An Investigation of the Impact of Baghdad and Seljuk Miniature Painting Schools on Minai Wares

Solmaz Mansouri[1] , Ahmad Salehi Kakhaki[1,] * and Mitra Shateri[2]

[1]*Department of archaeology, Faculty of Preservation and Conservation, Art University of Isfahan, Isfahan, Iran.*

[2]*Department of Archaeology, Shahr-e Kord University, Shahr-e Kord, Iran.*

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Pottery art in Iran reached its apex during the Seljuk and Kharazmshahi eras. In these two periods, artists produced high-quality wares, with Minai decorations which are considered as masterpieces of Islamic art from an aesthetical point of view. These wares were decorated with motifs from manuscripts illustrated by artists from Baghdad and Seljuk miniature painting schools portraying epic stories in the Shahnameh or love stories in Nezami's Khamse. Although very noticeable, influences on Minai wares from miniature works of Baghdad and Seljuk schools have received little attention by researchers. This led researchers to investigate the similarities of motifs remaining from Baghdad and Seljuk schools in works such as Varagha and Golshah, Kalileh-and-Dimna and Hariri Maghamat to recognise their influences on the motifs of Minai wares. The main purpose of this paper is to study and explore the impact of Baghdad and Seljuk miniature painting schools on Minai wares and evaluate their respective influences on Minai wares. The methodological approach applied in this study includes historical-comparative analysis as well as researches in libraries and museums resources. Illustrated manuscripts belonging to Baghdad and Seljuk schools were identified, their similarities and differences were singled out and finally their influences on Minai wares were evaluated.

Keywords: *Miniature, Baghdad school, Seljuk school, Minai wares.*

Introduction

Following the arrival of Islam in Iran, due to the limitations put on the use of precious metals such as Gold and Silver, Iranian artists chose the surface of wares and pottery vessels as the best alternative to show their art, depicting beautiful motifs by means of miniature and other techniques. There's a strong possibility that miniature artists during Seljuk, Kharazmshahi and other historical periods, decorated the wares with motifs retrieved from epic and historical Persian stories and tales. The emergence of Baghdad or Iraq school goes back to fifth century AH or a little while before that (Zaki 1977). It was believed that it has a more Arabic nature rather than Iranian (Zaki 1977). At the same time there was existed a school in Iran which shared general similarities with it. It is however advisable to label the common motifs in Iraq and Baghdad as "Baghdad and Seljuk schools' motifs" since these patterns were widespread all over the realm of Seljuk dynasty, not just in Baghdad or in Iraq. Seljuk period is identified with the formation of a powerful and central reign in Iran and the whole community of painters including Arab and Iranian ones were at the order of kings. Generally, major artists in this era were not Turks, rather they were Arab and Iranian ones working for Seljuk kings (Pope 2008). In addition to exploring the manuscripts and historical references on the issue of the miniature in Baghdad and Seljuk schools, some literature concerning with historical trend of miniature, different miniature schools in Iran, and their evolution in investigated (Zaki 1993; Tajvidi 1996; Bunion 1999; Soodavar 2001; Ken bay 2008; Ettinghausen 1977 & Ackerman 1986). Despite the extensive studies conducted on Seljuk pottery (Bahrami 1948) and on the history of pottery and miniature in Iran (Pope 2008; Wilkinson 1959; Fehervari 2000; Wattson 2004 & Khalili 2008), there is no comparative account on the influences of miniature on Minai wares.

*Corresponding author e-mail address: salehi.k.a@aui.ac.ir

Therefore, in order to have a better understanding of Minai wares' motifs, to find out the roots of this harmony and beauty and to give value to the artistic products of the past, it is crucial to conduct an aesthetic investigation on Iranian miniature art.

Discovering of the relationship between miniatures in illustrated manuscripts of Baghdad and Seljuk schools and motifs on Minai wares is one of the fundamental objectives of this study (Table 1& 2).

The Art of Miniature of the Baghdad School

Baghdad school, which is the first school in Islamic miniature art, is also known as Beyn-Al-Nahreyn (Mesopotamia) or Abbasid school (Mohammad Hasan 1993). This school started to thrive from the beginning of Abbasids era and continued toward the end of it (132-656 AH), continuing to be existent.

Even after the emergence of Tabriz (Ilkhani) school (Ajand 2010). Baghdad and Mosul were the main centers of this school, but the characteristics of their art spread all over Abbasids dynasty, even in Spain and Sicily (Gray 2005), including Baghdad, Iran, Egypt and North Africa (Akashe 2001). It seems that in these centers, some of the Iranian artists and Nestorian Christians were working (Zaki 1993), because their influences is evident in the pictures of these manuscripts (Akbari & Kashani 2009). It is noteworthy that in this school, the primary motifs were those of interest of common people but gradually the themes of these paintings extended to other ones, including scientific, moral, didactic, love and lyrical themes (Konnel 2005). The prominent features of this school were the combination of text and miniature and the deletion of cadres or margins, meaning that there was no borderline separating paintings from the surrounding text and the background is created through the paper's original color. This kind of framing helped them to begin elaborating on the topic of the book. Motifs of human bodies were adapted and verified based on Islamic principles (Morris 2001). The motifs in the books following this branch of art are brief, short, free and full of spirits (Papadopoulo 1979). Natural elements were added to portray features of the landscape. These natural motifs were depicted more arbitrarily than the human ones and the natural scenery was limited to some trees, flowers and plants. At least, in some of the instances the presentation of the third dimension can be perceived. Generally, the spatial features and its details are successfully depicted, leading to the success of the overall composition. The miniature motifs are still in a basic and elementary form, despite the huge developments in the presentation of the world around (Grabar & Ettinghausen 2005). Bright colors were used, including brown, red, black, white, golden, silver, purple, green, etc. We can say that the decorating impact of strong colors such as gold went to the extreme in this period (Bunion *et al.* 2004). Several books were illustrated according the style of this school, such as "Alteriagh", "Albeytareh", "Kalileh and Dimnah", "Hariri Maghamat" and other illustrated scientific and literary works. These works of art are ranked the same as western works and even in some cases they are far better compared to western works (Konnel 2005).

The Art of Miniature of the Seljuk School

Preferably, some of the paintings and miniatures can be called Seljuk Miniatures since these old manuscripts were developed in different places, each located distant from the other, but all within the Seljuk kingdom (Pope 2008). Seljuk dynasty ruled over Iran through fifth and sixth centuries AH and gave a great impact on art, science and industry (Grabar & Ettinghausen 2005). During the Seljuk era, the most important and influencing political centers were located outside Iran: firstly in Arabia, then in Syria (Umayyad dynasty) and after that in Iraq (Abbasids dynasty). We can obtain some scattered information about the developments in the process of creating pictorial motifs from historical, literary and artistic documents remained from Umayyads and Abbasids periods. The art of creating pictures along with texts gained a highly important and special place at the courts of Seljuk dynasty, borrowing elements from old traditions of art history such as Sasanian, Buddhist, Manichaean, Christian and Chinese ones (Bunion *et al.* 2004). Seljuk painters sometimes were also

the calligraphers of the books, and were attempting at specifying relevant parts of the stories written in the books by means of miniature motifs. The scenes created through these motifs were often empty, exaggerative and symmetric, using a simple composition and largely dependent upon the subject of the books (Filiz 1986). This dependence on the subject of the books is the main distinctive feature of the miniatures of this period. Other features of the art of the Seljuk miniature school includes the limited use of different colors, the use of bright colors, an overall rough appearance, without any delicacy but at the same time very peculiar. Although the depiction of human or animal bodies was not allowed in Islam, it was ignored after a while and it gradually became common again (Akashe 2001), paving the way to revive Iranian style of painting during the Mongol period.

Minai Wares

Minai or "rainbow" wares were artistically developed commodities created and produced in different shapes and styles by Iranian artists from sixth and seventh centuries AH to the beginning of Mongolian period. Rodgers believes that the most important factor in the development of Minai wares which was originated from glass production that was common in Euphrates basin, and then moved to Syria and Egypt from 490 AH/1100 AC. In addition, this kind of art became prevalent in Iran in 575 AH taking on a more professional nature (Rodgers 2005). The oldest found artifacts displayed in Metropolitan museum are two bowls tracing back to 582 and 583 AH (Lane 1971), while the most recent ones refers to 640 AH which are exhibited in Victoria and Albert museums (Bahrami 1948). These wares display different colors such as Matt white, blue, green, brown, red, black and golden on their glaze (Smitt 1999) , whereas colors such as turquoise blue and sky blue are used mostly under their glaze (Fehervari 2000). Generally, these wares were firstly made of white synthetic materials, then they were covered with matt white glaze and in some cases they were finally covered with matt turquoise color which was extended to the outer surface of stand and then it covered the vertical part of the circle consisting the stand of the ware and then the polychrome color was used on the glaze (Groube 2010). To decorate these wares, motifs of human, animal, plants, geometrical shapes, inscriptions and various creatures were utilized (Groube 2010). Some of these wares contain inscriptions and signatures of potters such as Aboozeyd kashani, Ali-Ibn-yousef, Abutaher Hussain and Hussain, inside and outside of them, but it is hard to find relevant information about where they were produced and who ordered them. For this reason, we cannot make sure about their place of production which are claimed to be the cities such as Kashan, Rey and Saveh, famous for the production of Minai wares. In addition, the existing samples were not obtained through scientific and formal explorations, so it is very difficult attribute them to a specific historical period. The subject matter of most of the motifs on these wares were mostly taken from Iranian ancient stories such as Ferdowsi's Shahname and in a few cases from the themes of Nezami's Khamse. In conclusion, it can be said that Minai wares evolved in two major periods; the first period which includes motifs of geometrical shapes, plants and flowers that usually covers the whole interior surface of the ware coincided with the beginning of sixth century AH, and the second one belongs to Kharazmshahi dynasty when the motifs of human bodies and animals were gradually added to the previous ones" (Wiet 1952). The most common types of the Minai wares produced in these two periods are plates, bowls with smooth edge and elongated body, with round stands, small and big urns for the purpose of keeping water in them, carafe, goblet, ewer, flat plates, tall mugs with a turnip-like body and with a short stand. Regarding the shape and decorative motifs, these wares were produced in a way that the motifs in the middle seemed to be more voluminous. In addition to the mentioned types of wares, other methods of decorating Minai wares were perforation and gold-binding. From the point of view of application it can be said that Minai wares were not likely to be utilized as everyday utensils, while they were commonly used as luxurious and fancy objects (Groube 2010).

The Influence of Literature on the Motifs of Minai Wares

There is an internal and inherent relationship between Persian literature and its art which shows

that both entities are created based on a single mindset and culture which are harmoniously related to each other. With regard to the link between literature and art in Islam medieval centuries (Seljuk and Kharazmshahi dynasty), the miniature art flourished along with the literature of its own age (Pope 1759), in a way that we can see they are incorporated into each other. The miniature art thrived a short while after literature flourished. Afterwards, the miniaturists applied literary concepts in painting domains, preserving the principles and technical rules, already influenced by literature (Removal & Apolonia Qua 2002). This golden period was actually the period of dissemination of Iranian culture, in which the pottery artists, with the help of lines and colors and with inspirations from poetry could design the best Minai wares out of symbolic meanings and concepts taken from Nezami's and Ferdowsi's poetry (Poop 1999). These artists skillfully used colors and motifs relevant to the theme of the stories, poems, and also the technical features of Persian poems such as rhyme, weight, symmetry of speech; in addition, plot and the actions of the people in the stories have been shown in the composition of the paintings which is illustrative of a kind of structural similarity between poetry and paintings (Ashrafi Moghaddam 1988). The pottery artist also uses the motifs from literary and mythological stories and attempts to illustrate them with the help of drawing different lines and human motifs. In fact, the framework used was the poem which contained the necessary features of national life. These features were more evident in Ferdowsi's works including horsemen, Zahak Mardush, Bahram-and-Azadeh, Khosrow-and-Shirin and Leyli-and-Majnun (Pope 1999). The marked similarities between the motifs on wares and their borrowing from literature show one of the unique features of the subject matters of motifs made on Minai wares. For instance, the motif on the bowl, painted by Aboozeyd in sixth century AH, is a borrowing of the Varaghah-and –Golshah by Ayooghi, which is descriptive of two lovers who are instances of the most beautiful characters in literary resources (Fig. 1). The miniature artist also follows specific procedures. The lovers with a corona above their heads are depicted very closely similar to each other. The similarities in clothes and faces make distinguishing their gender impossible. The miniature artist put the motifs in succession by applying the horizontal composition principles since he can show the plot and the sequence of the events in the story. It is interesting that as the poet begins to tell the story, the miniature artist tries to match it with the motifs of symmetrical and flat plants and flowers. In an instance taken from the story of Bahram-and-Azadeh, the artist depicts Azadeh's personality traits and the details of the story in a very interesting scene. Bahram took his own beloved, Azadeh, on a hunting trip to play harp for him.



Fig. 1: *a Minai bowl, Varagha-and-Golshah, Late sixth century AH (After: www.metmuseum.org. 2013)*

"He went to the preserve on day with his harp player, alone."
"The color of the face was extravagantly red so calling this Roman woman Azadeh, is wrong."
"The free cypress, Azadeh, sat on the camel's back, with a harp in her hands."
(Ferdowsi 2007, p.419)

One day, when Bahram was busy hunting and Azadeh was playing harp, Azadeh wanted him to hunt an extraordinary prey for her. He tried to shoot a deer by an arrow, but it hit the deer on its ear. When the animal raised his foot to scratch its ear, another arrow is thrown toward it and joins his foot and ear. Meanwhile, not only does Azadeh encourage or compliment the prince, but also blames him for that and is dissatisfied with what he did. At this moment,

Bahram goes crazy, hits her and causes her to fall on the ground. He even goes further to torture her and riding his camel, he tramples her to death, tearing her body severely badly (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2: *a Minai bowl with inscription motifs, sixth and seventh century AH (After: www.metmusem.org,2013)*

"He sewed deer's head, ears and foot together with an arrow, and Azadeh felt sorrow for that deer."
"Hitting her on the camel's back, Bahram took Azadeh down on the earth."
"Lying on the earth, Bahram made his camel to run over Azadeh and made her body bleed."
(Ferdowsi 2007, p. 419)

This event was a good starting point for many artists which was used to create a huge number of works. The interesting point in these motifs is that in the first scene of the story, we can see the king on his horse, pulling the arrow, while Azadeh is illustrated behind him on her camel, playing harp. There is also another horseman that accompanies Bahram and his beloved. The rest of the story is depicted like this in a small dish; on the one hand, he paints the injured deer, with head and ear and foot joined together, but on the other hand, we can see Azadeh and his sorrowful destiny, painted through an injured face, with an expensive dress and a crown on his head, died under camel's steps. It is important to consider that the cameleer's face and the harp player are so similar that we cannot distinguish their gender. Their faces are round like the moon, they have arc eyebrows, nice eyes, small nose and lips that are as small as the buds. Based on the conception of beauty at that time, these features are regarded by the producers of this bowl as the best facial features for a beautiful woman (Behnam 1963).

"Entering the garden, Bahram Gur looked at everywhere and everything quickly."
"He saw a lake in the middle of the garden, an old man sitting across it."
"The garden was so beautiful and colorful and there was everything in it."
"Three beautiful girls were sitting there, having a turquoise crown on their heads."
"Their faces were like spring, they were tall, they had long hair and beautiful eyebrows."

A Comparison Between Motifs on Minai Wares and Manuscripts of the Baghdad-Seljuk Schools

Diverse conditions existed in Iran during Islamic period which led to the creation and development of miniature practices for both scientific manuscripts such as Khavas-Al-Advieh, Galenus and Mofid-Al-khas and literary works in the area of didactic poetry and prose such as Samak E Ayyar, Hariri Maghamat, Kalile-and-Dinmnah and advisory and love stories such as Varagha and Golshah. The nature and quality of art works on Minai wares displays this evolution. Considering the link between these two cultural resources with regard to style, application method and the motifs used, we can infer some information about the social and political conditions in these historical periods (Ettinghausen & Yarshater 2000). In Kashan, Rey and Save which are the main production centers of these artefacts, there are distinguishing features in terms of color, motif and special motifs which separates these places from the other centers, each one resembling one of the two Seljuk and Baghdad schools based on style and manner of production. For instance, wares produced in Kashan have large-sized motifs, those produced in Rey have small-sized motifs, and those products in Saveh enjoy a mixture of large and small motifs on wares.

Generally, there are two or more simultaneous similarities in motifs and composition of motifs in Minai wares from Baghdad and Seljuk schools. The

first group are bodily features (including position, clothes, snood, ornaments) pointing to human actions which are exaggerated sky, trees, ponds, animals, birds, plants for the depiction of exterior places. In addition to tents, gates and furniture are used to depict the interior places and closed environments. These similarities help us to discover the influences of miniature in pictorial manuscripts of Baghdad and Seljuk schools on Minai wares and specific similarities existing in their motifs. In the next part, we will investigate features of Miai wares produced in Kashan, Rey and Saveh Minai and a comparative account of some selected pictorial manuscripts from both Baghdad and Seljuk schools will be presented.

A Comparison Between Motifs on Kashan Minai Wares and Some Selected Manuscripts of the Baghdad and Seljuk Schools

There is not that much variety in Kashan Minai wares in terms of diversity of motifs. The stories depicted on these wares are either about the conditions of their own age or about the people's relationship and their solidarity. These motifs clearly convey information about luxury aspects of events. The small range of subject matters is completed by a few ornamental principles and secondary motifs. The surface of Kashan Minai wares is divided into different parts by using miniature frameworks and margins. The motifs on these wares are created using thin and dark lines, and they show different motifs including one or two seated humans drinking or riding a horse in large scales. In some of them, there is a motif of a king or a prince sitting on his throne, with attendants and fellows around them, in decorated clothes, having round faces, with delicate bodies and long hairs that show the old standards of beauty in Iran. We can see motifs of geometrical shapes, animals, plants and flowers, sky and fishes in the pond as well. The important point is that, though being common, these motifs occupy a large portion of the ware's surface. The background and the outer side of Kashan Minai ware are decorated with a series of big palm leaves, small palm trees and plant-like motifs. On the edge of these wares, we can see arced, lunate, simple and free Arabesque or plant-like motifs and the inside inscription of these wares are made within an almost wide stripe which is located below the edge, containing writings in Kufic script with themes such as pray, majesty, justice, prosperity, liberality, magnanimity and eternal life for the artist of that work. In addition, on the outer surface of the ware, we can see inscriptions, sharing the same features in a horizontal order, while they are less decorative (Figs. 3 & 4, A-D).

Samak-E-Ayyar is the manuscript which is used as the criterion, for the authenticity of the work as belonging to Iran and based on which other works are judged. This work was decorated with motifs created by 'Sadegh Ibn Abulqasim Shirazi ' and it contains stories of 'Shams and Shamat' (Pope 2008). In 'Shams and Shamat' and the motifs on Kashan Minai wares by Abuzeyd there are several feature such as luxury, perpetuation and the relationship of a couple, the use of literary themes, limiting principles concerning primary and secondary motifs, one-colored background, the use of thin and colored lines around the bodies with round faces, delicate parts and long hairs on their shoulders, with similar hats on their heads in garments with different and colorful motifs such as Arabesque. In addition, there are motifs of trees and flowers in the center of cadre or symmetrically beside the pictures and birds' motifs placed above horizontal cadre. Kufic script inscriptions are placed within a quite wide strip, colored with green, brown, beige, red, light and dark blue, with overall round composition, following Seljuk miniature style, reflecting water which resembles a part of the sky and a lake. Apart from the above mentioned similarities, the main difference between these two styles lies in the fact that in Kashan Minai wares, fishes are painted in the lake, while in the second one, Shams and Shamat are painted in such lakes. Generally, in the manuscripts, the motifs are much more limited than Minai wares (Figs. 5 & 6).

Besides, there are similarities between Varagha and Golshah by A'yughi which has lovely and lyrical theme, and a picture from Kashan Minai ware which shows the picture of two lovers. The difference between these two works is that in Varagha and Golshah, the couple are standing, while in Minai ware, they are sitting. In both motifs, the couple are talking or flirting, with round faces and



Fig. 3: *Minai wares (A-C) depicting two lovers with each other, Kashan, sixth and seventh centuries AH (After: www.metmuseum.org)*



Fig. 4: *Minai wares depicting the prince riding a horse, Kashan, sixth and seventh centuries AH (After: www.metmuseum.org,)*

oval eyes, with long plait hair on shoulders, in long simple gowns with geometrical or arabesque motifs in red, green, golden and blue colors, corona around lovers' heads, drawing dark colors around motifs, simple trees, spiral flowers and branches between, around or at times on the ground which fills all the empty places within the scene and colors such as yellow, beige, dark and light brown, purple, pink, green, blue, orange and red are seen. The existence of Naskh inscription, above and below the picture in square cadre and flying bird motif made differences in Varagha and Golshah manuscript (Figs. 7 & 8). Another motif from the same manuscript shows the fight between Varagha and Golshah on horse, with the motif of Bahram and Azadeh on their camel on a Rey Minai ware which is elated to theme of adventurous stories of Shahname and love scenes respectively. The similarities between these two include, the existence of another horseman, little and unclear faces, decorated snood, the existence of arabesque trees, round composition, clear coloration and inscriptions around the picture in the cadre. The difference arises from this fact that in the motif in the manuscript, the script is Ta'liq, while on the Minai ware, the script is Kufic (Figs. 9 & 10). Generally, Kashan Minai wares and to some extent Rey's wares are significantly influenced by Samak-E-Ayyar and Varagha and Golshah manuscripts.



Fig. 5: *Shams and Shamat, Samak-E-Ayyar, fifth century AH, Seljuk school (After: Pope, 2008, p. 815)*

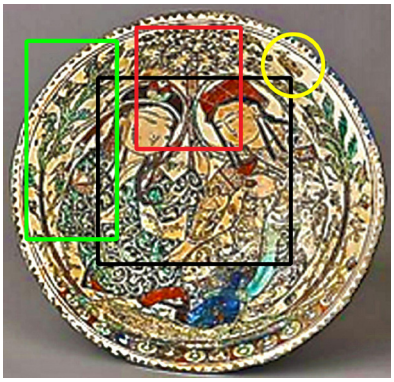


Fig. 6: *Minai ware depicting a couple talking, Kashan, late sixth century AH (After: www.metmuseum.org)*



Fig. 7: *conversation between Varagha and Golshah, couple,Varagha and Golshah, fifth century AH, Seljuk school (After: greatestbattles.iblogger.org)*



Fig. 8: *Conversation between Kashan Minai ware, sixth century AH (After: www.metmeuseum.org)*



Fig. 9: *fight between Varagha and Golshah, fifth century AH, Seljuk school (After: greatestbattles.iblogger.org)*



Fig. 10: *Bahram and Azadeh on a Minai bowl from Rey, sixth century AH (After: www.metmuseum.org)*

A comparison Between Motifs on Rey Minai Wares and Some Selected Manuscripts of the Baghdad and Seljuk Schools

Rey Minai wares are known for their little and miniature motifs. Because of their size and their imitation from manuscripts, we can call them as miniature motifs. The themes for Rey Minai wares are far more limited than Kashan Minai wares. In this style, the motifs are created haphazardly but their coloration is done more accurately and with paying more attention to details. For instance, parts of the face and other details are drawn without considering details and in most cases they are unclear and mingled, but clothes are depicted with more details and we can see minor details such as decorating strips on the clothes, arabesque motifs and palm trees in correct places. The major part of the picture is specified for kings on their thrones and

horsemen in little sizes around them. These pictures are mixed with geometrical and arabesque motifs. The landscapes around these motifs are generally consisting of little trees, with one-big branches and little dots representing bosoms, two birds with a rhomboid arabesque motif between them. It is important to consider that most of these motifs are common both in margins and decorated frames and they are used mostly for covering all the surface of the ware. The motif "chain and line" is used in different forms in the lowest part of the motif like a series of palm trees for the purpose of separating different parts of it and sometimes a combined triangular motif hanging with arabesque flower branch is used instead of chain and line motif. Inscriptions and prayers for the owner of the ware are seen and there are also some Persian quatrains which are similar to quatrains written on Kashan Minai wares. Some of the motifs in Minai wares of Rey are taken from Minai motifs of Kashan. For instance, some of the wares contain frames with pictures of famous people with horsemen or small-sized animal motifs are placed around the main ones that compared to Kashan wares, having the same elements, enjoys from a better quality which reveals the close relationship of these two centers with each other (Fig. 11). Generally, considering the differences in details in most of Ray wares, we can argue that all of them are created using the same method and the combined factors are representative of the common style of making Minai wares in Rey. Galenus manuscript which is a medical work written by Galen and probably it is illustrated in Mosul, the center of Baghdad school (Fig. 12) and Mofid Alkhas which by Razi (Fig. 14), contain motifs on medical, scientific and advisory themes which are similar to Rey Minai work in terms of attention to details. In one of motifs in Galenus manuscript, some of the main motifs such as horsemen in front of each other, with round faces and being inaccurate toward details, short hair falling on the neck, simple round hats, long gowns with arabesque and geometrical motifs and at times without any motif at all, with surrounding environment representing Mesopotamian and Iranian features, corona around heads, flying birds above and below their heads, creatures, trees with small and symmetrical leaves in the middle and around bodies in regular intervals, inscriptions with Kufic script in a wide strip and above the cadre or around the picture, small part of sky and earth, with creatures and plants on the ground, use of colors such as beige, brown, sky blue, green, red, ochre and black, are similar to the motif of Minai bowl (Figs. 12 & 13).

Another common feature of Razi's Mofid Alkhas with Rey Minai wares is the motif of two individuals in front of each other, talking, while there is a plant in the hands of one of them; they have short black hair, long garments with arabesque motifs and the colors used are beige, brown, ochre and black and round composition is used (Figs. 14 & 15). The king who is talking in Andarznameh is similar to Rey Minai wares with regard to didactic and literary themes and motifs, simple, round and dependent on subject matter composition, the existence of the King, advising his attendants with simple faces, depicted without any details or accuracy, childish eyes, long gowns with arabesque motifs with round simple hats or turban, brushing up while representing the pictures, joinery, use of matt colors such as beige, brown, ochre, red and green, Kufic inscriptions lacking any cadre surrounding the motifs in contrast to inscriptions in Rey Minai wares which have a cadre around them (Figs. 13-15)

A Comparison Between Motifs on Saveh Minai Wares and Some Selected Manuscripts of the Baghdad and Seljuk Schools

In Saveh Minai wares, most of the motifs are miniature but large-sized. The coloration process occurs with precision and attention to details and also the sketches are made with thin but dark ones. Saveh pottery artists combined and changed primary and central motifs of Kashan and secondary motifs of Rey which resulted in new forms of artefacts, revealing that the three groups of artists are in direct contact with each other. For instance, the artist made large motifs with details similar to Kashan style and created secondary motifs without accuracy, similar to Rey style on Minai wares. One of the distinguishing features of Saveh pottery is the compactness and size of the motifs on the surface of it, recruiting subject matters such as horse riders, sitting people, princes and their attendants similar to Kashan style, with round faces, delicate bodies



Fig. 11: *Minai wares (A-D) with horse-riders motif, sixth and seventh centuries AH (After: www.metmuseum.org. 2013)*



Fig. 12: *two individuals in front of each Mofid Alkhas, fifth ventury AH, Seljuk school (After: Pope, 2008, p. 86)*



Fig. 13: *two kings in front of each other, Razi's other on a Rey Minai bowl, sixth and seventh centuries AH (After: www.Metmuseum.org, 2013)*



Fig. 14: *A king while talking, Andarznameh, fifth century AH, Seljuk school (After: greatestbattles.iblogger.org, 2014)*



Fig. 15: *The king and his attendants, Rey Minai bowl, sixth and seventh century AH (After: www.Metmusem.org, 2013)*

and long hairs, with a little extravagance about their beauty and roundedness of their faces, in clothes with geometrical shapes in different sizes, animals such as dog, lion, bull and in some cases elephants in different sizes, trees, plants and lakes, often depicted in the surrounding garden or yard an motifs such as trees, plaid page, plants, sun shade, swimming pool and some writings below the main scene are among the common or similar features. These sketches are surrounded with different motifs with different combinations and complexities such

as round palms, big palms in the form of a heart, chain and simple line, a row of dots and little commas, some zigzag lines, role-shaped ornaments and snail shapes are extended over the surface of the ware and they are separated from each other to create a lighter composition. In addition, in Saveh Minai wares, secondary motifs are surrounded with inscriptions with Naskh script, among miniature rows, without any reference to the pictures and mostly without the accuracy of Kufic script, that are decorated with shininess which is sometimes separated by small decorated frameworks (Fig. 18, A-D). In general, considering the limitations put on subject matter, the visualizations are comparable to those handwritings in the same age with regard to both combination and design. A motif taken from Khavas-Al-Adviyeh manuscript, translation of "Matrica Medica" written by Discourdis, Abdollah-Ibn-Fazl, we can see how he visualizes the preparation method of medicines and surgeons at work accompanied by some landscapes of individual trees (Figs. 16 & 18) which are similar to the motifs on Saveh Minai wares from many perspectives including: individualized make up and decoration of bodies sitting with a small dish in their hands, simple faces with extended noses which is filled with wisdom and accuracy, wide round hats with lots of decorations on them, brushing up all the motifs with a black brush, use of a cadre for secondary motifs such as columns and curtain, corona around peoples head, humans and animals looking at something above their heads, in front of them or outside the cadre, symmetrical subjects in the cadre, use of Kufic script and colors such as light and dark brown, red, yellow, green and blue as flat forms and sometimes we can feel the existence of the third dimension. In the motif belonging to the companion of Abu Zeyd and his followers in Hariri Maghamat manuscript, that by using eloquent and poem-like (full of Saj') style, is placed in the category of realistic and moral stories primarily serious but satiric and funny in reality, the central role is played by Abu Zeyd Soroji that was usually in search for justice. He narrated stories for all groups of people that they liked. Some of the features are similar to the motif of prince and audience on Saveh Minai wares including: theme, overall composition, sitting people as a group and one person talking to them, simple faces with extended nose, filled by excitement, turban or simple round hats, expensive frizzy clothes with arabesque motifs, the creation of cadre by columns except for Rey wares in which these cadres are made with plant motifs, drawing line with black color around the motifs and shapes, use of colors such as red, yellow, green, purple and golden as flat and limited. With regard to insufficient familiarity with third dimension in motifs and Kufic script, the similarity can be summarized as similarities in delicacy, beauty, composition and scientific, moral and didactic themes in both artifacts (Figs. 19 & 20). The common features between motifs in Kalileh-and –Dimnah from early fourth century, illustrated by Ahmad Samani by the help of Chinese painters (Figs. 21-22) and the motif of prince and his audience on Saveh Minai wares is that the motifs are small simple, naïve, sitting and talking, long faces, with diagonal oval eyes, small mouth and black hair, corona around their head, frizzy clothes and filled with flower motifs, humans looking opposite side and outside the cadre, lack of volume processing and light shades, colorful Kufic inscriptions with colors such as beige, milky, brown, ochre, green and blue.



Fig. 16: *Minai wares, horse-riders motif, Saveh, sixth and seventh centuries AH (A_D) (After: www.memuseum.org)*

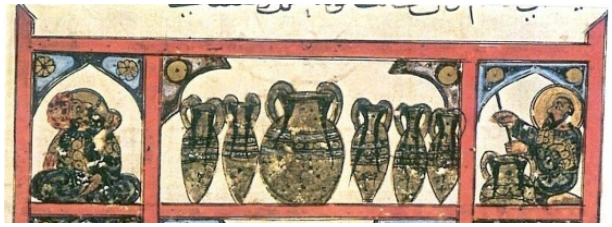


Fig. 17: *sitting people, Khavas-Al-Adviyeh, Sixth century AH, Baghdad school (After: Ettinghausen, 1977, p. 78)*



Fig. 18: *a person sitting on a Minai bowl, Saveh, Seventh centrury AH (After: www.Metmusem.Org , 2013)*



Fig. 19: *Aboozeyd and his audience, Hariri Maghamat, sixth century AH (After: Ettinghausen, 1977, p. 79)*



Fig. 20: *The prince and his audience on a Minai bowl (After:www.Metmuseum.org, 2013)*



Fig. 21: *A young man retells his story, Kalile- and-fifth century AH, Seljuk school (After:Pope, 2008, p. 815)*



Fig. 22: *Prince and his audience on a Saveh bowl seventh century, Minai AH (After: www.Metmuseum.org, 2013)*

Conclusions

Minai or "rainbow" wares represented a completely developed artistic phenomenon in the sixth and seventh centuries AH. Minai wares were produced in different forms at cities such as Kashan, Rey and Saveh. One of the prominent features of these Minai wares was their beautiful decoration and the diversity of their motifs, which were based on past traditions and events used as a source of inspiration to create different scenes depicting several subjects, from war to love and intimacy. These motifs closely reflected people's living style at that age Instead, as far as the manuscripts are concerned, the motifs of both Baghdad and Seljuk schools were quite similar to each other. In their turn, these motifs on manuscripts influenced the motifs existing on Minai wares. Features shown by Minai wares were the following ones: peculiar

composition, motifs and colors, excessive use of literary themes (especially from epic literature), harmony between motifs, smooth and polished surface of the wares, surfaces covered with fictional subjects and themes, coordination between motifs and subjects, use of fictional subjects to cover the empty space, use of flat colors, , separation of motifs from background, the existence of corona around human's heads, not considering details, skill and precision in depicting animals, similarity of faces, poor consideration towards the gender of people and their portrait through their clothes, make up or jewelry, use floral motifs beside human motifs, increased dimensions of heads if compared with other parts of the body The last features are also peculiar of manuscripts of Seljuk and Baghdad schools such as "Kalile and Dimnah", "Hariri Maghamat" and "Varaghah and Golshah".

In fact, the representation of scenes on the surface of Minai wares is very much similar to motifs portrayed in books. For instance, in "Kalileh and Dimnah" in Baghdad school, motifs are small and are placed on a red background. A summary of these motif scenes is represented on Minai wares from Saveh. Motifs of the manuscript "Hariri Maghamat" from Baghdad school are very much similar to motifs on Minai wares from Saveh. There are also specific similarities between motifs from "Varaghah and Golshah" manuscript and motifs on Minai wares from Kashan and Ray, concerning portraying faces, role specifications and adventures and events recorded in Shahnameh manuscript.

Considering the link between literature and art in these periods, motifs on Minai wares were under the influence of the literature of their age. The pottery artists of this age created the best motifs on Minai wares by the use of lines and colors and taking inspirations from metaphors and symbolic concepts in Ferdowsi's and Nezami's poetry. These artists also used literary and mythological stories as a source of inspiration, embodying all the necessary features of people's national life, especially stories from Ferdowsi's Shahname and Nezami's Khamse (e.g. Zahak-e Mardush, Bahram and Azadeh, Khosrow and Shirin and Leyli and Majnun). The miniature artists arranged motifs in a story-like order by using horizontal compositions, so that all the events and scenes occur in a narrative order. Generally, since literature played a significant role in the life of the people during this period and it was at the center of the kings' and ordinary people's attention, Iranians could create kind of national epic in this age by aiming at a national identity. From the point of view of authors, because in these periods, literature played a significant part in peoples' lives and it was at the center of kings' and ordinary people's attention, other artists tried to make efforts to show the importance of literature, especially Ferdowsi's Shahname. The most important attempts in this direction resulted in the influence of pictorial manuscripts from both Baghdad and Seljuk schools on motifs in Minai wares. It was this peculiar influence of is the influence literature that helped the motifs on Minai wares to develop and flourish.

Table. 1: *Comparison between motifs in Baghdad and Seljuk manuscripts and Minai wares Kashan, Rey and Saveh*

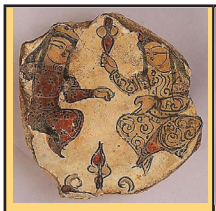
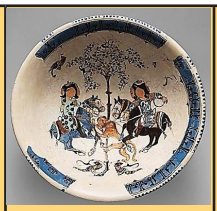
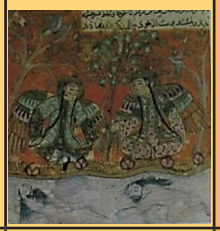
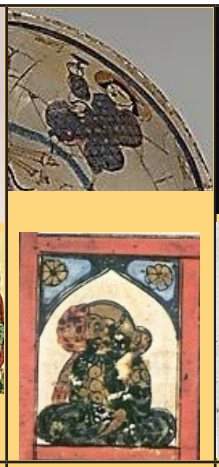
				**Comparison between motifs on Minai wares**
				
Composition, Kufic and Thuluth inscriptions, coloring	Composition Kufic inscription Coloring	Love themes, Kufic inscriptions, composition, coloring	Composition, Kufic inscription, Ta'liq script, literary subjects and coloring	**Similarities between manuscripts and Minai wares**
Rey	Rey	Kashan and Rey	Kashan	**Similarity with production centers of Minai wares**
Beige, light and dark brown, green, red, blue	Beige, brown, red, green, blue, white	Blue, green, gray, brown, red, black and white	Blue, green, gray, brown, red, black and white	**Coloring**
Round and oval	Round	Round and spiral	Round	**Composition**
Scientific and medical	Scientific and medical	Literary, love and lyrical	Literary and didactic	**Themes**
Mofid Al Khas	Galenus	Varagha and Golshah	Samak E Ayyar	**Manuscript**

Table. 2: *comparison between motifs from Baghdad and Seljuk school and Minai wares of Kashan, Rey and Saveh*

				**Comparison between motifs on Minai wares**
Literary subjects, composition, Kufic and Naskh inscriptions	Literary subjects, composition, coloring, Naskh and Kufic inscriptions	Composition, coloring, Kufic inscriptions	Literary themes, Kufic inscription, coloring, composition	**Similarities between motifs of manuscripts and Minai wares**
Saveh	Saveh	Saveh	Rey	**Similarity with production centers of Minai wares**
Beige, milky white, brown, ochre, green and blue	Beige, yellow, ochre, brown, blue, black and green	Beige, milky white, brown, green, gray, white, blue, black	Beige, brown, blue, yellow, ochre and gray	**Coloring**
Round	Round	Round and spiral	Round and oval	**Composition**
Literary and didactic	Literary and didactic	Scientific and medical	Literary and didactic	**Themes**
Kalileh and Dimnah	Hariri Maghamat	Khavas Al Adviyeh	Andarznameh	**Manuscript**

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