

Original Research Article

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Received: 22 January 2023

Revised: 1 May 2023

Accepted: 9 May 2023

DOI: 10.22055/PYK.2023.42872.1376

URL: [https://paykareh.scu.ac.ir/article\\_18225.html](https://paykareh.scu.ac.ir/article_18225.html)

How to cite this article: Saffari, N.S & Farokhfhar, F. (2022). Connection and Discontinuity of Shahnameh Writing in Shiraz Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar Schools. *Paykareh*, 12 (31), pp. 37-55

The Persian translation of this article is published in the same issue with the following title

پیوند و گسست شاهنامه‌نگاری در مکاتب شیراز آل‌ینجو و آل‌مظفر

## Connection and Discontinuity of Shahnameh Writing in Shiraz Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar Schools

### Abstract

**Problem Definition:** Among the masterpieces of Persian literature, Shahnameh of Hakim Abulqasem Ferdowsi has a special place in visual arts because this epic and national work has been illustrated various times by the capable and master painters of this region. Each of these works is one of the most important documents to know the artistic characteristics of that period. Among the painting schools of Iran, the remaining works from the schools of Shiraz in the 8<sup>th</sup> century A.H. during the reigns of Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar are very important because of the starting point of illustrating Shahnameh and the variety of existing works. Based on this, the present research addresses the following question: In the illustrated Shahnamehs of the two schools of Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar, despite the existence of various illustrated versions and the symmetry of the common time and place in creating the works, what similarities and significant differences are clear in the way of illustrating the works of the two schools?

**Objective:** The present research aims to identify the connection and discontinuity between images by comparative study and comparison of the visual and structural structures of the joint assemblies in the illustrated Shahnamehs of the two periods of Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar.

**Research Method:** In the current research, descriptive-analytical method with comparative approach was used and the information of this research was collected as library-documents.

**Results:** The findings of the current research show that obvious similarities can be seen in the layout, composition and details of the images of these Shahnamehs; However, the improvement of the quality level of painting such as the increase of details, elegance and accuracy in design and diversity in movements is more visible in Al-Muzaffar period.

### Keywords

Painting Schools, Art of Shiraz, Al-Inju, Al-Muzaffar, Shahnameh Writing

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### **Introduction**

Iran's painting schools have undergone numerous changes in form and content throughout the history of political and social developments. Although most of these schools have unique features, but some features are common in the way of illustrating the works. In the meantime, the two schools of Shiraz Al-Inju (703-754 A.H.) and Shiraz Al-Muzaffar (754-795 A.H.) emerged in a parallel era and in a common region, are famous for different works. Despite the special importance of these two schools as the beginning of the illustration of the Shahnameh and the variety and abundance of their existing works, little research has been done to analyze the common visual features between the works of these two schools. For this purpose, the present research is based on it to solve this problem by comparative study and comparison of the visual structure of the Shahnamehs of the two schools of Shiraz, Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar. The question is, what are the commonalities and differences between the illustrations of the Shahnamehs of the two schools of Shiraz, Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar. The rules and principles that were established in the coloring and composition and execution of Al-Inju's paintings were also used in the era of Al-Muzaffar.

### **Research Method**

This research has the nature of development, which has been done by using descriptive-analytical method and with comparative approach and collecting information by library-document method. The time frame of the research is the period of Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar in the 8<sup>th</sup> century A.H., and the illustrated Shahnamehs of these two periods, including the Shahnamehs of the schools of Al-Inju 731 A.H. (available in Topqapi Library), 733 A.H. (available in the Hermitage Library), 741 A.H. and 753 A.H. and Al-Muzaffar: 771 A.H. (available in Topqapi Library) and 796 A.H. (available in the National Library of Cairo). This research is organized in four sections introducing the socio-political situation of Shiraz during Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar periods, illustrated Shahnamehs of two periods, analysis of the visual characteristics of pictures and explaining the common aspects of Shahnameh writing during Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar eras.

### **Research Background**

There are many sources in Shahnameh writing of the Shiraz school of the 8<sup>th</sup> century A.H., but none of them have addressed the present research. Among them, «Adamova and Giuzalian» (2004), in the book entitled «Illustrations of the Shahnameh», examined the illustrations of the Shahnameh of 733 A.H. and while referring to other versions, such as the Shahnameh of 731 A.H., they emphasize the importance of these illustrated Shahnamehs. «Azhand» (2008) also deals with the 731 A.H. and 733 A.H. editions in the book entitled «School of Shiraz» in the section related to the manuscripts of the Shiraz School. It also refers to the research of some researchers. In the article by «Behrouzpour and Ghazizadeh» (2019) entitled «Research of the characteristics of the Shiraz school of painting in the painting of Al-inju and Al-Muzaffar period and its influence on the art of painting in Iran», the characteristics of the paintings of the three Shahnamehs of the Al-Inju period and the Shahnameh of 771 A.H. from the Al-Muzaffar period have been examined. «Gray» (2005) briefly discusses the Shiraz school in the book entitled «Painting of Iran». Also, «Mohammadi Khashoui and Farrokh Far» (2015), in the article entitled «The influence of the socio-political situation of Al-Muzaffar period on the illustration of the Shahnameh», examined the thematic sub-branches of visual elements and the influence of the social-political conditions of the Al-Muzaffar period on the illustration of the Shahnameh. What emerges from the study of the available sources is that little research has

been directly related to the current research. This research, while presenting a brief history of the social-political situation of Shiraz in the 8<sup>th</sup> century A.H. and also the painting characteristics of Shiraz schools of that period, it examines the similarities between the paintings of the Shahnamehs of the two periods of Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar.

### **The history of social-political developments in Shiraz in the 8<sup>th</sup> century A.H.**

At the beginning of the 8<sup>th</sup> century A.H. and after the weakening of the power of the Mongols, some regions were seeking an opportunity to create a local government for themselves; among them, the local governments of Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar, which declared their presence in Fars after each other. The city of Shiraz remained as a center of art and bookmaking due to being immune from the devastating attacks of the Mongols, and the Seljuk style was continued (Adamova & Giuzalian, 2013, p. 275). The Inju family, which was one of the subordinate rulers of the Ilkhans, became independent after the death of Abu Said in 735 A.H. and they ruled Persia until 753 A.H. while they were expelled from there by the Muzaffar family. Al-Muzaffar ruled over all the southwestern parts of Iran. Finally, in 795 A.H., they were destroyed by Timur (Iqbal Ashtiani, 2008, pp. 561-552). During Al-Muzaffar period, the support of science, literature, and art led to the emergence of an artistic style and style, different from the common paintings in Shiraz and in contrast to the composition of Al-Inju, which had a significant impact on the works of later periods.

### **Shahnameh writing in the school of Shiraz Al-Inju**

From the beginning of the 8<sup>th</sup> century A.H., Shiraz workshops began a wide activity in illustrating literary texts, especially the Shahnameh, so that there are at least four illustrated Shahnamehs from the reign of Al-Inju which are one of the artistic achievements of Shiraz due to the characteristics of their common cognitive style. In fact, in order to confront the Ilkhans and consolidate their position, the Injuids had adopted the policy of glorifying Iran's history. As a result, the popular porcelain in Tabriz had the least impact on Shiraz painting. Thus, along with innovators such as «Ahmed Musa» and «Shamsuddin», the Shiraz school continued the tradition of Iranian painting (Pakbaz, 2005, p. 68). In this period, «as if the characteristics of the Sassanid period come to life in a dry and immature way» (Adamova & Giuzilian, 2013, p. 66). The small Shahnamehs are composed of four Shahnamehs cut into small pieces and do not have any inscriptions, dates, or endings. The only factor that connects them to each other is their similar stylistic features. From the Injuids period, at least four Shahnamehs are in hand, which have been compiled into books and are known as small Shahnamehs because they have a small cut, and in them, especially, almost miniature pictures are included in the text. These Shahnamehs are chronologically as:

**1. Shahnameh 731 A.H.:** This Shahnameh is kept in the Topkapi Library of Istanbul (1479 A.H.). It was written by Hasan bin Ali bin Hossein Bahmani and there are 89 pictures on the cover (Adamova & Giuzalian, 2013, p. 54). It was written in manuscript and 6 columns are reserved for poetry.

**2. Shahnameh 733 A.H.:** The Shahnameh of 733 A.H. is kept in the National Library of Russia in Saint Petersburg (Drom 329) and it was written by Abdurrahman bin Hasan bin Abdurrahman bin Ahmad bin Zahir in 733 A.H. from Shiraz (Loukonine, 1996, p. 135), this edition contains 49 pictures and a two-page title. Its images have a memorable character and are magnificent and very impressive and it is considered a literary work in which the past greatness of the country has been praised (Adamova & Giuzilian, 2004, p. 88).

**3. Shahnameh 741 A.H.:** This Shahnameh is kept in the Freer Gallery of Washington Code (2924), Perry Collection, Geneva Code (Pozzi Collection, Geneva), Chesterfield Museum,

Dublin Code (per.111 و per.104)• Brooklyn Museum (O1955i001-86.227.133-verso-IMLS-PS3), and Cambridge University Library (<https://shahnama.caret.cam.ac.uk> & <https://shahnamaprojectmanuscript.com>) and it is famous for the Shahnameh of Qavam al-Din Hasan because the book was compiled with the encouragement of this pro-Iranian minister, Amir Sheikh Abu Ishaq. For the first time, Ivan Sechkin emphasized its importance (Stchoukine, 1936, p. 93) and later, art scholars such as Simpson (Simpson, 2000) discussed and analyzed it.

**4. Shahnameh 753 A.H.:** This Shahnameh is preserved in the Topkapi Library of Istanbul (Azhand, 2008, p. 91) and it was written in Shiraz in the late era of Al-Inju, and it has 108 pictures and one picture at the beginning of the copy (Adamova & Giozalian, 2013, p. 54). This version of the Shahnameh has received less attention and investigation and fewer pictures of it have been published.

### **Shahnameh writing in the school of Shiraz Al-Muzaffar**

The cultural prosperity of Shiraz, which had spread during the Al-Inju period, continued during the Mozaffarian era. But Al-Inju's style of painting stopped when Mozafarian took over (Kenby, 2010, p. 41). The art of painting in Al-Muzaffar School adopted a different style from the usual painting of Shiraz Al-Inju and the elegance of its works contrasts with the compositions of Al-Inju (Titely, 1983, p. 41). During this period, a new taste occurred in the royal workshops and lyrical poems were added to the book arrangement program and the way of working has changed. In this period, most of the themes of books were compiled, which were based on moral and religious matters in terms of content. However, in this situation, the Shahnameh book arrangement had found a tradition that the rulers believed in and they included book editing as one of their jobs (Azhand, 2008, p. 122). The two important and prominent versions of this school are:

**1. Shahnameh 772 A.H.:** This copy is kept in Topkapi library (H.1511) and its end in 772 A.H. mentioned in Shiraz and its dimensions are 160 x 260 mm. It has 288 pages and 12 miniatures and each page has 6 columns with 33 lines which were written in Nastaliq script by Masoud bin Mansour bin Ahmad Shirazi (Mohammadi Khashoui & Farrokhfar, 2015, p. 4).

**2. Shahnameh 796 A.H.:** This Shahnameh is preserved in the National Library of Cairo (Ms.no.73) and it was completed in the years when Timur destroyed Al-Muzaffar and conquered Shiraz (Titely, 1983, p. 91). This copy was written in Nastaliq script in Shiraz by Lotfollah bin Muhammad bin Yahya. And its dimensions are 232 x 352 mm. It has 321 pages and 67 pictures. Each sheet is tabulated in 6 columns and there are 31 lines in each column.

### **A comparative study of the visual features of Shahnameh writing in Shiraz Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar schools**

**Statistical community:** The main part of the studies of the current research is dedicated to the comparison of the characteristics of the two schools of Shiraz, Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar, and to discover their commonalities and differences. Based on this, it is necessary to select images from the manuscripts of these two schools, which have common themes and the artists of two schools have faced similar narratives in illustration. Considering the incompleteness and lack of access to the complete archive of many illustrated versions of this period, especially from the era of Al-Muzaffar, the only pictures that can be found with similar images in both schools are: 1. Bahram Gur's battle with the dragon (See Figures 1 & 2), 2. Battle of Kay Khosrow and Afrasiab (See Figures 3 & 4), 3. The story of Kamos



Keshani (See Figures 5 & 6), 4. The story of Siavash passing through the fire (See Figures 7 & 8) and 5. The story of Kay Khosrow, the son of Siavash (See Figures 9 & 10), it is clear from the era of Al-Inju in the Shahnameh of 731 A.H. and from the era of Al-Muzaffar in the Shahnamehs of 772 A.H. and 796 A.H. The images of this version constitute the statistical population of the current research (See Table 1).

**Table 1.** Selected images of the statistical population. Sources: Authors

Shiraz Al-Inju School		Shiraz Al-Muzaffar School	
Assembly 1: Bahram Gur's battle with the dragon		Assembly 2: Battle of Kay Khosrow and Afrasiab	
			
<b>Figure 1.</b> Shahnameh 731 A.H. Source: <a href="https://muze.gen.tr">https://muze.gen.tr</a> .	<b>Figure 2.</b> Shahnameh 772 A.H.. Source: Gray, 2005, p. 177.	<b>Figure 3.</b> Shahnameh 731 A.H. Source: <a href="https://muze.gen.tr">https://muze.gen.tr</a>	<b>Figure 4.</b> Shahnameh 772 A.H. Source: Wright, 2012, p. 59.
Assembly 3: The story of Kamos Keshani		Assembly 4: The story of Siavash passing through the fire	
			
<b>Figure 5.</b> Shahnameh 731 A.H.. Source: <a href="https://muze.gen.tr">https://muze.gen.tr</a> .	<b>Figure 6.</b> Shahnameh 772 A.H.. Source: Wright, 2012, p. 161.	<b>Figure 7.</b> Shahnameh 731 A.H. Source: <a href="https://muze.gen.tr">https://muze.gen.tr</a>	<b>Figure 8.</b> Shahnameh 772 A.H. Source: Wright, 2012, p. 168.
Assembly 5: The story of Kay Khosrow son of Siavash			
			
<b>Figure 9.</b> Shahnameh 731 A.H. Source : <a href="https://muze.gen.tr">https://muze.gen.tr</a>		<b>Figure 10.</b> Shahnameh 796 A.H. .Source: Wright, 2012, p. 161	

**Basics of analysis:** Regarding the five images of the battle from the Shahnameh 731 A.H. related to the Al-Inju period and also four images from the Shahnameh 772 A.H. and one image from the Shahnameh 796 A.H. related to the period of Al-Muzaffar and examining the qualitative features, including the content, visual, and structural features, which to some extent have similarities and differences in the paintings of the two periods of Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar, will be examined. The content features of paintings that have a battle theme, such as a battle with a dragon, a hand-to-hand battle, and an epic story, are examined. In terms of visual features, things like broken and stepped frames, images sticking out of the frame, the use of dominant colors in pictures, natural details and decorations, and the number and details of human and animal figures are of interest. Structural features, such as relative or non-related composition, dynamics and movement, and the type of approach, are investigated.

**1. Content features:** Assembly 1. In this picture of Bahram Gur, one of the most important and popular characters in the Shahnameh, shown fighting a dragon. In such battles in the Shahnameh, two opposing forces face each other. Bahram Gur is depicted as an important hero by overcoming the dragon, which represents the dark force. In both pictures related to Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar Shahnameh, the dragon is depicted with a large and twisted body that represents power. Bahram Gur, who is the main character, is placed as a point of emphasis in the image and in the middle of the text with a well-developed body (See Figure 1). In the Shahnameh of 731 A.H. related to the Al-Inju period, Bahram Gur is depicted with a sword fighting a dragon. In the Shahnameh of 772 A.H., Al Muzaffar period, he fought on horseback with a bow and arrow (See Figure 2).

Assembly 2. With the theme of battle, this assembly refers to the great war between Kay Khosrow, the king of Iran, and Afrasiab, the king of Turan, which in the end leads to the death of Afrasiab and is one of the greatest stories in the Shahnameh. In the Shahnameh of 731 A.H., the school of Al-Inju found a staggered and broken state in order to synchronize the text with the image. The protrusion of the image from the picture frame on the left side and top of the page is quite clear. The state of crowding and the activity of the figures in both corps show the peak of the dynamics of the war scene (See Figure 3). In the Shahnameh of 772 A.H. of Al-Muzaffar School, the image is placed in the middle of the page and the text is placed above and below the image. The continuation of a part of the image is visible above the text. In this picture, the crowd of soldiers is reduced by placing some natural elements, such as plants. And a few soldiers represent a complete army (See Figure 4).

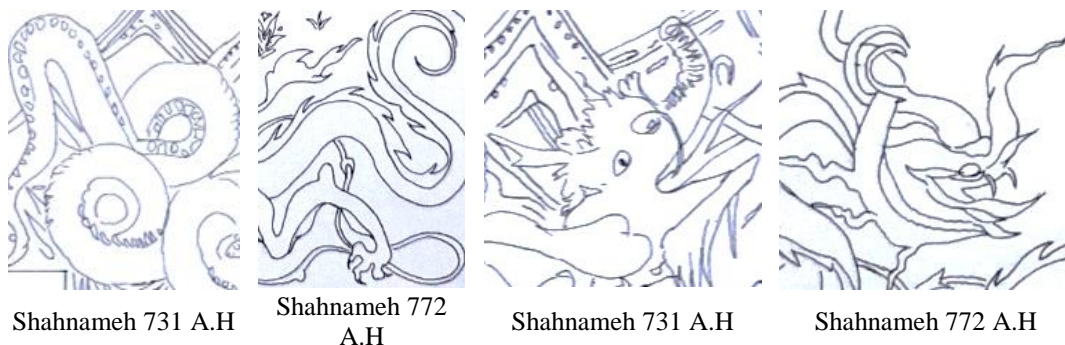
Assembly 3. The image of Kamos Keshani with the theme of battle is another battle between Iran and Turan. In this battle, Rostam, an Iranian warrior, captures and kills Kamus, a Toran warrior and in this way, the battle ends with the victory of Iran. In order to synchronize the text with the image in both Shahnameh of Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar, the images are placed in the middle of the page and the text is placed at the top and bottom. In the 731 A.H. Shahnameh of Al-Inju, the centrality of the issue is emphasized, that is, the defeat of Camus. In the 731 A.H. Shahnameh of Al-Inju, the centrality of the issue is emphasized, that is, the defeat of Camus (See Figure 5). In the Shahnameh of 772 A.H. Al-Muzaffar, the centrality of the subject, which is probably the Iranian warrior Rostam, is emphasized by using elements and decorations of nature (See Figure 6).

Assembly 4. In this assembly, which is epic in terms of theme, it refers to the story of Siavash passing through the fire and proving his innocence. Sudabeh, Siavash's stepmother (the son of Kikavus, the king of Iran), is attached to him and Siavash, who is accused of sin, He passes through the fire with his horse and his innocence is proven. In the ancient culture of Iran, fire has a purifying effect and Siavash is a symbol of purity, in terms of content, the

force of good wins over evil (Hall, 2001, pp. 198 & 199). In the Shahnameh of 731 A.H. of the Al-Inju school, Siavash is wearing a white dress and riding a black horse. In order to synchronize the text with the image, it has found a staggered state, and the image is placed in the middle of the page between the top and bottom text (See Figure 7). In the Shahnameh of 772 A.H. related to Al-Muzaffar, Siavash is shown riding a black horse amid flames. The image is placed at the bottom of the page and the text is completely placed at the top of the page (See Figure 8).

Assembly 5. In this painting, the story of Kay Khosrow, the son of Siavash, who is known for his good name and justice, is shown. In both Shahnameh of Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar, Kay Khosrow is depicted sitting on the throne in the center of the image. In order to synchronize the text with the image, the image has been drawn in a stair-step style with an emphasis on Kay Khosrow's personality. In the Shahnameh of 731 A.H. Al-Inju, the entire text of the image is filled with human figures and no details of nature (See Figure 9). In the Shahnameh of 796 A.H. Al-Muzaffar, by using the elements of nature, a poetic and lyrical atmosphere has emerged (See Figure 10).

**2. Visual features:** Assembly 1. In the painting of «Bahram Gur's battle with the dragon», in the Shahnameh of 731 A.H. of the Al-Inju period, there is an emphasis on human and animal figures that fill the overall space of the image. In this picture, additional details have been removed. Pointed mountains with thick contour lines are the only natural elements, the use of warm colors, especially red, is clear. The frame is placed horizontally across the entire width of the page and is staggered at the bottom. The figure of the dragon, which is twisted, occupies two-thirds of the image, inducing a state of dynamism and activity. Also, a large human figure detailed in his dress and hat, holding a sword; the emphasis point is the image. In the Shahnameh of 772 A.H., Al-Muzaffar uses more varied colors in the illustration. A small part of the image space is dedicated to the sky, and it is clear in terms of the formal feature of the high horizon. Focusing on the abundant nature of round hills is another feature of this painting. The twisted figure of the dragon, which instills a kind of fear, it completely covers the lower part of the image, the human figure and the horse are placed in the upper part of the image (See Figure 11).

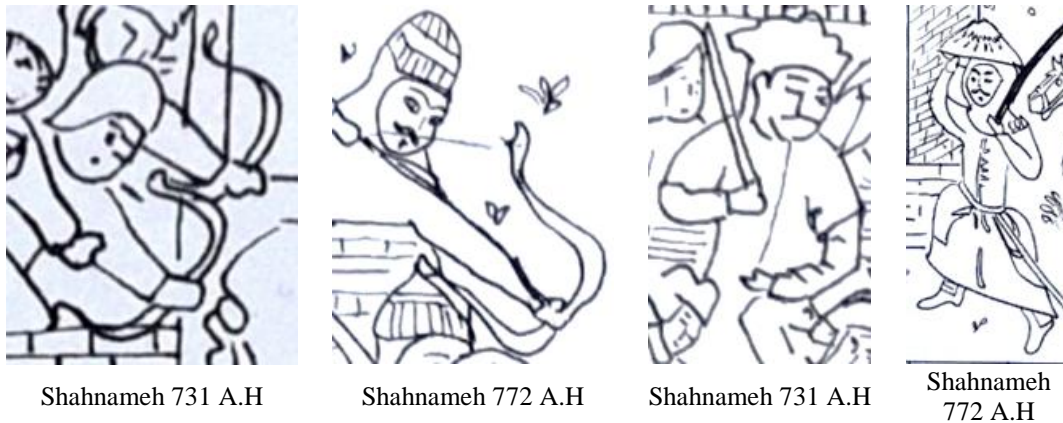


**Figure 11.** Line drawing and details of the dragon figure in Assembly 1 (Bahram Gur's battle with the dragon). Source: Authors.

Assembly 2. In the «Battle of Kay Khosrow and Afrasiab» in the Shahnameh of 731 A.H., we see a staircase facing upwards, which causes the eye to move upwards. The crowding of human and animal figures in the painting shows a kind of dynamic and forward movement of the battle scene. A part of the image is drawn above and outside the frame. The character of the king (Kay Khosrow) at the top, and the main warrior (Afrasiab) at the bottom of the



frame, are drawn in a larger and more prominent way. Due to the lack of color image resources, in terms of color composition, most likely, like other paintings of Shahnameh 731 A.H., the painting has dominant warm colors. In the Shahnameh of 772 A.H., we see the use of warm and cold colors in a balanced way next to each other, as well as the good quality of the colors. Using round hills, a high horizon, plant decorations and the ground covered with flowers and plants are the characteristics of this painting. Allocating a small corner of the image to the blue sky, the details of the castle building, as well as clothing and war tools such as shields and spears, and movement and dynamics in the figures, are of interest. The placement of the figures behind each other induces a kind of perspective. Also, the pointing direction of the spears creates a kind of visual rotation in the image. Face painting and figure painting are clear in a conventional and Mongolian style (See Figures 12).



**Figure 12.** Line drawing, details of face and body in Assembly 2 (Battle of Kay Khosrow and Afrasiab). Source: Authors.

Assembly 3. In the story of «Kamus-Kashani» in the Shahnameh of 731 A.H., human and animal figures are used in a large and stout form, which occupies a large part of the image. The main focus is done by depicting the character of the fighter in half of the frame and it has caused a kind of coherence in the image. The image frame is displayed horizontally across the entire width of the page. The faces are depicted without special emotional and emotional states and conventional portraiture, human figures and war tools in detail. This picture in the Shahnameh of 772 A.H. has nature full of decorative elements, various flowers and plants and shrubs and round hills. Dedicating the upper part of the image to the cloudy sky and the attention to details of the clothes, hat and saddle of the horse in the traditional and Mongolian style attract attention. Placement of the warrior's body in the middle of the image with warm color on a cold color background is intended. The protrusion of a part of the landscape, from the right side, is worth mentioning. The good quality of color without bright shadows and also the lack of respect for human proportions are the characteristics of this painting (See Figure 13).



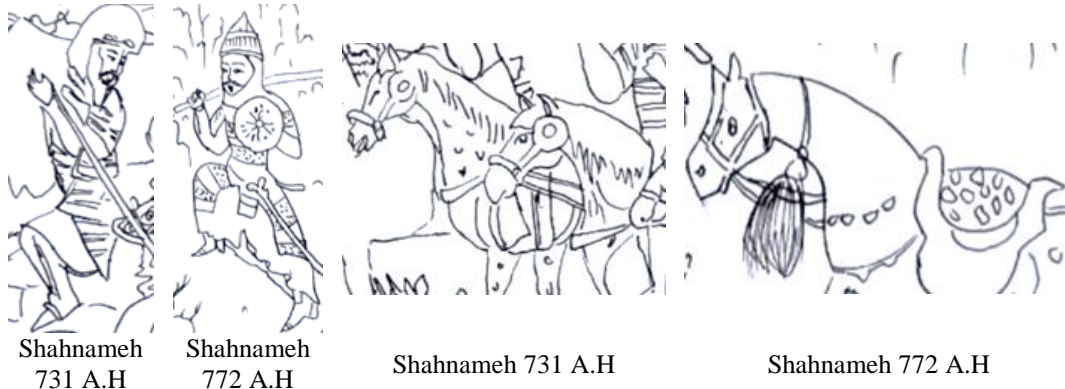
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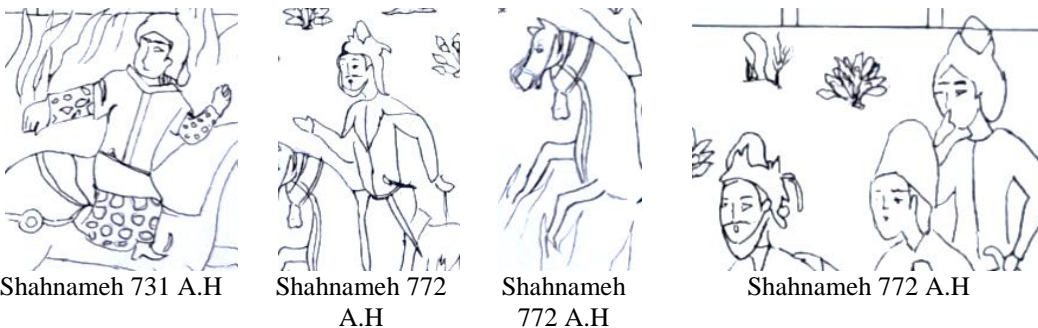
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**Figure 13.** Line drawing and iconography details in assembly 3 (Dastan Kamoskhani). Source: Authors.

Assembly 4. The use of warm colors, especially red and ochre, can be seen in the painting «Passing Siavash through the Fire» in the Shahnameh of 731 A.H. of Al-Inju school. The horizontal image frame that is on the upper left side is stepped. The main body on a horse is placed in a single form and with more emphasis on the right part of the picture; also, the white color of the dress on the red background of fire emphasizes it. Using thin lines has separated the human and animal figures from the text of the image. More details are seen in the dress and a part of the palace can be seen on the left side and no natural details can be seen in the image. This image in the Shahnameh of 772 A.H. period of Al-Muzaffar has an almost square frame at the bottom of the page. Warm colors are predominantly used next to cold colors and cause the eye to rotate in the image frame. Using flowers, bushes and round hills covers the entire background of the painting. Using thin lines has separated the figures from the background. Good color quality and no bright shadows, as well as figures and conventional clothes, are considered (See Figure 14).



**Figure 14.** Line drawing and details of the figures in assembly 4 (passing Siavash over the fire). Source: Authors

Assembly 5. The illustration of the story of Kay Khosrow son of Siavash in the Shahnameh of 731 A.H. is depicted with a combination of predominantly warm colors and some cold colors. The image frame is staggered on both sides, so that the main character is placed in the center of the image with a larger figure. The decorations of the king's throne and clothes have been considered by the artist more than those around him. Some natural elements can be seen in the image's background. In this picture in the Shahnameh of 796 A.H. period of Al-Muzaffar period, the decorations of natural elements in work and also the luxuriousness

of the king's throne in the center of the picture attract attention. The stepped frame at the top of the image has created a great breathing space in the image. The clothes of the people in the picture are simple and without additional decorations. Almost different headdresses in terms of color probably show the difference in status. The direction of turning heads and looking towards the center of people induces a kind of attention to the center. Emotional states are not clear because of the distortion of the faces (See Figure 15).



**Figure 15.** Line drawing detailing assembly 5 (the story of Kikhusro son of Siavash). Source: Authors.

**3. Structural features:** Assembly 1. In the picture of the battle «Bahram Gur with the dragon» in both Shahnameh of Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar, Bahram Gur is depicted on the right side of the image, attacking the dragon on the left. In the Shahnameh of Al-Inju, we see the staircase of symmetry in the lower part of the image and the features of Mongolian painting of the Tabriz school are clear like sharp mountains. The area occupied by the dragon is two-thirds of the frame and the remaining third of the frame belongs to the human body and, in general, can be seen Symmetric state without symmetry in the picture. In Al-Muzaffar Shahnameh, the square frame of the picture and the style of Chinese Mongolian painting can be seen especially in the drawing of dragons and round hills, as well as the face and body of Bahram riding a horse. Triangular composition can be seen in such a way that the tip of the triangle is on Bahram Gur's head and creates a state of focus. Dynamics and movement, creating open space, focusing on breathing space and maintaining the connection of the main elements, can be seen in this image (See Figure 16).



**Figure 16.** Line drawing of assembly 1 (Bahram Gur's battle with the dragon). Source: Authors.

Assembly 2. The picture of the battle of Kay Khosrow and Afrasiab in the Shahnameh of 731 A.H. has an asymmetrical composition, the weight of the elements on the left side of the picture is clear. The asymmetric triangular composition, the compression and back-to-

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back execution of the figures, and the poor execution quality of the image elements have created very little breathing space in this picture. This picture in the Shahnameh of 772 A.H. of Al-Muzaffar has a composition almost symmetrical. So that the heaviness of the palace building on the left side is compensated by numerous human figures on the right side. And the movement of the eye on the page is quite noticeable. The pure quality of line and execution, as well as the attention to details, are worth mentioning. Putting the figures on top of each other and aligning the elements induces a kind of dimensionality (See Figures 17).



Shahnameh 731 A.H



Shahnameh 772 A.H

**Figure 17.** Line drawing of Assembly 2 (Battle of Kay Khosrow and Afrasiab). Source: Authors

Assembly 3. In the picture of «Kamus Keshani» in the Shahnameh of 731 A.H. similarity composition, while not similarity and it is also clear that the main character is placed on the golden point. The connection of the main elements is preserved in this picture and due to the big size of the figures and images, there is very little breathing space for the background (See Figure 5). This image in the Shahnameh of 772 A.H. has a similar composition centered in the center of the image; also, excellent breathing space is quite clear. The composition of the main elements is on the diameter of the picture, and this dynamic combination induces an upward movement. The pure quality of line, color and execution, as well as distant lines, are considered (See Figure 18).



Shahnameh 731 A.H



Shahnameh 772 A.H

**Figure 18.** Line drawing of Assembly 3 (Dastan Kamoskhani). Source: Authors.



Assembly 4. In the image of «Siavash's passing through the fire» in both Shahnamehs, an asymmetric composition is clear and also focusing on the character of Siavash, which is drawn in a larger form and separate from other pictures and it is placed in the middle of the warm colors orange and red that represent the flames. In the Shahnameh of 731 A.H., the main character is placed on the right side of the picture and all attention is drawn to this part of the frame. Three horse-riding figures and two female figures at the top somehow are balanced in a triangular composition. In this painting, the attention to the breathing space and also the connection of the main elements of the image has been somewhat reduced. In the Shahnameh of 772 A.H., the figure of the main character on a horse is placed in the golden point of the frame, that is, on the left and bottom of the image. And in order to balance the image and rotate the view, three human figures are seen on the right side; also, the surrounding natural decorations have created a good breathing space in this painting. Maintaining the connection of the main elements of the image, creating open space and Symmetrical and asymmetric are quite clear (See Figures 19).



Shahnameh 731 A.H



Shahnameh 772 A.H

**Figure 19.** Line drawing of Assembly 4 (passing Siavash over the fire). Source: Authors.

Assembly 5. The image of «Kay Khosrow son of Siavash» in both Shahnameh of Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar has Symmetrical composition. In both Shahnamehs, centrality in the work and emphasis on the main character can be seen. The pictorial space of this painting in the Shahnameh of 731 A.H. is completely covered with human figures and free of any natural decorations. Flat color surfaces are visible without an exponential dimension. This picture has a symmetrical triangular composition. In the Shahnameh of 796 A.H., the open image space is clearly visible, especially at the top of the frame. It should be noted that the execution quality is weaker and also the lack of attention to details compared to Al-Muzaffar's early paintings (See Figure 20).





Shahnameh 772 A.H



Shahnameh 731 A.H

**Figure 20.** Assembly 5 sketch (the story of Kay Khosrow son of Siavash). Source: Authors.

### Discussion and analysis of research findings

A remarkable and common point in the Shahnamehs of Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar is the use of horizontal and staggered frames to synchronize the text and image. Using the stair frame provides the painter with facilities to easily achieve his goals in the page layout and composition of the work; For example, putting the main characters, events and incidents in the biggest frame, placing the secondary characters and events in stairs or smaller frames. In this way, the viewer's attention is drawn to the larger frames or steps that have the main task of describing the scene. Also, in another application of these types of frames, besides intensifying the symmetry of the composition, it is to show the situation and position of the people depicted in the event; usually the king or important people were placed on the biggest step, subordinate people and enemies who were less important were placed on smaller steps, which can be considered as a kind of official perspective. Of course, it is worth mentioning that the use of central symmetry in some images did not prevent the eye from rotating in the frame. And the artist with special awareness has reduced, creating stillness and lack of dynamism in the picture by using facilities such as lines and various color options; also, if the main character is not in the center of the frame, the artist draws the viewer's attention to the subject by using factors. In cases where the image is seen protruding from the picture frame, the dynamics and movement are such that it causes the eye to turn. In pictures, empty space is not used as part of the composition and the background of the paintings is filled with flowers and plants or decorative elements, sometimes in summary and stylized form and sometimes with details. The artist of this period reduced the negative effects of the background by drawing the main events boldly and clearly. In the illustrations of these Shahnamehs, the separation of elements besides separating the levels, used as a decorative element and it takes the image out of the state of uniformity and stillness and it gives a new spirit to the shape of the figures and the general view of the painting.



# PAYKAREH

Journal of Art Faculty, Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz

Connection and Discontinuity of Shahnameh Writing in Shiraz Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar Schools

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		Shiraz Al Inju School					Shiraz Al Muzaffar School					
		Asse mbly 1	Asse mbly2	Asse mbly3	Assemb ly4	Assem bly5	Asse mbly 1	Asse mbly 2	Assemb ly3	Assemb ly4	Assem bly5	
iconography	concentrate on main character	✓	×	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	✓	✓	✓	
	Painting with emphasis on the main character	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Native / non-native / oriental	Native next to Mongolian					Non-native and Mongolian					
	Expression of inner states	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Contract format	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Viewing Angle	The upper body is three-sided and the legs are half-faced	The upper body is three-sided and the legs are half-faced	The upper body is three-sided and the legs are half-faced	The upper body is three-sided and the legs are half-faced	The central figure from the front and the figures around the three-sided upper body	The upper body is three-sided and the legs are half-faced	The upper body is three-sided and the legs are half-faced	The upper body is three-sided and the legs are half-faced	The upper body is three-sided and the legs are half-faced	The central figure from the front and the figures around the upper body are three-sided, the legs are half-faced	
	concentrate on main character	✓	×	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	✓	✓	✓	
	The number of bodies	wo man	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
		Man	1	25	6	4	14	1	8	2	4	6
		Animal	2	3	5	4	-	2	3	1	1	-
clothes	Native/non-native	Native and non-native					non-native					
	Contract format	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	head cover	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Clothing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	footwear	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
landscape	Nature	✓	×	×	×	×	✓	×	✓	✓	✓	
	buildings	×	✓	×	✓	×	×	✓	×	×	×	
	The scene of the incident	Mountain	battle castle	battle scene	Palace of nature	Castle	Nature	battle castle	Nature	Nature	garden nature	
	The relationship between landscape and narrative	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	×	✓	

		Shiraz Al Inju School					Shiraz Al Muzaffar School					
		Asse mbly 1	Asse mbly2	Asse mbly3	Assemb ly4	Assem bly5	Asse mbly 1	Asse mbly 2	Assemb ly3	Assemb ly4	Assem bly5	
Color	Variety of color palette	Low color variation	No color image	No color image	Medium color variation	Medium color variation	Medium color variation	Many color variations	Medium color variation	Many color variations	Many color variations	
	dominant color	Red	No color image	No color image	ocher red	orange green	blue ocher	wormy brown	blue	light brown	wormy	
	Predominance of warm/cold colors	hot	No color image	No color image	hot	equal	equal	hot	cold	hot	hot	
	Use of complementary colors	x	No color image	No color image	red and green	red and green Orange and blue	x	x	x	Orange and blue	x	
Dimensioning		x	x	x	x	x	x	Very low	x	x	x	
Performance quality		weak	weak	weak	Pure quality of line and execution	Pure quality of line and execution	Pure quality of line and execution	Pure quality of line and execution	Pure quality of line and execution	Pure quality of line and execution	Pure quality of line and execution	
Structure	Composition type	Non-triangular and dynamic	Triangular and dynamic	Non-triangular and dynamic	Triangular and static	Symmetrical and static triangle	Triangular and dynamic	Triangular and dynamic	Diagonal and dynamic	Triangular and static	Axially symmetrical and static	
	Corresponding/non-corresponding composition	symmetry	Unmatched	Unmatched	Unmatched	symmetry	Correspondence in the same dissimilarity				symmetry	
	Application of golden points	x	x	✓	x	x	✓	✓	x	✓	x	
	Approach	decorative	x	x	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		imaginary	✓	x	x	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓
		realist	x	✓	✓	x	x	x	✓	x	x	x
		naturalist	x	x	x	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓
	symbolist	✓	x	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	
The connection of image elements with each other		keep in touch	keep in touch	keep in touch	Reduced communication	keep in touch	keep in touch	keep in touch	Reduced communication	Reduced communication	keep in touch	
Attention to breathing space		x	x	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

**1. Aspects of similarity:** Examining the content, visual and structural features of the selected paintings from Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar periods reveals obvious similarities, especially in the page layout. In terms of content, these pictures are completely similar to each other and have depicted the desired narratives. Similar features can be seen in page layout, such as the use of the text box, the number of columns, and broken and staggered boxes. Conventional format in portraits and portraits and clothes is clearly clear in both Shahnamehs and non-native laws have been followed, such as Mongolian and Chinese elements. Emphasis on the main character and the use of official painting in pictures that are the same in terms of content can be seen in both Shahnamehs. In both periods, the display of emotional and emotional states is not seen in the faces. Also, in these



Shahnamehs, the angle of view is drawn in the three-faced face painting, and in the full-face portrait of the upper body, and the legs are drawn in half-length. In the Shahnamehs in question, distant lines are used to represent human and animal figures, and in terms of color usage, flat colors are used in both periods without shading and projection. In the Shahnamehs of both schools, we see the dynamics and cutting off and protruding of human and animal figures and trees in the frame of the pictures.

**2. Aspects of difference:** Numerous differences can be seen in the illustrations of the Shahnamehs of these two periods. The selected paintings of these two periods differ from each other in terms of visual features such as how to use color and natural decorative elements. In the Shahnameh of 731 A.H., the period of Al-Inju was dominated by warm colors such as red, orange, and ocher. Because of the use of large human and animal figures, there is no place left for nature decorations and there is little breathing space in the paintings. In the Shahnameh of 772 and 796 A.H. of Al-Muzaffar, the variety of colors and the use of a diverse color palette were more than in the previous period. And in some paintings, the predominance of cold color is quite clear. In the Shahnamehs of Al-Muzaffar, especially the Shahnameh of 772 A.H., purer colors are used with better execution quality compared to the period of Al-Inju. Using decorations and elements of nature, such as the high horizon and various flowers and bushes, are often seen next to appropriate human and animal figures. In general, the dream landscape is one of the remarkable features of Al-Muzaffar's paintings, which replaces the raw landscape of Al-Inju. Also, the existence of great breathing space in Al-Muzaffar's paintings has caused the eyes to rotate in the image. For writing in Shahnameh 731 A.H. of the Al-Inju period, the Naskh script is used, and in the Shahnamehs of Al-Muzaffar, the Nastaliq script is used with elegance. The viewing angle of the viewer and the painter in the Al-Inju period is more than facing, while in Al-Muzaffar Shahnameh, the viewing angle of the viewer is from above and facing. In terms of the structure of the composition in Al-Inju paintings, there is symmetry in most cases and asymmetry in a few paintings. But in most of the paintings of Al-Muzaffar period, there is Symmetry at the same time asymmetry and probably for this reason, maintaining the connection of the elements of the image with each other is stronger and clear in the paintings of Al-Inju's Shahnameh than in the paintings of Al-Muzaffar. In Al-Inju's paintings, we mostly see an imaginary and symbolic approach and in Al-Muzaffar's paintings, decorative, naturalistic, and realist approaches can be observed besides imaginary and symbolic approaches. In Al-Muzaffar's Shahnameh, due to the social and political atmosphere prevailing in the Shiraz region, there are more influences from the Mongolian and Chinese elements compared to the Al-Inju period. In the paintings of Al-Inju, there is more localism and Iranian traditions. So that in face painting and figure drawing, native elements are used along with Mongolian ones, while in Al Muzaffar's Shahnamehs, native elements have been replaced by Mongolian and Chinese elements. In terms of the space occupied by the images on the page, in the Shahnamehs of Al-Inju, the dominant space is mostly written. While in Al-Muzaffar's Shahnamehs, in some pictures, the picture and writing are equal, and sometimes, more space is occupied by the picture and a smaller percentage of the page is dedicated to writing.

### **Conclusion**

According to the comparison of the painting characteristics of five similar assemblies in the two schools of Shiraz, Al-Inju and Al-Muzaffar, with the themes of Battle of Bahram Gur with the dragon, Battle of Kay Khosrow and Afrasiab, Kamus-Kashani, The story of Siavash passing through the fire and The story of Siavash's son Kay Khosrow which were

shared in the Shahnamehs of 731 A.H. by Al-Inju, 772 A.H. and 796 A.H. by Al-Muzaffar. The research findings show that, although there are commonalities in the content, visual and structural characteristics of the paintings, which exist mostly in the layout and composition of the two schools, many differences are also clear. In the layout of both schools, we see common features such as the type of page, the number of columns, and the use of stepped and broken boxes to synchronize the text with the image. Also, one of the significant similarities between these two schools is the use of happy and bright colors; with the difference that in the period of Al-Inju, the dominant color in most paintings was warm tones, but in the period of Al-Muzaffar, the color palette was wider and the use of warm and cold colors together increased. In the painting of Al-Inju, due to the enlargement and the use of larger human and animal figures, less space is dedicated to nature than in the painting of Al-Muzaffar. In other words, unlike the Al-Inju school, in which the exaggerated use of plants and placing large figures in the picture's foreground are clear. In the Al-Muzaffar school, the elegance in the display of vegetation and the smaller size of the figures is obvious; As the use of many flower and bush decorations to cover the ground, landscaping, as well as the lofty horizon and focusing on the breathing space in Al-Muzaffar's paintings have become unique features of this school. The most similarities between the first and second councils in terms of content, visual and structural characteristics can be seen in the dynamics and movements of the figures. In the third assembly, we see the least similarity and the most difference in visual and structural features in both paintings. The fourth assembly has various similarities in terms of content and many differences in terms of visual and structural aspects. In the fifth assembly, it has common features in terms of content and structure, and in terms of visual features such as the lack of breathing space (in Al-Inju's painting), it has a lack of common features. What is clear is the influence of Al-Inju's painting inspired by the ancient and native cultures of Fars and this influence is noticeable in the type of face painting and details; While in Al-Muzaffar's painting, due to the socio-political atmosphere prevailing in the Shiraz region, this old style has given way to new definitions influenced by the Tabriz school. It is obvious to get to know as much as possible the characteristics and characteristics of the Shiraz schools of the 8<sup>th</sup> century A.H., which, like the poly-traditions of pre-Islamic images of Iran, have been transferred to post-Islamic schools. Also, examining the illustrations of these schools' manuscripts in terms of synchronization with the calligraphy pen, the effects of the socio-political situation at the time of illustration can be the basis for deeper analysis.

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