The Conceptual Status of Poetry in the Illustrations of the Divan of Khwaju Kirmani

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Abstract
Literature has been always a source of inspiration for the miniaturists. Persian miniatures with unique settings that reflect imaginal world are full of poetic characteristics. Persian literature, especially poetry, has acted as a tool for expressing mystical themes in addition to its narrating function. The direct impact of Persian poetry and literature on Persian miniature painting can be traced throughout all courses of history. In Jalayirid era, important manuscripts were illustrated among which divan of Khwaju Kirmani is considered as one of the most brilliant and unique works produced during this period. This manuscript consists of beautiful imaginal illustrations painted by Junayd Sultani, who was able to display the taste of union and being drunk with happiness expressed in the poems of Khwaju Kirmani. The manuscript has nine miniature illustrations and it was scribed by Mirali Tabrizi in nasta’liq calligraphic style. It is kept in the British Museum. This paper aims to study the effects of literature on this manuscript of the divan of Khwaju Kirmani focusing on the imaginal world depicted in its miniature illustrations. For this purpose, the following objectives are sought:

1- Have access to the theme expressed by the miniature illustrations of the divan of Khwaju Kirmani.
2- Identify and analyze the miniature illustrations and talent of the artist in composition of form and content.

The questions of this paper are as follows:
1- What is the relation of literature with miniature painting during Jalayirid era?
2- What are the visual and thematic characteristics of the miniature illustrations of Humay and Humayun?
3- Are the miniature illustrations of the divan of Khwaju Kirmani only the imaginations of the artists or the results of similes and poetic figures of speech?

The data of this research were collected by library method, and the miniature illustrations were analyzed based on the historical findings and analytical-descriptive method.

Keywords: Miniature painting, Khwaju Kirmani, Junayd Sultani, Humay and Humayun
INTRODUCTION

Jalayirid miniature school is profoundly indebted to Baghdad school (6th century A.H./12th century A.D.) and Il-Khanid school. In this school, lyrical, mystical, and romantic subjects are of higher significance. Upon the innovation of nasta’liq calligraphy hand, Persian identity was attached to the depicted manuscripts of this era and it considerably enhanced the beauty and magnificence of the miniatures of this school. The interest in showing poetic nature of Persian literature and illustration of the imaginary boundless world, and ideal scenes indicate the attachment of the kings of this era to art and literature. The interests of Iranian people in Persian literature, especially poetry, and their inspiration from such an art rooting in old times have created valuable works in the history of Islamic art. Miniature painting which had a long history in Iran has been always a reflection of the mysticism of poets and their romantic and lyrical aspects in addition to the naturalistic aesthetic elements express in such paintings. Being aware of such issue, the Jalayirid artists used the element of landscape to show mystical and romantic concepts as well as imaginary compositions. Landscaping and paying attention to the details of nature emerged in Iranian miniature from Jalayirid era. The divan of Sultan Ahmad Jalayir, Khosrow wa Shirin, Ajaib al-Makhluqat wa Gharaib al-Mawjudat are of this type. In the meantime, the divan of Khwaju Kirmani has special characteristics.

This book was illustrated by order of Timurid kings during Herat era. However, the manuscript written and depicted by order of Sultan Ahmad Jalayir is of higher value. Eight illustrations of this manuscript, which are created by Junayd and another one by someone else known as Khajeh Abd al-Hay, is of great significance because of innovation in composition, brilliant coloring, and reflection of lyrical and mystical concepts.

This paper aims to explain the socio-political conditions of Jalayirid era to study the poetry and literature of that period as well as their effect on miniature painting. Upon description of book design during the rule of Sultan Ahmad Jalayir, several illustrations of the divan of Khwaju Kirmani are analyzed in both terms of form and meaning.

Socio-political Conditions of Jalayirid Era

In the mid-8th century A.H./13th century A.D., the Il-Khanid rulers started to fall from power gradually. Jalayirid dynasty had a great role in such a collapse leading to the occupation of a large region especially Iraq and west part of Iran which was reigned previously by Mongols (Azhand, 2010: 51). In fact, Jalayirid dynasty ended the rule of Mongols in Iran. They selected Baghdad as their capital and could dominate Tabriz in 760 A.H./1357 A.D.. They supported the art of book layout and designing in this city. Such support increased considerably at the end of their rule, especially during the reign of Sultan Ahmad (Adamova, 2007: 72). Owais Jalayiri and Sultan Ahmad Jalayir are the most famous kings of this dynasty. Sultan Owais was himself a professional painter skilled in depicting portrait. His great credit is due to his outstanding mentor Abd al-Hay, who taught him painting (Robinson, 1997: 40). Escaping from Cairo after the invasion of Tamerlane, Ahmad Jalayir established his reign in Baghdad in 796 A.H./1393 A.D., after a short stay at the court of Mamluk kings. In 803 A.H./1400 A.D., Tamerlane occupied and ruined Baghdad and slaughtered its citizens. In 807 A.H./1404 A.D., Sultan Ahmad re-occupied Baghdad and many divans and manuscripts were created at his court (Canby, 2012: 23). In 813 A.H./1410 A.D., Sultan Ahmad was killed by his opponent, Qara Yusuf of Kara Koyunlu dynasty. After his death, Jalayirid dynasty came to its end.
An Overview of the Art of Book Designing during the Rule of Jalayirid Dynasty

The tradition of book layout and illustrating Persian manuscripts was formed from Il-Khanid era in Iran. When Jalayirid dynasty came to power, Iran was plunged into political chaos and it was ruled in form of feudalism. However, Jalayirid dynasty could create an appropriate atmosphere for the development of art and literature in such a chaotic period. According to Dowlatshah Samarkandi, Sultan Owais was himself an artist with good taste of art, handsome, generous, and informed of different types of art. The portraits, which were depicted by him using the reed pen (made from the reeds planted in Wasit), surprised the painters. Khajeh Abd al-Hay, who was prominent in this art during that period, was apprenticed to Sultan Owais (Samarqandi, 1959: 197). According to Moin al-Din Natanzi, the whole region of Azerbaijan was just like a place better than heaven. He also named Muslim poets, painters, and illustrators including Abd al-Hay, and scribes like Hajji Bandgir and Abd al-Rahim, who were famous artists at the time of Natanzi (Natanzi, 1957: 166). The building Dowlatkhaneh in Tabriz was constructed by Sheikh Owais (Ibid: 167). The interests of Sultan Owais in art and miniature painting was the reason of building a royal library at his court and his support endowed to the miniaturists and calligraphers. Following him, his son, Sultan Ahmad Jalayir came to power. Sultan Ahmad had a good taste of art and mysticism and supported artists and poets too. He was skilled in composing poems in both Persian and Arabic languages. A divan of him is available now. He was also prominent in illustration, tazhib (illuminating of manuscripts), khatam works (Persian style marquetry), and all six styles of calligraphy called aqlam-i sitta (six styles of calligraphy). Sultan Ahmad was also an outstanding musician (Heravi, 1966: 43).

According to Samarkandi, Sultan Ahmad was indeed a prominent poet skilled in different arts such as illustrating, illuminating, bookbinding and mosaic works. He prepared several calligraphic manuscripts. Samarkandi added that it was said that Khajeh Abd al-Qader was one of his retainers and apprentices and the songs composed by Sultan Ahmad was (in the 9th century A.H/15th century A.D.) common among most musicians and singers (Samarqandi, 1959: 229-230).

Ahmad Jalayir was the inspiring source of the most prominent artists of that era, during which brilliant illustrated books such as Khamseh (quintet) composed by Nizami, Ajaib al-Makhluqat wa Gharaib al-Mawjudat, divan of Khwaju Kirmani, and divan of Sultan Ahmad Jalayir were scribed and illustrated. The development and unity of Jalayirid artistic atmosphere was indebted to the art patron kings, who supported and encouraged artists and poets. In fact, the political credit of a state depended on the development of literary and artistic atmosphere. The achievements of Jalayirid dynasty had effects on the next eras even after its collapse. The formal characteristics of the books and compositions of miniature painting of that period helped the art of other eras such as Timurid era to be developed.

The threat of Tamerlane forced him to escape from his homeland and settle in different regions such as Tabriz and Baghdad. In some cases, Sultan Ahmad had to leave his homeland several times. He reigned three times in the west of Iran and each time, one manuscript was illustrated by his order. The first manuscript was khamseh of Nizami, the second one Ajaib al-Makhluqat wa Gharaib al-Mawjudat, and the third one divan of Khwaju Kirmani, which was ordered to Junayd the miniaturist after the king settled in Baghdad. The book Khamseh which belongs to the first period of Jalayirid school consists of 22 illustrations scribed by Mahmud ibn Baghdadi and illustrated in 809 A.H./1406 A.D. (Binyon, 1999: 141). The second manuscript is Ajaib al-Makhluqat wa Gharaib al-Mawjudat compiled by Zakaria Qazvini in Arabic Language. This book was compiled in Baghdad in 791 A.H./1389 A.D. and it was scribed and illustrated there using nasta’liq calligraphic hand. At present, it is kept in National Library of France in Paris. This book is about the secrets of the universe and cosmology including astrology, animal biology, and...
mineralogy. It describes some animals that we have yet no scientific information about them (Akbari & Kashani, 2009: 65). Divan of Khwaju Kirmani is the third manuscript scribed in 722 A.H./1322 A.D.

This manuscript written in *nasta’liq* calligraphic hand by Mirali Tabrizi contains nine illustrations. Eight illustrations were created by Junayd Sultani and one by Khajeh Abd al-Hay. The illustrations of this manuscript are considered as masterworks of Persian miniature and have been able to be linked with the lyrical poems of the divan in a harmonious level. In fact, it is a link between painting and literature.

**Literary Characteristics of Khwaju Kirmani’s Divan and its Illustrations**

Divan of Khwaju Kirmani is one of the most famous and prominent literary works composed in Iran in the 7th century A.H. (13th century A.D.). Although Khwaju Kirmani was not an innovative poet, he imitated the poems of his ancestors professionally. To ascend himself to intellectual and affective maturity, he sought recourse to divine realm. For this purpose, he made a pilgrimage to Mecca in Hejaz. He felt that Kerman was not enough for him and his soul needed to get free from that city, which was like a cage for him. The poems of Khwaju apparently reveal such a need (Razmjou, 2001: 14). The main activity of Khwaju was limited to poetry. The diversity of the contents of his poems and his proficiency in prose and poem are of significance. He was one of the Persian poets who have the maximum number of poems. His divan was compiled during his life (Shafaghi, 2002: 55).

His prose style is poetic and euphuistic, figurative, and full of fine details, therefore, an example of artistic classical literary prose welcomed by the fan of literature. Some existing samples of his prose are mostly rhythmic and lyrical (ibid: 56). His poetic themes include eulogy of Imams and religious saints, giving advice, mysticism, and lyrics. His divan is about the love of Humayun for Humay, the daughter of the king of China. It was composed in form of *saqi-nameh* (dithyramb), which is a lyrical style of poetry in which the poet addresses the *saqi* (cupbearer) and the singer to give him drink and sign a song. Then, he starts to talk about the torment of short life and encourages the reader to seize the day and understand the eternal power of love (Shamisa, 2004: 259).

During his trip to Shiraz, Khwaju Kirmani started writing *Humay and Humayun* in couplet form in the name of Sultan Abu-Said and wanted to submit it to the king Abu-Said after his trip and completion of the verses. Finally, he completed the couplet poem in Baghdad in 723 A.H./1323 A.D. Three years later, Khwaju went to Tabriz to receive the reward of his artistic work, but Abu-Said had been died in 736 A.H./1335 A.D. (Eini, 1980: 70). Because of his artistic skills in poetry, Khwaju was called “nakhlband of poets” (a person who makes decorative artificial trees). The book Humay and Humayun with 4407 verses includes not only lyrical verses but also riddle and puzzles.

This long versified story is a traditional lyrical novel with different events and turning point. Perhaps, the anarchic condition of the administration of Abu-Said of II-Khanid dynasty, the last king of that time, and the chaotic era throughout Iran had great impacts on Khwaju and caused his lyrics to be full of conflicts and different events. However, the metaphysical and lyrical quality of the story and affective fine details of the story was the reason of its illustrating by Junayd Sultani. Sultan Ahmad Jalayir, who was himself inclined to art, had the book to be scribed in 790 A.H./1380 A.D. This book was illustrated when Sultan Ahmad Jalayir settled in Baghdad. Divan of Khwaju Kirmani consists of lyrical and static illustrations (Canby, 2012: 46). Although the divan was illustrated in Baghdad, Junayd used a style different from the ancient Mesopotamia and followed the painting style of the II-Khanid painters (Pakbaz, 2000: 65).

In Jalayirid school, colors are more consistent than those in II-Khanid school, and are in closer link with the surrounding decorative motifs. In general, the miniaturists of this school could establish a close link between abstraction and nature in form of color, human being, and environment as it was their concern (ibid: 259).
44). Divan of Khwaju has nine illustrated scenes known as majlis. The divan was scribed in nasta’liq calligraphic hand by Mirali Tabrizi. Most likely, most of the illustrations were painted by Junayd or under his supervision. These illustrated scenes (majlises) can be regarded as the prototypes of the illustrations of the next centuries (ibid: 66). The artistic works of Junayd paved the way for the next generations of artists. His techniques of composition and the mutual link between human and visual space in the illustrated scenes were used by the artists who prepared illuminated manuscripts of Timurid era. The oldest text, in which the name of Junayd the Miniaturist has been mentioned, is the introduction to Moraqqa-e Bahram Mirza (Art Anthology of Bahram Mirza) written by Dust Muhammad Heravi. In that anthology, Junayd was introduced as the prominent painter of the 8th century A.H./14th century A.D. and an art student of Shams al-Din Shirazi. Junayd who was originally from Shiraz worked in Baghdad Book Designing Workshop (Gray, 2005: 72). In addition to the brilliant illustrations, Divan of Khwaju Kerman has illuminated margins, which was emerged in Jalayirid school for the first time. Seven pages of the total 337 pages of this divan have motifs in the margins of the book painted magnificently with black ink using blue and golden yellow colors. Abd al-Hay was the painter of these pages.

One of the characteristics of Khwaju’s illustrated divan is that the texts are filled totally with the pictures of hand in such a form that the pictures have covered the whole page (Akbari and Kashani, 2009: 66). The illustrations of all these pages are inspired from poetic themes and deep emotions of Khwaju Kirmani narrating a legendary world, in which horses and imaginary scenes are illustrated in full details. The painter used vivid and pure colors, and innovated brilliant artistic compositions, main lines, directions, and rhythms. This technique was employed to depict abstract and spiritual world for the representation of feelings and emotions (Adamova, 2007: 18).

Characteristics of the Form and Content of Khwaju’s Divan
The independence of miniature painting from scribing, professional and harmonious application of colors, as well as filling the background with the pictures of birds, animals, trees, and flowers are the main characteristics of the divan. The pictures used in the analysis of this research have been selected from this manuscript based on the lyrical theme of the poems of Khwaju. At first, the illustration is studied in terms of its composition, color, and elements, and then the story is analyzed in relation to the illustration and poem written in the related page.

1- Arrival of Humayun at the Palace Gates of Humay, Divan of Khwaju Kirmani, 798 A.H./1395 A.D
In this illustration, the Iranian prince riding a horse is depicted while standing at the entrance of a beautiful palace of Humay, the Chinese Princess. From the upper porch of the palace, Humay is looking down furtively. However, the high walls of the palace prevent her to see Humayun. The row of flying birds and red robe of Humay attract attentions. The light color of the outside directs attention to the green garden and colorful tiles of the place. In general, the miniature painting tries to express the atmosphere of the story using fine details in the composition (Pakbaz, 2004: 66). Everything around the palace reflects youthful enthusiasm. The hill and field of flowers in light pink is covered with colorful flowers (Sharifzadeh, 1996: 95). The lyrical setting of this illustration has been depicted by the abundance of trees, plants, and flowers of the garden in contrast to the empty space of the outside. Indeed, putting together the artificial and natural settings to focus on the topic and enhance the content of the work become of importance in this work. Junayd creates a new visual setting by use of the whole page and making the bodies small and far from the frame edge of the picture. This technique was used in the great masterpieces of miniature paintings of
Timurid and Safavid eras (Canby, 2012: 46). The following verse about the fair-faced Humay is written on this illustration:

*Just like the moon on the roof, she was seen by the prince*
*Just like the night, her hair was around the moon of her face*

As in Persian miniature, the physical one-to-one representation of the objects, the painter uses literary similes like pretty moon to cross the superficial meaning and reach the reality.

![Figure 1. Arrival of Humayun at the place of Humay, Divan of Khwaju Kirmani, 798 A.H/1395 A.D](image)

**Figure 1. Arrival of Humayun at the place of Humay, Divan of Khwaju Kirmani, 798 A.H/1395 A.D**

2- **Wedding Ceremony of Humay and Humayun, Divan of Khwaju Kirmani 797, A.H./1394 A.D**

This illustration is in two parts. The right side of the picture shows the outside of the building and the left side inside of the palace, which is filled with joy of life and freshness. The women are putting make-up on Humay, the musicians are playing music on the other side, and a boy is dancing (Grabar, 2011: 82). Other women in the ceremony have been gathered around a tablecloth or beside the throne of Humay serving her. Humayun is in blue and Humay in red. This attractive composition of colors dominated by red reflects the wedding scenes depicted by women and dancing or in symbolic forms. On the upper part of the throne of Humay, a verse has been written that states the bond between Humay and Humayun:

*He mixed with Humay like honey and sugar*
*As fresh dates sank down in oil*
The coloring and pictorial richness as well as the marvelous decorative motifs of tiles and surfaces, rugs, and curtains are the issues used to enhance the visual attraction of the illustration. The signature of Junayd Sultani can be seen on the red pediment depicted on the spandrel of Humay’s room.

3- The Meeting of Humay and Humayun in a Garden, Divan of Khwaju Kirmani, 799 A.H./1396 A.D

This illustration shows Humay and Humayun in a colorful garden and pleasant atmosphere. Humay (right) in yellow and Humayun (left) in blue stand in the middle of the picture together with their servants. The feeling of the lovers is expressed using the least movements. Their elaborate clothes are combined with the flowers of the landscape (Grabar: 83). The trees bear white blossoms, whose colors are linked with the blue color of sky. The fence of the garden is in red shining under the blue sky. The dreams and fantasy of Khwaju keep pace with the innovative landscape. The love affairs have been shown by fine bushes and shrubs with many small red and orange flowers. The sparkle of the yellow clothes of the beloved in the middle of the scene indicates the mystical mystery of Khwaju’s poetry. It is the sign of the golden color of the face of the beloved which is identical to the sun:

Like Moses, I am filled with sadness
I am on the fire of the sun of your face
I have seen a portrait of your face
Which I have never seen before
Khwaju Kirmani was benefited from figurative language especially metaphor for composing his poems, and that is why the similes of moon instead of the face of the beloved, night, musk, and lasso instead of hair, flower and tulip instead of the cheek, cedar instead of the height of the beloved, and gem instead of speech can be found in abundance in his poems (Shamisa, 1996: 67). Junayd used such poetic exaggeration in illustration and depicted the face of the beloved in form of the moon, and trees, cedars, flowers and bushes in form of the cheek, hair, and face of the beloved respectively.

Figure 3. - The Meeting of Humay and Humayun in a Garden, Divan of Khwaju Kirmani, 799 A.H./1396 A.D

4- Hunting Scene (Majlis), Divan of Khwaju Kirmani, 830 A.H./1426 A.D
This illustration is a separate small sheet from the divan of Khwaju Kirmani, Humay and Humayun, painted in 830 A.H./1426 A.D. This illustration, which is a combination of hunting scene together with igneous rocks, is completely different from the paintings of Shiraz or Herat schools. Although this illustration is attributed to Shiraz school, the name of its scriber Ali ibn Yusuf al-Mashhadi underpin the assumption that it was scribed in Mashhad or any other place (Canby, 2012: 64). The style of its motifs is different from that of Junayd. The grooved rocks and high horizon, which are the characteristics of Shiraz school, are observed in this illustration, and there is no trace of flowers, bushes, and fine ornaments common in Jalayirid school. The verses selected for this illustration are not as lyrical as those in the divan of Khwaju Kirmani are:
The king of east set off for hunting
Group of panthers were around his
The chaos and thrill created by them
The deers prostrated by arrows
The illustration shows three men are going hunting deer running away fast and however, they are hunted by the hunters. One of these men is Humayun riding a horse and entering the scene from the left side. This illustrated scene (majlis) reflects the wars of Humayun with the Chinese corpse running like the escaping deer.

Figure 4. Hunting Scene (majlis), Divan of Khwaju Kirmani, 830 A.H/1426 A.D

5- War between Humay and Humayun, Divan of Khwaju Kirmani 797, A.H./1394 A.D
This illustration depicts the war between Humay and Humayun. Humay who is unintentionally in disguise starts fighting with Humayun after a quarrel with him. However, after the secret of Humay is disclosed, Humayun consoles her and apologizes for unintentional fight with her. The bodies in this illustration are small and standing inside the natural scene of hills covered with flowers, plants, and trees. Nature shown in this illustration is similar to a carpet covered with floral motifs depicted finely in full details. Humayun who is tall and slim has kneed and consoling his beloved. The movement of two horses is depicted gently. Junayd used a professionally skilled coloring to create a poetic world inspired by imaginary world of literature parallel to the legendary world composed by Khwaju Kirmani in his poems. Fruitful green trees, flying birds
over the background in creamy color are shining. Junayd has cleverly put red spots among the rocks and flower bushes to enhance the wonder of his work. A verse has been written on the upper part of the illustration.

The man came from the plain
He hide the secret of heaven in his heart

In this illustration, Junayd tries to reflect an imaginal world and delete time and location from his work, since he uses nature as the main factor of lyrical world in the war field. The illustrations of Junayd create a harmonious composition with literature. The miniaturist has changed the war field to a calm setting expressing the world of poetry and a tragedy which is expected to lead to failure in tasting success to the union of the lover with the beloved.

Figure 5. - War between Humay and Humayun, Divan of Khwaju Kirmani, 797 A.H./1394 A.D

Conclusion
Miniature painting has been in close relation to the Persian literature, which inspired many artists to illustrate the imaginary world of imaginal nature. Divan of Khwaju Kirmani which is filled with metaphors, similes, lyrics accompanied simultaneously with epic, events described in full details, and many ups and
downs, has always inspired the artists of Jalayirid era. Meanwhile, the supports and interests of Jalayirid kings in arts made miniature painting and book designing to be developed significantly.

Landscape painting and naturalism, use of tash ‘ir (an ornamentation style of books), and the skill of Junayd in separating the settings and assigning a separate page to the illustration are the important characteristics of Khwaju’s divan. During this period, miniature painting is so developed that illustration becomes independent from the text and it reflects the significance of painting in comparison to calligraphy. The illustrations of this manuscript which are abundantly filled with flowers, trees, happy birds, and shining colors focus on the poetic setting and the fine details and pure quality of lines and color narrate the atmosphere of the story. That is why lyrics and its narrative structure have always inspired Iranian miniaturists of all historical period. Its climax affected the imaginary landscape painting of Jalayirid School filled with the colorful carpet of flowers and plants, fresh trees, and singing birds.

As this paper studied, the use of literary and poetic themes in miniature painting was started from Jalayirid era and continued thereafter. The art patron Jalayirid court was a place for the development of artists and even advent of nasta’liq calligraphic style. The name of Jalayirid school is linked so closely with the divan of Khwaju Kirmani that its style of drawing and coloring continued and developed in the next eras.

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