multiplicity and diversity of methods of art criticism, the current research will apply the Feldman method of art criticism as it is most appropriate to the subject of the current research, its directions and objectives. Through it, the researcher can transfer the aesthetic experience, values, and artistic and design concepts inherent within Arabic calligraphy and the calligraphic formations embodied in the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba, based on the following steps: Art criticism through a Western perspective. This method is also considered a systematic and integrated critical method for describing and analyzing artworks. In addition, this method enhances the aesthetic experience to understand art, its dimensions and value. In addition, these methodological steps developed by Feldman help increase insight into the depth and dimensions of the artistic work and enhance the aesthetic vision of the content of the artistic work (Feldman, 1993). At the same time, the study tool will be observation, the basic and essential tool in this study. This tool is one of the most important research tools the researcher used to obtain information and facts related to the study case to be observed. Using this tool, the researcher determines what is needed to focus on, analyze, and write it down.

#### **4. Results and Discussions**

##### **Steps for applying artistic criticism include describing, analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba (Feldman Method)**

###### **1- Description**

Feldman (1993) says that "the description stage is a description and perception of the visual elements in the artwork and an inventory of all the elements of the work, for example, the name of the artist, the name of the work, the date, the place, the material used, the space, and noting what is visible in it directly and in a detailed manner." minute." Based on the above, the researcher will accurately describe, in a precise and detailed manner, the totality of Arabic scripts and calligraphic formations in terms of form and textual content. Calligrapher: Mukhtar Alam Title: Curtain Door of the Holy Kaaba Date: 2024 Location: The Grand Mosque, Mecca, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The Holy Kaaba's covering retains the beauties of its ancient, historical, and cultural heritage. Scholarly selections of several Qur'anic passages served as the basis for its design. These lines demonstrate the beauty and magnificence of Arabic calligraphy. They were written overlappingly inside various calligraphic formations, weaved in the legible Thuluth script, and produced in prominent letters, along with the appearance of Islamic securitization components. Due to its covering of the Sacred House of God and its profoundly sacred significance, the Holy Kaaba is one of the planet's most precious and holy fabrics.

Regarding all the Qur'anic verses, monotheistic statements, and exquisite divine names inscribed on the present Kaaba covering, these were penned in the intricate, legible Thuluth script and are the creations of the Saudi calligrapher Abd al-Rahim Amin Bukhari. May God have mercy on him and pardon him earlier. Currently, covering the honourable Kaaba is the responsibility of Mukhtar Alam, a calligrapher from Mecca. They produce Islamic embellishments, calligraphic compositions, and Qur'anic verses and oversee and carry out these tasks. The Qur'anic passages, monotheistic statements, and Islamic decorative units were all stitched with their letters protruding two centimetres above the fabric's surface for all calligraphic formations.

###### **Curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba**

Also called the burqa, this curtain is hung on the door of the Holy Kaaba from the outside. It consists of five pieces gathered vertically and then lined with cloth. It is considered the most artistically distinctive garment of the Kaaba, as the length of the curtain is 7 meters, its width is 3.3 meters, and it is made of Pure natural silk dyed black and embroidered with gold and silver threads coated with gold water. Several Qur'anic verses have been written on the curtain, and Islamic floral decorative units and bands have been engraved. The number of circles is twelve, with the phrase (My Lord God) written on eight of them, while on the remaining four, the vertical one in the centre of the curtain from top to bottom, is the phrase (God suffices me), while Concerning the oval rectangles located on edge on the right and left sides, and before the fifth piece of the curtain, there are ten rectangles in number, and inside them are written (In the Name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful) and (Surat Al-Fatihah in full).

Regarding the Qur'anic verses, the first piece was written in the middle of it: In the Name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful [And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a Paradise as wide as the heavens and the earth, prepared for the righteous [[Al Imran: 133]], while at the top of the piece in the middle was written on the right side [May We see

the change in your face Heaven [Then from the left side [So We will certainly turn to you a qiblah that you will be pleased with] [Al-Baqarah: 144] and on the right side at the bottom of the first piece, the basmalah was written [In the Name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful [In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful] and on the left side at the bottom of the piece, the verse was written [Not upon them is anger, nor of those who go astray] [Al-Fatihah: 7 ] At the bottom of the first piece four lamps are repeating inside it [God is the light of the heavens and the earth [[Al-Nour: 35].

Regarding the second piece of the curtain of the door of the Kaaba, there are two oval rectangles at the top from the right, with the circle between them (God suffices me) in which part of the Throne Verse is written in the first rectangle. In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful [God, there is no god but He, the Ever-Living, the Self-Subsisting. Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him.] In the second rectangle, the verse completing the previous verse was written: "Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. Who is there to intercede with Him except by His leave? He knows what is before them and what is." [Al-Baqarah: 255]. As for the middle of the second piece, there is a rectangle. It is great, and the verses are written in a clear, compound thuluth script. It was surrounded by decorative plant units in each corner of the rectangle, and it was written in the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful [God has certainly confirmed the vision with truth, that you will certainly enter the Sacred Mosque, God willing, secure] [Al-Fath: 27].

Regarding the third piece, there are two oval rectangles at the top, on the right and left sides, in which the rest of the Throne Verse is written. On the right side, the verse was written [Behind them, and they will not encompass any of His knowledge except with what He wills. His Throne encompasses the heavens and the earth] and on the left [And And He is the Most High. He is the Most High. The Great \* There is no compulsion in religion. Rightness has been clearly distinguished from error. [Al-Baqarah: 265] And in the middle of the piece, along its length, there is a rectangle in the shape of a pyramid on which are written vertically on the right and left sides of Qur'anic verses. On the right side is written [Say, O My servants who have transgressed against themselves no And despair of [And on the left side is written [God's mercy. Indeed, God forgives all sins. Indeed, He is the Forgiving, the Most Merciful] [Al-Zumar: 53]. At the bottom of the third piece, there are two large squares, inside of which a floral decorative frame surrounds two large circles; the two circles are bordered at their four corners by floral decorative units; on one of them, on the right side, is written the complete Surah Al-Ikhlās [Say: He is God, one, God, the Eternal, He begot not, nor was He begotten, and there is no one equal to Him]. On the opposite side is written [Muhammad is the Messenger of God, and those with him are strong on the palm. See those merciful among them, and you will see them bowing and prostrating." [Al-Fath: 29].

In the fourth piece, there are two oval rectangles under the two squares, in one of which the phrase is written from the right side to the left side (There is no god but God, the true and clear King) and in the other (Muhammad is the Messenger of God, true to the faithful promise). Under that, there are four oval rectangles on each side two. He wrote about them (In the Name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful), and then the complete verses of Surat Quraysh were written [to accustom the Quraysh to familiarize them with the journey of winter and summer, so let them worship the Lord of this House, who has fed them from hunger and protected them from fear]

At the bottom and last part of the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba, there is the fifth piece, which is the dedication piece, meaning that it shows the place and date of making the curtain, in addition to mentioning the name of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques. This piece consists of two large rectangles filled with Islamic floral decorations, and in the middle of each, there is a rectangle in which the phrase "dedicates the honourable kiswah." In one of them was written the phrase (He made this curtain in Mecca and gave it as a gift to the Holy Kaaba) and in the second of them (the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, Salman bin Abdulaziz), Al Saud, may God accept it.

## 2- Formal analysis

The researcher believes that the process of formal analysis strengthens the hypothesis of the artistic components of Arabic calligraphy on the one hand and the other hand, strengthens the artistic and design elements embodied in the structure of the calligraphic formations and the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba. Feldman (1993) says the analysis process "is finding the relationship between forms and the effect of one on the other." From Feldman's point of view, the analysis process includes two aspects: Formal analysis, which reveals the relationship between things and elements that the critic identifies in the description—and second, Analyzing the underlying meanings within the artistic work (Feldman, 1993, p. 43).

Based on the above, the researcher will analyze the Arabic calligraphy and calligraphic formations in the Kaaba dress in terms of form and meaning. Karim Al-Saadi (2015, p. 12) confirms that "the analysis process is about understanding the elements of composition and the functional relationships of the artistic elements to reveal the structure of the laws of the artistic work and analyze it in terms of its construction and texture." In an initial analytical reading of the curtain at the door of the Holy Kaaba, the researcher found that artistic design elements were employed in designing the overall Kiswah fabric, where new data was embodied following technical standards and based on a harmonious design methodology.

About the curtain of the door of the Kaaba, the colour values of the linear formations varied among themselves, as a set of Arabic lines, plastic and decorative movements, and plant decorative units that surround, frame and embrace a set of linear formations were embroidered in gold, while contrast occurred in the geometric lines that frame the set of geometric formations and give them a geometric shape. Whether square, rectangular, or circular, all of them are embroidered in silver to distinguish between the decorative units and the structure of the linear formations.

Knowing that the first piece, which contains four repeating lanterns, includes the Qur'anic text, "God is the light of the heavens and the earth," and the second piece, which contains the rectangular geometric formation, which includes the Qur'anic text, "God has certainly confirmed the vision in truth to His Messenger. You will certainly enter the Sacred Mosque, God willing, secure." In addition to the third piece, which contains two squares, the complete Surah Al-Ikhlās is written on one of them on the right side, and the opposite side is written: "Muhammad is the Messenger of God and those with him are hard against the disbelievers and merciful among themselves. You will see them bowing and prostrating."

Also, the fifth piece of the curtain of the Kaaba's door includes the dedication piece in a rectangular configuration. The researcher notes that all of these pieces had Arabic calligraphy and plastic and decorative movements embroidered in a different colour, as they came in silver, and this would enhance the aesthetic and artistic values, create a kind of excitement, attract attention, and solidify the foundations of the artistic work.

The researcher would like to point out that the second piece, which includes the rectangular geometric composition that contains the Qur'anic text, "God has confirmed the vision with truth. You will certainly enter the Sacred Mosque, God willing, secure." It is the only piece within the curtain that includes the name of the calligrapher and the year of manufacture in the Hijri date, as it was written in size. Small pen, contrasting colour.

The researcher adds that the black colour of the Kaaba's curtain door played a special spiritual role, along with the colours of the lines and decorations represented in gold and silver, which symbolize a vision and reflection of the atmosphere of Paradise. Through the analytical study of the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba, the researcher notes that all the calligraphic formations are linked to the writing of Qur'anic texts, some to the Most Beautiful Names of God, and some expressions of monotheism. Its production formats are varied and numerous, executed in the clear, complex Thuluth script, described as the most beautiful and perfect among other types of Arabic calligraphy. The art of Arabic calligraphy adds aesthetic value to the text when writing it down, and through that, it becomes closer to the soul of the viewer and recipient. This aesthetic value is, in fact, equivalent to the moral and spiritual value of the text. Arabic calligraphy's basic function is to transform the raw material into calligraphic works with an aesthetic artistic dimension (Al-Zaidi, 2001, p. 32).

The researcher believes that all the linear formations and Islamic decorative units embodied in the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba, in their independent form and their various compositions, carry a balance in the spaces they contain, such as the square, rectangle, circle, or other shapes that characterize the kiswah. The characteristic of balance was present in the overall design process of the Kaaba curtain in terms of balance in the arrangement and distribution of the shapes of the linear formations and plant decorative units between the right and left side of the curtain to create a state of aesthetic organization.

In an analytical reading of the curtain at the door of the Kaaba, the researcher sees that the design of the curtain was based on the principle of symmetry and symmetry in the way the linear formations and plant decorative elements are distributed between the right and left sides, in a lively rhythm in which there is harmony that combines balance and symmetry, achieving harmony in an Islamic artistic unity. The design of the Kaaba Gate curtain took into account the decorative form derived from the Islamic style. Harmony was achieved between the design of the Kaaba Gate curtain and the design of the Kaaba Gate in terms of the type of calligraphy with which it was drawn, which is the Thuluth calligraphy, in addition to the matching of the floral decorations between the Kaaba Gate and the Kaaba Gate Curtain, in addition to... Similar to the geometric shapes represented by circles and rectangles, knowing that the door of the Kaaba was decorated by engraving and engraving on gold, with Qur'anic verses and decorative vocabulary engraved. The researcher also adds that the linear formations embodied on the curtain of the Kaaba door contained striped, geometric, and iconographic formations, and several compositional levels were achieved in them, between the light, double, and heavy composition levels. At the same time, the reading sequence was achieved in some linear formations and not in others. The aesthetic properties that include balance, Proportion, rhythm, contrast, unity and harmony were achieved in the set of linear formations in the curtain of the door of the Kaaba and the covering of the Holy Kaaba. On the other hand, linear formations were treated as three-dimensional plastic art by embodying the lines on the Kaaba, thus taking on a third dimension, through which tactile values were achieved in addition to visual values. Thus, all the calligraphic formations embodied in the curtain of the Kaaba door were treated in a way that deepened their expressive potential on the one hand and, on the other hand, imbued them with artistic and plastic concepts.

Through a comprehensive analytical reading of the overall cladding fabric, the researcher notes that all the writing strips, linear formations of a geometric nature, lamps, and lamps were distributed within the general pattern of the cladding design while maintaining spatial adaptation, and the formations did not condense on one side of the cladding at the expense of the other side but rather appeared in an equal manner. Structural, visual and aesthetic. Except for the eastern side of the Kaaba Gate, which contains the curtain, where this side was distinguished by the abundance

of formations, compositions, and decorations that appeared on the curtain of the Kaaba Gate, following the aesthetic organization of the art of Arabic calligraphy, on the one hand.

On the other hand, according to the principles of artistic design.

Through the process of formal analysis of the linear formations and decorative units present in the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba, the researcher concluded that the most important artistic design relationships that enhanced the success of the linear formations are the contact of the lines and decorative units with each other within the structure of the linear formations, which created a sense of space depth, in addition to the juxtaposition of linear formations and their connection in a coordinated organizational pattern, which generated a force of attraction in the visual field. The researcher points out that decorative vocabulary, both botanical and geometric, represents the language of Islamic art., While the overall designs of curtain designs for the door of the Kaaba are decorated with Islamic decorations represented by plant decorative units and geometric lines, which take a large share and decorate and fill the spaces between most of the linear formations.

The formal analysis of the curtain at the door of the Holy Kaaba focused on identifying how its artistic elements were organized. It was based on analyzing the existing relationships between the diversity of shapes and sizes of linear structures and formations, in addition to analyzing the colour relationships between the linear formations to reveal the artistic and aesthetic values that were organized during the design of the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba.

Nobler-Nathana (1987, p. 97) confirms this, saying, "An integrated artistic work must have each of its elements as a necessary unit in the performance that the artist aims for, and the process of combination is what unites these elements and is what gives the work its meaning." From this standpoint, the curtain fabric design for the door of the Kaaba carries artistic design and plastic values with aesthetic, visual and tactile dimensions that embody the content of the word in a way of extreme beauty and artistic creativity.

### **3- Interpretation**

The process of interpretation introduces us to the artistic and aesthetic values and concepts of the designs of the covering of the Holy Kaaba, in addition to its expressive dimensions. Feldman (1993, p. 362) says, "Interpretation differs from description, as it includes the viewers' feelings about the content of the artistic work and the meanings it contains." Feldman (1993) also says, "Interpretation is a sentence and comment that revolves around the artistic work to make the totality of views available to the viewer into a single entity so that it becomes meaningful." Based on what was mentioned above, the researcher will interpret the set of latent meanings emerging in the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba, as the curtain of the door of the Kaaba, as a work of art, is described as beautiful as soon as some artistic foundations and principles are available, but on the condition that they are employed in an organized formulation and entity that suggests its content to produce a sense of harmony, harmony, and integration. That feeling is the value of beauty (Reid, 1981, p. 54).

Ihab Muhammad Ali (2002 AD, p. 58) explains, "An artistic work may be described as beautiful as soon as the design foundations are present in it, provided that these foundations adapt, transforming chaos into a system that suggests its distinctive content, producing a sense of harmony, harmony, and beauty, and these foundations serve as standards for aesthetic values."

The interpretation process is considered a reproduction of calligraphic formations and Arabic fonts by the researcher because through the interpretation process, the researcher wants to convey the aesthetic experience through expressive language, and this language works to interpret the artistic, plastic, design, and aesthetic values and then transform them into expressive words. The curtain of the Kaaba's door, including Arabic lines, calligraphic formations, and Islamic floral decorative units, was woven to reveal beauty and majesty within the folds of Islamic aesthetic philosophy.

The researcher believes that Arabic calligraphy cannot be separated from the rest of the artistic elements and design foundations, just as Arabic calligraphy has the technical specifications that enable it to build calligraphic formations and compositions that are evident in the curtain of the door of the Kaaba, and that the artistic design elements that were formulated, arranged and distributed according to the foundations of artistic design on the surface of the curtain The Kaaba door, or the so-called aesthetic or plastic foundations, were organized according to mutual relationships with other plastic elements adjacent to it. These elements played a prominent role in achieving the basic goal that the curtain of the Kaaba door wants to convey. The design foundations work together through the way they enter the artwork. It is impossible to perceive the rhythm of the form without calculating the balance of this rhythm and its connection to the proportionality of the shapes to each other (Desouki, 1990).

The researcher adds that Arabic calligraphy is a design element that can be formed and has its own artistic and design vocabulary; in addition to that, linear values are achieved in building calligraphic design through rhythm, unity, balance and Proportion that are produced by organizing linear relationships on the flat fabric of the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba. Abdul Redha Daoud (1997) says, "Although the art of Arabic calligraphy is based on the textual structure, from which it derives the basic justifications for its existence, it includes it and goes beyond it to a more comprehensive and broader aesthetic and semantic eloquence." Based on the above, the researcher explains that the calligraphic formations embodied on the curtain of the Kaaba's door went beyond the semantic textual content to a visual aesthetic eloquence. In addition to embodying the aesthetic images of Arabic calligraphy through calligraphic

formations of an artistic and aesthetic nature, within formations with linear, geometric and iconographic systems whose dimensions are derived from the textual meaning in a perspective sequence towards the centre of the composition, making the visual and linguistic reading of the form and text exciting and enjoyable.

Through the researcher's proposed interpretation process, she will shed light on the interpretation of the most important foundations and design principles that played a prominent role in the aesthetics of the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba.

In the curtain of the Kaaba's door, the units share the same type of calligraphy but differ in shape, size, and colour, creating a non-monotonous rhythm according to a visual perspective. That means that movement, a word synonymous with rhythm, was achieved in design through the repetitive systems that govern the vocabulary and wording of the work, and movement was achieved through the diversity of sizes and sizes of Arabic fonts and Islamic decorative units. Based on the above, the movement in the linear configurations of the curtain of the door of the Kaaba included slow and fast, according to the compositional characteristics of the lines and the direction of the repetition systems.

The researcher also adds through the interpretation process that she proposes that all the linear formations in the curtain of the Kaaba door achieve a symmetrical balance in the distribution of the linear elements, whether vertical or horizontal. Iyad Al-Husseini (2003) says, "The reliance of balance on complete symmetry in many forms raises prestige and majesty that is closely related to the content of the Qur'anic texts and the sanctity they mean." Note that balance in the visual arts is the task of compound weights, not in their sensory sense, but in their suggestive, perceptual sense. The apparent weight in a composition may vary according to its colour or shape and position (Al-Bahnasi, 1998). The researcher believes that all the linear formations in the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba, in their independent form and their various compositions, carry a balance in the spaces they contain, such as the square, rectangle, circular, or other shapes that distinguish and uniquely characterize the curtain of the door of the Kaaba.

While proportionality was achieved between the lines within the structure of the linear formations embodied in the curtain of the Kaaba door, in general, proportionality is one of the basic pillars of design relationships. As for rhythm, it created a mental movement within the units of linear formations and Islamic plant decorative units. In addition to the unit of the line (Thuluth Al-Jali line), which linked the linear elements to each other within the structure of the linear formations. The researcher believes that the set of calligraphic formations in the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba express the artistic, aesthetic and rhetorical dimensions of the content of the written text, in addition to covering the elements and foundations of artistic design. The researcher explains that the gradation was achieved in the curtain of the Kaaba door, ascending and descending, and between the two ends of the curtain in terms of the size of the line, the size of the space, and the colour tones. This gradation was used in regular degrees and inspired movement, evoking a sense of succession and rhythmic sequence.

The researcher also explains that all linear formations of various types achieve kinetic activity through multiple directions imposed by the spatial space in the composition. Spatial integration is achieved on the surface of the linear configuration, whether it has a circular, square, or rectangular pattern. It also embodies the principle of contrast between the Zainid and syllable movements within the structure of the calligraphic compositions, as it was written with a thinner pen than the pen in which the full text is written. The researcher goes by what Hussein Jarmat (2018) says: "Calligraphic compositions constituted a qualitative and structural shift in calligraphic writing. They also enriched the aesthetic and artistic values of the art of Arabic calligraphy. Thus, the artistic development in constructing calligraphic compositions turned into an intellectual development resulting from contemplation and the rich experience that formed A clear response to achieve a sober, aesthetic, artistic performance."

The researcher also explains that the calligrapher relied on using letters with similar endings to merge them so that they appear in one interconnected form to show unity, rhythm and movement at one time and at another time to form the least amount of space while adhering to the rules and principles of Arabic calligraphy (thuluth script). This overlapping and overlapping in the structure of the linear formations in the curtain of the door of the Kaaba is characterized in some formations by ease and in others by difficulty. Some calligraphic structures can be distinguished and their words read, while others are difficult to read and their written vocabulary is difficult to distinguish.

The researcher also explains that the aesthetics of Arabic calligraphy lies through creativity in drawing letters and words and creating aesthetic, artistic compositions for writing Qur'anic verses. The essence of the content of the curtain at the door of the Kaaba lies in the meaning of the Qur'anic verses. In the way Arabic calligraphy is formulated, this calligraphy carries functional, aesthetic, and spiritual values, in addition to the Islamic decorations that adorn the curtain and the wonderful harmony they form that combines shape, colour, movement, and rhythm in a fabric that completes the Islamic aesthetic vision of the curtain of the door of the Kaaba. In addition to embodying the elements (colour, line, texture, space) and the foundations of artistic design (rhythm, Proportion, balance), these foundations and elements came together to embody the aesthetic, creative and spiritual aspects in proportional, intertwined forms and harmonious relationships between them. Proportion and harmony are among the most important aesthetic rules embodied in the Kaaba Curtain. In addition to the linear rhythm that combined soft lines and geometric lines framing the space of the linear composition and present in the circular, square and rectangular shape. The elements of the linear composition were organized in an overlapping and intersecting manner due to the necessities of the available

space and to increase the carrying capacity of the text, in addition to the element of colour, considered one of the most important artistic elements.

The researcher also explains that the materials used in making the curtain and in writing calligraphic compositions and Islamic decorative units gave the curtain of the Kaaba's door high aesthetic and artistic values through the way it was processed to create a textured unit in surface and colour that arouses the pleasure of touch (as it was embroidered with threads coated with gold water and raised by 2 cm from the surface fabric). In other words, all of these raw materials and materials with which the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba was treated and the way it was formed, through which the sense of manual skill and visual response are evident, raise the aesthetic, artistic and spiritual aspect, as Arabic calligraphy gave the raw materials with which it was treated with artistic, aesthetic and spiritual values added to the value of the material itself.

Based on what was previously stated in the previous paragraphs, the researcher confirms that Arabic calligraphy is considered a design element that has the ability and flexibility to be formed with the rest of the elements and foundations of design and is distinguished by its artistic and plastic vocabulary. Among the most important design foundations formulated in designing the linear formations in the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba lie in Proportion, unity (line type), balance, rhythm, and contrast in the design of linear compositions. This design resulted from the organization of linear relationships on the work surface and the combination and union between the linear vocabulary and the elements of the artistic work. Idham Muhammad Hanash (2008) confirms this by saying, "The aesthetic concept of the art of Arabic calligraphy is based primarily on the reality of calligraphy, which is original: an effect, a shape, an image that is improved and approved in light of certain aesthetic values and standards such as weight, proportion, and others, and they represent the cognitive nerve of the theory." This artistic line.

The researcher summarizes what was previously stated through the interpretation process that she proposed by stating that the formal and textual content represents the basic essence that expresses a total unity between form and content. Also, all the calligraphic compositions and decorative vocabulary highlight the extent of the extreme skill in execution and the diversity in production between overlapping written strips and geometric shapes such as circular, rectangular, square, and iconic forms represented by lamps. In addition, all of these Arabic scripts were subject to the virtuous lineage, which means "good calligraphy," on the basis that good calligraphy is everything that combines what is appropriate for it, such as the proportionality and parallelism of the letters, the straightness of their arrangement, and their good regularity (Hanash, 2008).

#### **4- Evaluation**

Through the description, analysis, and interpretation of the plastic and design aspects of the curtain at the door of the Holy Kaaba, the important stage is the evaluation stage. The stage of issuing a judgment or evaluating an artistic work is considered one of the most difficult stages that art criticism goes through because, at this stage, the critic must give a material or moral value to the artistic work, and issuing a judgment may vary from one critic to another, and this is due to the critic's culture, inclinations, and artistic trends (Feldman, 1993). Feldman (1993) says, "Evaluation consists of giving the artistic work a rank concerning other works of the same type in terms of formal, expressive, and functional direction." Based on the above, the researcher will evaluate the aesthetic composition of Arabic calligraphy (thuluth calligraphy) embodied in the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba in terms of formal, expressive, and functional direction.

The researcher believes that the honourable kiswah was decorated with calligraphic formations and Arabic lines, from which the lights and manifestations of Qur'anic verses overflow with designs and Islamic decorative units of the utmost beauty and richness. In addition, these calligraphic formations and Arabic lines embodied in the Kaaba dress are a prominent feature in the aesthetics of the kiswah and a qualitative artistic shift in the history of the kiswah. The source of the aesthetics of the kiswah is the Islamic spirit stemming from the meanings and implications of Qur'anic verses and the way they are addressed in Arabic calligraphy in a functional and artistic aesthetic formulation at the same time.

The researcher adds that the design of the fabric of the covering of the Kaaba, in general, and the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba, in particular, is considered the finest, highest and most sacred Islamic model that was designed and embodied through the extent of the beauty and spirituality of Arabic calligraphy, calligraphic formations and Islamic decorative units. Meanwhile, the researcher confirms that the design of the door curtain and the honourable cladding is an integrated system of aesthetic, artistic, plastic, design, spiritual, historical and cultural values. The difficult equation he achieved throughout history is to combine beauty and spirituality within a precise, methodological design framework. In addition, the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba, with its decorative elements and calligraphic formations, expresses a distinct artistic calligraphy painting that rises to the level of creativity, beauty and perfection. All linear compositions are equivalent to their directive form while preserving the textual content with aesthetic, artistic unity.

The researcher adds that all the configurations in the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba confirm that all design relationships are calculated based on their functional and aesthetic value and are based on the elements and foundations of artistic design that were organized according to a systematic process studied for the sake of exemplary integration to produce the fabric of the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba.



In terms of evaluating linear formations from the plastic and design aspects, the researcher believes that their attraction towards the design space has been achieved through the qualities that intersect to achieve the requirements for the success of linear formations, which aesthetics scholars agree to include within the concept of searching for order, arrangement, and coordinated unity of the whole and its unification in it. Harmony (Jerome, 1972). That is evident in contemplating the design of the curtain at the door of the Kaaba, where we find order, unity, harmony, and harmony between the shapes, sizes, and colours of the lines and linear formations.

In addition, Arabic calligraphy carries aesthetic and spiritual values with a visual impact that makes it an essential element for decorating the fabric of the door curtain of the Holy Kaaba with the most beautiful and finest calligraphic formations and Islamic decorations that indicate the genius and skill of artistic direction. The curtain at the door of the Kaaba exudes vitality, beauty, and absolute perfection in terms of the beauty of appearance and pleasure for the eye and soul, embodied in the writing of some verses and surahs of the Noble Qur'an within calligraphic formations of an aesthetic, artistic character and in a contemporary manner.

The researcher evaluates that the design of the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba and its Islamic compositions, rhythms, formations, lines, and decorative units came as a positive response to the factors of form and content. From the language of composition and organization, its aesthetic and spiritual value was derived from the sanctity of Quranic verses, so the curtain of the door of the Kaaba acquired the majesty of meaning and the beauty of the linear composition. Movement, unity, balance and repetition are best demonstrated in the designs of linear formations and plant decorative units with an equal-dimensional decorative rhythm that emphasizes the artistic foundations and gives them a complex character that suggests direction and generates depth in the curtain design. In addition, the eye moves from one linear configuration to another and from one decorative unit to another in a sequential two-dimensional design with templates of different shapes, sizes, and colours.

The researcher evaluates the totality of the written formations embodied on the curtain regarding artistic treatment methods, technical specifications, and performance experiences as having formed a coherent discourse structure reflecting the quality of mastery, implementation, and performance. That is evident on the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba in terms of creativity and compatibility between the quality of the artistic design and the quality of the materials used, and in terms of the quality of the materials used to write the Arabic calligraphy on the covering of the Holy Kaaba in general, it expresses technical luxury. By technical luxury, we mean using materials consistent with the work's appearance, meaning, and function (Feldman, 1993).

The researcher adds that the design of the curtain fabric for the door of the Holy Kaaba, embroidered with the most beautiful Arabic calligraphy (the clear, complex Thuluth script) and Islamic decorative units, indicates the compatibility of implementation methods with the material and content. Arabic calligraphy is also considered a type of artistic expression, and through calligraphy, calligraphic formations are embodied to show us the most beautiful Quranic texts to indicate the authentic Islamic contents in the curtain of the Kaaba door that illuminates the Holy Kaaba. In other words, the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba represents an Islamic artistic painting parallel to sensation, feelings and visions and embodies the authenticity, sanctity, aesthetics and spirituality of the art of Arabic calligraphy using the finest and most valuable materials and techniques.

The researcher also believes that all calligraphic compositions carry within them the spirituality of the noble verses and their verbal meaning, in addition to the spiritual dimension represented in writing the noble verses was embodied before the artistic dimension. Because the textual content of the noble verses is a Qur'anic miracle, in addition to the effect of the colour contrast existing between the black colour embodied in the background of the covering curtain and the colours of the prominent embroidered threads in gold and silver, it had dignity, sanctity, splendour and elegance that reflects the extent of the beauty of the Qur'anic verses and makes the eye attracted to the beauty of the lines—Arabic and Islamic decorative units.

The researcher also assesses that all the calligraphic compositions in their various forms had texts distributed within the prepared space in a parallel manner in terms of filling the spaces with appropriate formation and decoration movements, in addition to the diversity of the accompanying Islamic decorative units that framed and surrounded most of the calligraphic compositions. This harmonious design in terms of organizing the elements of the calligraphic composition is due to the calligrapher, who relies on his taste and method of formulation to treat Arabic lines within the systems of calligraphic compositions in terms of distributing the space and linear mass, taking into account the parallelism between the vertical and horizontal lines.

The calligrapher supervising the design of the covering of the Holy Kaaba was extremely creative in the way he treated Arabic calligraphy in a plastic art style. In addition, this way in which Qur'anic verses were treated was done using the latest contemporary methods, which gave the calligraphic formations and Islamic decorative units a beauty that exceeded the beauty of calligraphy and decoration and went beyond that through a visual artistic language that reveals the vocabulary and contents it carries that embody the spirituality and aesthetics of Arabic calligraphy and Islamic decoration.

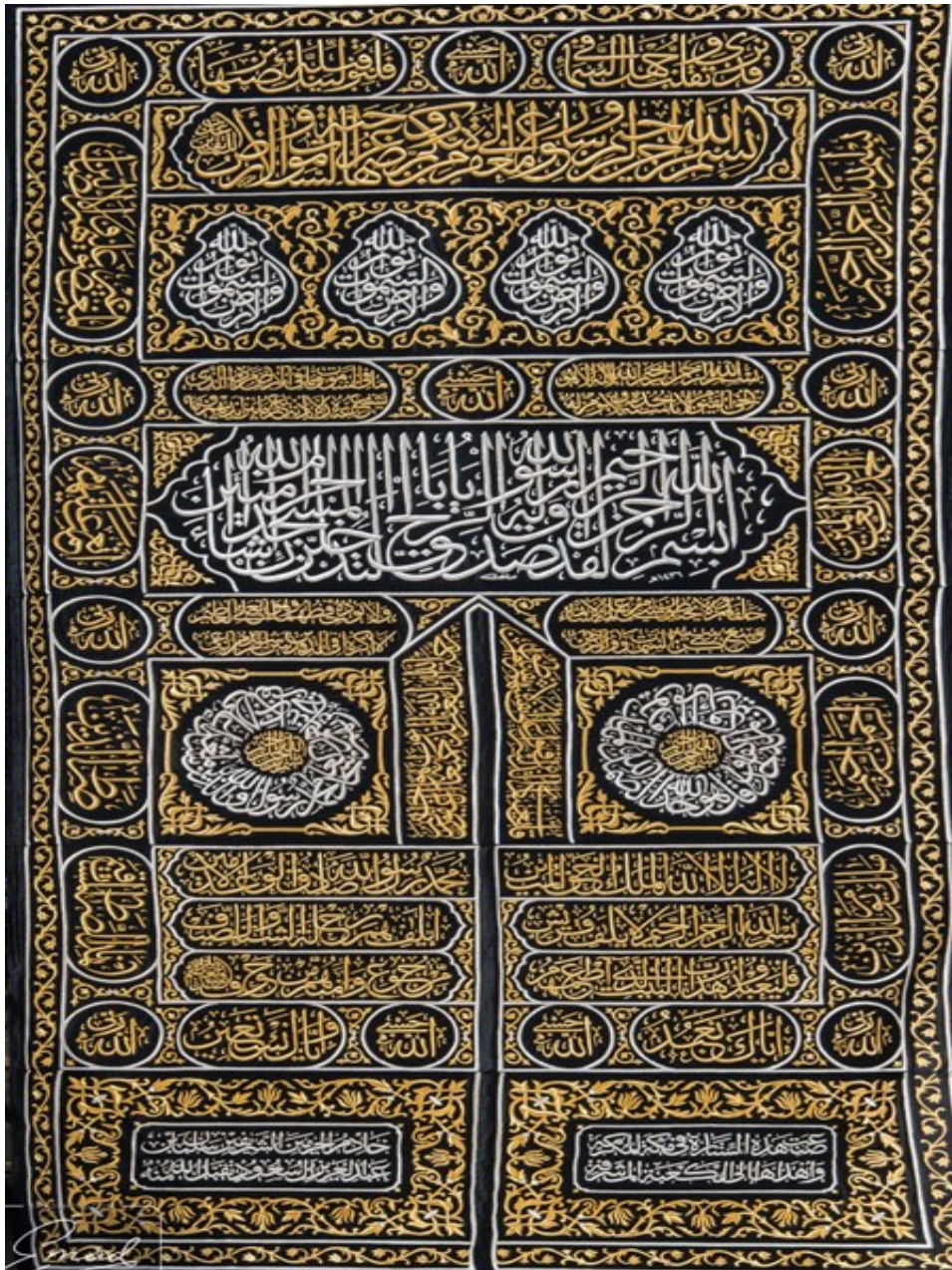
In light of the above, the researcher assesses that the calligraphic compositions that decorated the curtain of the Mushrifa Gate are not merely a collection of letters and words but rather were formulated by manipulating the spaces on which the compositions were to be created, whether they were square, rectangular, circular, geometric, or written strips or shapes. Iconic and embodied in The lamps are designed while considering the elements and foundations of

artistic design, aiming to achieve the aesthetic, functional and spiritual artistic goals of writing God's verses in a sequential recitation sequence.

The researcher adds that all the Arabic calligraphy and decorative units on the curtain of the Kaaba door are characterized by beauty, splendour, and extreme mastery. The marriage between Arabic calligraphy and Islamic decoration was to achieve limitless aesthetic values and concepts that express the unity and diversity of Islamic art. In terms of the quality of Thuluth calligraphy and its calligraphic compositions, they are characterized by cohesion, unity, and rhythm. Suhaila Al-Jubouri (1962) confirms the Thuluth script, saying, "The Thuluth script is one of the beautiful and elegant scripts, with strong performance, and a script that still maintains its survival, presence, and brilliance. It is considered one of the most famous scripts of our present era, despite the development and perfection brought to it." From this standpoint, the clear Thuluth script was used in all the calligraphic formations and compositions in the curtain of the door of the Kaaba without omitting any of the letters, and through it, the textual meaning of the noble verses was expressed to reflect the extent of the beauty and spirituality of the calligraphic compositions.

On the other hand, the researcher confirms, through her evaluation of the design of the curtain at the door of the Holy Kaaba, that all the elements and artistic foundations made the curtain an aesthetic masterpiece with a captivating charm, an attractive appearance, and an unparalleled Islamic artistic character. The covering of the Kaaba, in general, has sanctity and spirituality and expresses spiritual beauty on the one hand. On the other hand, it has aesthetic characteristics and features of a plastic artistic nature, and there is no parallel at all in Islamic art in terms of beauty, reverence, prestige, and sanctity that characterize the honourable kiswah, to the point of miraculousness and creativity in sincerity, mastery, and artistic beauty.

Finally, the researcher evaluates that the majesty and great beauty of the honourable kiswah (the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba) confirm the extent of the artistic, aesthetic and spiritual values possessed by the art of Arabic calligraphy when it assumes the function of beautifying the honourable kiswah and its curtain. The calligraphic formations that appeared within the folds of the curtain added beauty and visual rhythmic elegance to it and enhanced the sense of the aesthetic and artistic values of Arabic calligraphy, in addition to its spiritual value, revealing to us a great Islamic artistic work characterized by the spirit of mastery, precision of execution, and the beauty of calligraphic formations. In other words, the calligraphic formations that appear on the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba are nothing but a unique and great work of quality, beauty and perfection through which the authenticity and aesthetics of Islamic arts are embodied, represented in the artistic composition of Arabic calligraphy and Islamic decorative units, and from them emerges the philosophy of aesthetic Islamic art that carries within it the adoration of And sanctification of the Sacred House of God, which linked the historical and Islamic character of this ancient art.



Model (1): A detailed picture of the curtain at the door of the Holy Kaaba, 2014 (Photo by Imad Al-Husseini)

<http://www.emadphoto.com/#/makkah>

## 5. Conclusions

Through what was previously presented, the study concluded that the process of applying artistic criticism to the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba revealed that the design of Arabic calligraphy and calligraphic formations has creative, aesthetic aspects in terms of aesthetic and spiritual values and the artistic and design elements and foundations that the curtain includes. The linear formations' plastic components and artistic methods decorate the curtain with multiple embroideries and patterns. Also, by applying Feldman's steps of artistic criticism to the calligraphic formations in the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba, it became clear to the researcher that the Arabic letter was used as an aesthetic tool and its meaning as a letter had transcended to another meaning, being a rhythmic system through which calligraphic formations and compositions were organized, even though he retained his subjective experience as a readable element. Despite the overlap and intertwining, it has become a plastic arts language with an aesthetic, artistic dimension that decorates the curtain and links aesthetic and design values by adopting an organized geometric unit. In addition, the study concluded that using geometric shapes represented by (circle-rectangle-square added an aesthetic relationship between the structure of the linear formations in the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba and made its external form carry aesthetic and geometric artistic qualities simultaneously. Finally, it became clear through study and analysis that the aesthetic composition of Arabic calligraphy embodied in the curtain of the door of the Holy Kaaba is compatible with the Western perspective of artistic criticism, and this is one of the miracles of the aesthetics of the dress of the Holy Kaaba.

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