

RELIGION AND PERSIAN MINIATURE

During the Reign of King Tahmasp as Two Sources for Political Legitimacy

The Safavid kings drew on shi'ism to unify their territory and to bring about political division between neighboring territories and that of their own. Nevertheless, they seem to have encountered certain difficulties in this scheme. To overcome these problems and establish further concrete legitimacy, they began to support and promote art and artists, though modifying their relationship with them as demanded by the circumstances and the needs of their state. Inevitably, this kind of behavior led to inconsistent, at times even paradoxical, behavior on the part of the rulers. Among these rulers, King Tahmasp is particularly apt for the present study. Despite being an ardent patron of Persian miniature in the first decade of his reign, not only did he publicly renounce this art but he also notoriously continued to mistreat artists for the rest of his life. This paper asserts that it is the weakness and, later on, the absence of one of the sources for political legitimacy that accounts for King Tahmasp's inconsistent and paradoxical behavior. Thus, King Tahmasp's renunciation of this art and his repentance for having supported it must not be viewed merely as a transformation of his personal religious beliefs; rather, it must be interpreted in relation to his political power. His support for and attention to the huge project of illustrating "Shahnameh" must be assessed in a similar fashion

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as well. In other words, art and religion were two effective tools wielded by King Tahmasp to enhance his political power. Accordingly, having "Shahnameh" illustrated and warming up to religious scholars and clergymen after his repentance served to bring about royal and religious legitimacies respectively. The authors of the present study aim to explicate the religious and political contexts of King Tahmasp's reign, and to examine the rise and fall of Persian miniature.

The researchers who have paid attention to politics and religion in the era of Safavid, such as Andrew Newman⁽¹⁾, RulaJurdiAbisaab⁽²⁾ and Amir Arjomand⁽³⁾ didn't care to the effect of politics and religion on arts in particular on painting. Those who have heeded to history of Safavid art like Kanbi⁽⁴⁾ although have allocated an introduction in their studies to political and religious conditions, but they haven't surveyed the influence of the mentioned circumstances on the arts. Perhaps there are two exceptions. The first one is Hilinborand's

paper⁽⁵⁾, «ShahnameShahi's Portraiture». In this case, he uses the images of Tahmasp-Shahname in his political issue and regarding the denotation of the paintings, introduces this master piece of painting as an image of his period political conditions. The second one is Kenbi's essay "the Safavid Painting"⁽⁶⁾ that surveys the painting of Safavids in the field of Political and religious issue in the first century of this reign. But none of these two researchers notices the role of legitimate giving the painting of TahmaspiShahname against the religious legitimate which was left by Shah Tahmasp

In favor of Shi'i jurisprudent, the study intends to investigate this aspect of painting art relation and religion & Politics. It also studies the face of two kinds political legitimate, on the base of religion and Shahname painting in Shah Tahmasp's times.

King Tahmasp, the second king in the Safavid Dynasty, ascended to the throne in Tabriz in 930 AH. At the time, Shi'ism had come to be officially accepted, enabling Iran to regain political unity. A painter and calligrapher himself, King Tahmasp was particularly interested in book illustration and, as a result, admitted an increasing number of artists to the court. Notably, "Shahnameh" was illustrated at his command with 258 illustrations, which

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subsequently came to be called “The King TahmaspShahnameh”. This unprecedented and rather odd action on the part of the king has recurrently kindled the curiosity of historians and made them probe into the motives behind it. This curiosity is justified by the fact that during a reign of more than 50 years, King Tahmasp adopted varying, at times contradictory, policies on art and artists. In the first decade of his rule, for instance, he fervently pursued artistic aspirations, but then he repented, banning all arts, and shifted his attention to religion. Considering the extent to which the Safavids were influenced by Shi’ism, the present study aims to analyze the role of King Tahmasp’s religious tendencies in the popularity of Persian miniature during his reign.

Our contention is that although Safavid rulers had initially drawn on Shi’ism to unify their territory and to bring about political division between the adjacent territories and that of their own, they were perfectly aware that Shi’ism alone could not guarantee undisputed legitimacy for their rule. Naturally, they sought

other sources of legitimacy. Besides religion, therefore, they attempted to employ two further sources by introducing themselves as the spiritual leaders of the Sufi order, and claiming to be descended from the dynasty ruling over the ancient (pre-Islamic) Iran⁽⁷⁾. These three sources were incorporated to varying degrees in that if one diminished, the others were emphasized and consequently strengthened. This explains, for instance, why after King Ismail’s defeat in Chaldoran and the decline of his spiritual authority as the Sufi leader among Ghezelbash tribes, he had to resort to Persian miniature. The illustration of “Shahnameh” which began in his reign and came to fruition in King Tahmasp’s reign can be viewed as his attempt at establishing royal legitimacy (i.e. claiming divine right by relating himself to the dynasty ruling over the ancient pre-Islamic Iran). As mentioned earlier, Shi’ism, with its tenets concerning Imams and leadership, could never grant the Safavid rulers unquestionable legitimacy. Whereas people might have paid little attention to how devout their king was, they were deeply affected by the guidelines with which their religious leader provided them⁽⁸⁾. Consequently, Safavid kings felt a need for the active presence of religious leaders and scholars both to confirm the religious suitability of Safavid rulers at kingship

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and to provide them, though implicitly, with legitimacy⁽⁹⁾.

King Tahmasp's repentance and resorting to Shi'ism must be viewed as a scheme to derive religious legitimacy. He pursued two goals through this action: firstly, to show people that he was qualified for kingship; and secondly, to derive further legitimacy by displaying obedience to religious leaders and scholars. Thus, the relationship among Shi'ism, politics and art, far from having anything to do with the king's personal taste and belief, ought to be studied with a view to religion as a source for political legitimacy; further, the interplay of other sources for political legitimacy must be taken into account to explain how and why the Safavid kings were forced to turn to another source when one source diminished.

Based on this foundation, the present study contends that the popularity of Persian miniature in the reign of King Tahmasp was impacted by Shi'ism as a source of political legitimacy when other sources were either diminished or absent, and that the King's repentance and resorting to Shi'ism must be considered as a scheme to derive religious legitimacy.

2. Political Context: The Rule of King

Tahmasp

The eldest child to King Ismail I and the founder of the Safavid dynasty, Tahmasp-Mirza, given the middle name AbulFath, was born in Shahabad, a village located in Isfahan, on DhillHadja 26, 919 A.H.⁽¹⁰⁾. Only two years of age, he was appointed by his father as the ruler of Khorasan in 921 A.H.. A man named AmirkhanMoslou was selected to mentor the young prince and to take charge of the affairs in Khorasan⁽¹¹⁾. Subsequently, King Ismail appointed Amir Ghiasuddin Mohammad as a "Lord Chancellor of Khorasan and Head of judges, scholars, etc." and to tutor the young prince⁽¹²⁾. During his residence in Harat, Amirkhan did much to improve the circumstances in Khorasan through selecting ministers such as Madjd al din Mohammad Kermani and Mawlana Amir Samarkandi⁽¹³⁾. After the Uzbeks attacked Harat, however, TahmaspMirza and Amirkhan were both called on to move to Tabriz. TahmaspMirza continued to reside in Tabriz from 928 A.H. until the death of King Ismail. After the demise of his father on Rajab 19, 930 A.H., Tahmasp-

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Mirza ascended to the throne⁽¹⁴⁾ when he was only 10 years, 6 months and 23 days old⁽¹⁵⁾, beginning his long rule which was to last until his death in 984 A.H.

King Tahmasp spent seven years under Amir Ghiaseddin's tutorship in Harat, being trained in whatever was deemed necessary for a prince. After he moved to Tabriz, his father discovered great talent in him for the arts, and thus appointed Sultan Mohammad Tabrizi and Behzad, both of whom were "attendants of the royal library", to instruct the young prince⁽¹⁶⁾. Mir Khalil and Khawdja Abd al Aziz have also been mentioned by some historians to have been the king's instructors at some point⁽¹⁷⁾. According to Sadeghi Beyk⁽¹⁸⁾, the 10th-century painter, poet and chronicler, Tahmasp Mirza was in possession of an innate gift for the arts. Most researchers ascribe the culmination of art in his reign to the presence of artists such as Sultan Mohammad Tabrizi and Behzad as well as to the king's own fascination with it; nonetheless, the fact that he later on repented and renounced art, shifting

his attention from art and artists to religion and religious leaders, indicates the extent to which his interest in art at the beginning of his reign was politically charged.

3. Religious Context: King Tahmasp's Repentance

Although the king had been instructed in Shi'ism by Amir Ghiasudin Mohammad—one of the most brilliant scholars of Khorasan—ever since he was a child, a review of King Tahmasp's biography before his repentance will provide few or no traces of such a religious upbringing. According to historical accounts, until the age of 20 (939 A.H.), the king did not avoid actions deemed sinful by religion, indulging himself in revelries and debaucheries, and spent his time listening to fortune tellers, drinking wine and smoking hashish⁽¹⁹⁾. In 940 AH, however, he repented of his sins and famously decreed, "These mandates are henceforth to be observed throughout the realm by everyone, according to which drinking wine, gambling and prostitution shall be eradicated from our realm, and should anyone violate this law, he or she will be punished severely."⁽²⁰⁾

On the surface, King Tahmasp's repentance was brought about by the Shia leaders and scholars of the Safavid court and their

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increasing influence. Ever since King Ismail (ruling from 907-930 A.H.) declared Shi'ism as the official religion of the kingdom, there had been an urgent need for a Shia leading authority who could deal with the innumerable Sunni scholars. This need was met when King Tahmasp invited a number of Shia scholars from Iraq, Bahrain and JabalAmel to Iran⁽²¹⁾. A significant religious-political movement ensued their arrival in the Safavid world which paved the way for the generation of a new title, the "head" of religious scholars. This was certainly a position of utmost importance in the religious-political hierarchy of the Safavids, responsible for fighting the opponents of Shi'ism⁽²²⁾. Several sources credit Mohammad JabalAmeli (b. 968 A.H.), one of the invited scholars, with having played the biggest role in King Tahmasp's repentance. Coming from JabalAmil in Lebanon, Mohammad JabalAmili initially became the *pishnamaz* (a religious leader behind whom congregations say their prayers) of King Tahmasp's army, and participated in repelling the first attack by Sultan SulaymanOsmani (an Ottoman king) in 939-940 A.H. This Shia scholar claimed to have had a vision during this battle in which he had been told by the Prophet Muhammad that, "If the king repents of his sins, God shall grant him effortless conquer of many lands. " Moved by

this news, the king is said to have repented"⁽²³⁾.

Similarly, Mohaqiq Karaki was another such Shia scholar invited to Iran who started to teach and compile Hadith and Fatwas in the king's campaign. Although MohaqiqKaraki did not believe the Safavid rule to be lawful and legitimate, he maintained that the Safavid rulers were promoting Shia religion and instructions, and that the religious scholars' success was possible only by their support⁽²⁴⁾. Subsequently, he gained so much power that the king himself began to seem to be Karaki's assistant. According to Khawnsari, when the king was putting Karaki in charge of the realm and giving him unlimited power, he said, "You are more deserving of being the king and I am merely one of your servants, obedient to your orders"⁽²⁵⁾. The king's subservience to the interests of Shi'ism went too far. Becoming ever stricter in religious matters, he ordered the rulers of the various parts of his realm to adopt a similar attitude to the point that people who

Although MohaqiqKaraki did not believe the Safavid rule to be lawful and legitimate, he maintained that the Safavid rulers were promoting Shia religion and instructions,

violated the rules against indulging in music and wine would be brought to the scaffold. Part of his decree read, "Entertainers of all sorts, including storytellers and all those who accompany the entertainers, are hereafter law-breakers"⁽²⁶⁾. By the same token, playing any and all musical instruments was banned, and violators had their hands cut off⁽²⁷⁾. Sufi orders had an equally hard time as well⁽²⁸⁾. The carved stone tablets put up in mosques and public places attest to the importance of these mandates⁽²⁹⁾.

These harsh policies fanned the flame of religious dissent between the Sunni and the Shia, and had a significant impact on the arts too. As biographers of the Sunni figures of the period indicate, those who refused to convert to Shi'ism were tenaciously persecuted. Notably, Mir Ala al Din HusainiGhazvini's family was among these victims⁽³⁰⁾ whose property and possessions were confiscated by law, and whose safety was jeopardized. To avoid torture, Mir Ala'eddin and his brother, Mir Abd al Latif, were forced to seek refuge in Hodayun's court in India. Ubiquitous during the reign of IbnBatuta, many of the monasteries, convents, etc., which enabled dervishes among others to practice their religions, were demolished in this period⁽³¹⁾.

As was mentioned before, not only the

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king's repentance but also his attitude toward art and artists was shaped by the religious scholars of the court. One such scholar of influence was Mohaqiq Karaki who deemed the depiction of countenance in paintings religiously unlawful⁽³²⁾. Therefore, King Tahmasp's renunciation of Persian miniature might have been caused by Karaki's fatwa. Abdi Beyk Navidi Shirazi, one of the historians in the court of King Tahmasp, memorably remarked that after the king's repentance circumstances grew so strict and somber that Imam Zaman (the 12th imam in Shi'ism) was expected to arrive any day⁽³³⁾. Thus he sycophantically commented, "May his rule lead to and join that of the 12th Imam"⁽³⁴⁾. Abdi Beyk-NavidiShirazi pointed out elsewhere that even though 40 years had elapsed from the king's mandate, no one dared commit a "sin". Having witnessed the decapitation of many a law-breakers, everyone knew that any violation of rules was punishable by death⁽³⁵⁾. The king's intolerance and severity persisted, and even the Christian inhabitants of Iran such as the Armenians and Gorjis were persecuted from

959 to 961 A.H.⁽³⁶⁾. Famously, on learning that Antony Jenkinson who was there to deliver the queen of England's letter to the king was a Christian, King Tahmasp immediately expelled the ambassador from the court⁽³⁷⁾.

Undoubtedly, these strict measures affected art and artists, forcing numerous painters and Persian miniaturists, among others, to emigrate abroad. One such artist was Kamal al-Din Husaini Harati (b. 973), an accomplished calligrapher and a master of *nasta'liq* in particular, who moved from Harat to Mashhad and then to Qom to join King Tahmasp's campaign. However, upon realizing that he was not at all welcome there, he immediately left the court, disillusioned, never to return⁽³⁸⁾.

Despite the severity with which everyone was expected to adhere to religion and its binding commands, the king, marvelously enough, did not consider himself bound to do so and disobeyed the rules with impunity. After his repentance, for instance, although he pretended to be staunchly, even exaggeratedly, religious, he broke the oath he had made by the Quran and sanctioned the execution of Muslims, including that of his own brothers

and their sons, with no objection on the part of those around him⁽³⁹⁾. Therefore, his repentance ought to be viewed not as a genuine, personal transformation of his beliefs, but as a strategic move that he had to make in order to manipulate the presence of religious scholars in the court and attain further legitimacy.

4. Vogue and Decline of Persian Miniature

The development of Persian miniature in the reign of King Tahmasp can best be traced by dividing his long rule into two periods of before and after his repentance.

a) Before Repentance

Interested in painting and calligraphy, King Tahmasp began getting lessons in his adolescence⁽⁴⁰⁾. According to Iskandar Beg Munshi⁽⁴¹⁾, the king not only "befriended and was in close contact with" artists and their circles, but

he also practiced painting whenever he was undisturbed by "the demands of kingship and the affairs of his state". Being fully supported by the king, artists were

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enabled to explore and innovate which led to the perfection of art in this period⁽⁴²⁾. Prior to this, influenced by Mongolian paintings, artists depicted the countenance, the eyes and eyebrows in particular, in imitation of Chinese models; after Behzad's innovations in this period, however, the essence of the paintings drifted away from Chinese models to the nature and life of contemporary people. Having mastered natural imitation, he produced life-like paintings of the face and popularized an unprecedented painting style. Various referred to as Realistic or Naturalistic, this new style became the vogue, enticing most of the artists of its day.

Thus, it can be concluded that the Safavid School was founded upon the style popularized by Behzad and his followers. Moreover, besides supporting artists, King Tahmasp himself gave painting a try and created works which indicate his minute attention to detail⁽⁴³⁾. In 931 A.H., for instance, he embarked on illustrating a long work of poetry titled "Ball and Polo"⁽⁴⁴⁾ by Arefi in collaboration with the artists of the court such as Mir Mosavvar, Doust Mohammad and Agha Mirak⁽⁴⁵⁾.

N e v e r t h e -
less, the illustrated

"Shahnameh" remains the masterpiece of the period. Comprised of 258 illustrations in 380 sheets, the most significant work of art in the reign of King Tahmasp is the illustrated "Shahnameh", alternatively called "The King Tahmasp Shahnameh"⁽⁴⁶⁾, which was brought about by the collaboration of the most accomplished artists of the court such as Sultan Mohammad, Agha Mirak, Mir Seyyed Ali, Mirza Ali and Mozaffar Ali⁽⁴⁷⁾. Among the most beautiful illustrations was "Kiumars's Royal Meeting Hall" by Sultan Mohammad, the supervisor of the project, which, according to Stuart Welch⁽⁴⁸⁾, took three years to finish and went far beyond the other 257 illustrations in terms of detail and variety of color. Subsequently, however, Sultan Mohammad was replaced by Mir Mosavvar. This can be traced to the king's preference for the style of Harat (in which Mir Mosavvar excelled) over that of Tabriz (at which Sultan Mohammad was competent)⁽⁴⁹⁾.

In addition to illustrating "Shahnameh", the artists of the court produced several other works, though, of course, of a lower stature. A

famous example would be "SorkhanBeigSofrechi" by Mir Mosavvar which is now kept in the British Museum⁽⁵⁰⁾. Further development in

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these single illustrations led to the advent of albums⁽⁵¹⁾. Among artists who made such albums was DoustMohammad who compiled single illustrations accompanied by pieces of calligraphy and put together an album surveying the development of art from the 8th century to the 10th century A.H.⁽⁵²⁾.

b) After Repentance

The king's repentance in 940 A.H. made its impacts on artistic activities felt only gradually. That is why (and how) Nezami's "Khamseh" managed to be illustrated with 14 illustrations by 5 artists in the court working in collaboration from 946 to 949⁽⁵³⁾ A.H. Nonetheless, inhibitions persisted, preventing artists such as Sultan Mohammad from pursuing certain projects the way they wished; for instance, at some point in the illustration of Nezami's "Khamseh" when the artists were working on an illustration titled "Khosrow's Glimpse of Shirin Bathing", a number of religious fanatics reprimanded the king for permitting such

unlawful activities. Inevitably, under such circumstances an artist such as Sultan Mohammad had to limit himself to projects which were neither disadvantageous to the state nor unfavorable to the king, and yet attempt to stay true to his art. Consequently, he started to employ subdued and gloomy colors as well as to develop a tendency towards concealing figures in rocks, clouds and tree trunks.⁽⁵⁴⁾ Further, besides creating more fanciful depictions of nature, he reduced the number of figures in his paintings; and finally, to appease the religious fanatics, he illustrated the Prophet Muhammad's ascension to Heaven⁽⁵⁵⁾.

As the king grew ever stricter after his repentance, artists found it increasingly difficult to tolerate the hostility with which he treated them. However, because the king's repentance was tactical, he seemed unable to abandon his personal interest in art. Accordingly, after the illustration of Nezami's "Khamseh" was completed, he ordered that a huge book titled "Fahlnameh" or "The Book of Divination"—ascribed to Imam Sadegh—be illustrated. This book combined verses of Quran and Hadith from the Prophet Muhammad with instructions on how to react when one comes across a bad or good omen in the book⁽⁵⁶⁾. Little information is available about the book owing to the fact that several illustrations are miss-

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ing, the last page has been lost, and the illustrations are not numbered. Welch, however, maintains that there is a connection between the king's private life from 947 to 962 A.H. and the making of this book; and, moreover, that the increasing severity with which the king adhered to religion is reflected in the obsessive, superstitious nature of this book. That is why despite being illustrated by Agha Mirak and Abdolaziz, two accomplished illustrators, the illustrations lack coherence and consistency. Whereas some depict significant historical events, the rest illustrate lesser-known incidents which may have been adapted from folk tales⁽⁵⁷⁾.

Considering the circumstances, these artists seem to have sacrificed their own interests to those of the king, and to have drawn inspiration from subject matters that were appealing to the king. King Tahmasp's religious harshness not only influenced the work of these artists, but it also caused many of them to go into exile or seek a safe haven elsewhere. Among these, artists such as Mir Mossavar, Mir Seyyed Ali, Abdolsamad, Doust Mohammad, Molana Farsi, Darvish Mohammad, Ghasem Mazhab, Fakhr Sahhaf and Ostad Younes Zargar are usually mentioned, though there is dispute among critics, some of whom contend that only four⁽⁵⁸⁾ of the artists of

the court accompanied by Homayoun went to India,⁽⁵⁹⁾ and the rest of whom assert that they were no more than two⁽⁶⁰⁾. Regardless of such disputes concerning the names and number of these artists and whether Homayoun indeed made any invitation, the free intellectual and religious atmosphere presiding over India since the time of Zahir al-Din Mohammad Babor, which was in sharp contrast to that of Iran, must have enticed artists into emigrating to India. In retrospect, these emigrations are responsible for the wonderful link between Iran's artistic traditions and those of Gourkani India. These artists disseminated the Iranian style and techniques through not only producing works of art, but also teaching and running calligraphy workshops⁽⁶¹⁾. Later on, in the reign of Akbar, these cooperations and collaborations culminated in the emergence of a new style, namely the Indian-Iranian style⁽⁶²⁾.

After the king's repentance, when Ghazvin replaced Tabriz as the capital city⁽⁶³⁾, a need was felt for Persian miniature, not least for il-

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illustrating the walls of the palace. Since the court had been depleted of artists, the king himself made illustrations on several walls of the Ivan-e ChehelSotun Palace⁽⁶⁴⁾ (The Forty-Pillared Portico Palace) such as “The Feast of Yousef and Zoleykha” and “Citrus Served to Gentlewomen of Egypt and Women”, and Mozaffar Ali, one of the king’s servants, undertook the “illustrations of Homayoun’s court and the feast hall of Ivan-e ChehelSotun”. This undertaking on the part of the king, however, must not be interpreted as the restoration of the king’s interest in art because considerably fewer artists were active then than in the past, particularly the beginning of his reign when numerous calligraphers, among other artists, were employed in producing manuscripts. In addition to Mozaffar Ali, Agha Mirak was among the scarce artists who continued to paint during this period through his friendship with the king, and helped complete the illustrations of Haft Orang in the court of EbrahimMirza in collaboration with several artists in Mashhad⁽⁶⁵⁾.

In the final years of King Tahmasp's life in 981 A.H., the manuscript of “Garshasbnameh” was illustrated. Mozaffar Ali once again did a masterly job of painting the first of the eight illustrations. Also, Sadeghi Beyk and Zeynolabedin undertook two of the illustrations of

this project⁽⁶⁶⁾.

Conclusion:

Supported by the king, the most significant work demonstrating Iranian culture, “Shahnameh”, was illustrated by the most accomplished artists of the court in the first period of King Tahmasp's reign. This interest in “Shahnameh”, a secular work advocating Iranian language and culture as well as reviving the history and tradition of kingship in ancient (pre-Islamic) Iran, is in close connection with the Safavid rulers' attempts at gaining legitimacy by claiming to be descendents of the dynasty ruling over ancient Iran and subscribing to the notion widespread in ancient Iran of kings being God's representatives on earth. This argument acquires even more cogency when one considers that after King Ismail's defeat in Chalدران, and the decline of his legitimacy and authority as the Sufi leader among Ghezelbash tribes, other sources of

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legitimacy had to be sought. Similarly, King Tahmasp's repentance and the shift in his attention and endeavors from art and artists to religion and religious leaders, far from being a mere transformation of his personal beliefs, was a scheme to gain legitimacy by having religion on his side.

The king's religious extremism after his repentance brought about a decline in Persian miniature. Before the king's repentance, artists faced no limitations and needed to take no precautions in making kingly illustrations. This is attested by the fact that a group of artists visiting the court of EbrahimMirza, the king's nephew, painted illustrations on the walls of Haft Orang in a spirit reminiscent of that of "Shahnameh". After the king's repentance, however, not only did a considerably smaller number of artists work on illustrating Nezami's "Khamseh", but they were also obligated to avoid all possible indiscretions, to limit themselves to dark and subdued colors, and to select subject matters which posed no social or religious inconveniences.

Further, Persian miniature drifted away from the kind of realism popular in the first period of his reign towards more fanciful depictions of nature, and so illustrations of religious works such as "Fahlnameh" increased in importance and popularity. The king's repentance and his subsequent severity towards artists, all of which aimed at gaining the support of religious leaders, paved the way for the emigration of artists to states such as India and the Ottoman Empire where Persian miniature was to find new supporters and take a different path.

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notes

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- 7 -The important religious changes in Safavid, caused political reactions. The Safavid kings rendered through different ways their government legitimate, such as: 1. they presented themselves as the hidden Imam vice. 2. They introduced themselves as the shadow of God on the earth. This idea backs to the Iranian kingdom before Islam. 3. They called themselves Allah way Guide (Morshid) see:
Quinn, Sholeh Alysia, *Historical Writing during the Region of Shah Abbas: ideology, imitation and ...*)2000,(p.5.
See also: Plam, John Herawld, *Desolation of the Past*, translated by Amanat, Abbas, (Tehran, 1386), translator’s preface, p. 1720-.
- 8 Sefatgol,Mansoor, *The Structure of Religious Institution and Speculation in Iran during Safavid Era: The History of Religious Changes in Iran from 10th to 12thCentury* (Tehran, 1381), p. 491 ff.
- 9 - Because of this MohaghaghKarki was invited to Iran by

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- Shah Tahmasp, he had left Iran after Ghāldoran battle. The king during welcoming ceremony the cited scholar to the capital (Isfahan) addressed him: you as the vice of hidden Imam are the most competent person to kingdom and I am only as one of your agents who fulfill your orders. (Tunikaboni, Mohammad IbnSolyman, Ghasas al-Olamā,) Tehran, 1364(, P.333.
- 10 Monshi, Alexander beik, *The Adorned-with-Scholars History of Abbasid*, performed by Afshar, Iraj, (Tehran, Amirkabir, 1350), 441/, compare with: Khandmir, Qias al-Din, *The History of Habib al-Sair*, (performed by Siaghi, Mohammad Dabir, (Tehran, 1333), The introduction by Homaii, 3531/; Natanzi, Mahmood ibn Hedayatallah Afoshtei, *Neqava al-Athar fi Zikr al-Akhyar*, performed by Eshraghi, Ehsan, (Tehran, 1350), p. 12
- His birthday has cited 918 A.H. The king himself in his biography claims his birthday 920 A.H. On the base of historical events, It seems incorrect.
- 11 - It is in historical sources that the incompetence of Zeinal Khan Shamloo – the governor of Khorasan, resident in his headquarter Harāt – in the repelling of the Ozbaks invasion and their aggression made Amir Khan Moselo the ruler of Ghayen and Balkh ruler to go before the king and inform him of insecurity in Khorasan. For this reason the king decided to assign his elder son as the governor of that area to remove the problems and encouraging and making hopeful the people.
- Qv: Khandmir, *Habib al-Sair*, p. 553; Monshi, *ibid*, corrected by Rezwanifar , Mohammad ismael, (Tehran, 1377), 761/.
- 12 - Khandmir, *ibid*, 553.
- 13 - *ibid*, 557.
- 14 - The contemporary compiler of Shah Tahmasp, GhaffariGhazvini writes: without doubt, the kingdom of Shah Tahmasp leads to Times Imam Appearance. It is odd that in confirming of his word, writes: The words of Imam is mysterious and the phrase of AkharAzzaman on the base of Amjad numbers means 930 A.H., the first year of the king's reign. See: GhaffariGhazvini, Judge Ahmad, TarikhJahanAra, by MojtabMinoovi, (Tehran, 1343), P. 281).It is very considerable that in this era Shiite thought and belief in AkhbarOzzaman issue is so customary and current among people that the author believes the end of the king rule leads to Imam Manifestation.
- 15- *Shah Tahmasp's Biography: the Description of Shah Tahmasp Life by his Own Writing*, (Berlin 1343), 8; Monshi, *ibid*, 451/; Shirazi, Zein al-Abedinibn Abd al-Momen Navidi, *Takmila al-Akhbar*, corrected by Navaee, Abd al-Hosseini, (Tehran, 1396), 549.
- 16-The jurist Monshi, AhmadQomi, *Garden of Art*, corrected by Soheili, Ahmad, (Tehran, 1396), p. 137; see also:
- 16 Basil, Gray, *An Album of Desines for Persian Texiles in Aus der Welt der Islamischen Kunst*, Festschrift fur Ernst Kuehnel,)Berlin,1959), p. 113.
- 17- Isfahani, Mirza Habib, The biography of Caligraphy and Caligraphists in Addition to the Kings Words, translated by Akbary, Rahim Chavosh, (Tehran, 1369), p. 247, 185.
- 18- Afshar, Sadeqi beyk, *The Collection of Characteristics*, translated by Abd al-Rasul Khayyampour, (Tabriz, 1327), p. 89-.

- 19- Roomlou, Hassan beyk, *The Best among Bistories*, corrected by Navaee, Abd al-Hosseini, (Tehran, 1357), p. 95; Khandmir, *ibid*, p. 156.
- 20- Qazwini, Budaq Monshi, *Jawahir al-Akhbar*, performed by Bahramnejad, Mohsen, (Tehran, 1378), p. 307; also, *Jawahir al-Akhbar*, a copy of its picture is available in the library of Islamic Grand Encyclopaedia Center, Shirazi, Navidi, *ibid*, p. 77.
- 21- For more details, see: Al-Mohajer, Ja'far, *Amiliya Travel to Iran during Safavid Era*, (Beirut, 1989).
- 22- See: Seiwari, Rodger, *Iran in the Safavid Era*, translated by Azizi, Kambiz, (Tehran, 1366), p. 27.
- 23- *King Tahmasp*, *ibid*, p. 2930-; Shirazi, Navidi, *ibid*, p. 7677-.
- 24- Korki, Ali, *Jami' al-Maghasid fi Sharh al-Ghawaid*, (Qom, 1408), p. 41.
- 25- Al-Musavi, Mirza Mohammad Bagher, al-Isfahani, Khansari, *Rawzat al-Janan fi Ahwal al-Olamawasadaat*, performed by Ismaeilian, Asadallah, (Qom, 1391), 3614/364-; Tonekaboni, *ibid*, p. 333.
- 26- Isfahani, Mohammad Yousef Waleh, *The Eternal Paradise*, corrected by Mohaddes, Mir Hashem, (Tehran, 1372), p. 395.
- 27- Monshi, Judge Ahmad Qomi, *Kholasa al-Tawarikh*, performed by Eshraghi, Ehsan, (Tehran, Tehran University, 1359), 5981/599-.
- 28 - For instance in 944 A.H., he commanded his men to arrest Shah Ghavāmoddin Norbakhsh, because he had behaved like the great kings and spent his time in hunting along with his dogs and panthers and fixed expensive curtains over the gates of his palace, the same as the kings of old Iran and Roman emperors.
- 29 - The commands of the king are found in cities such as: Kashan, Ardebil and Isfahan orderly in the upper part of Miramad Mosque, Sheikh Safi mausoleum complex and Jama Mosque. Unfortunately only a small part has remained in the form of inscription (see: Asnād and Mokātabate Siasi Iran «Shah Tahmasp-Safavi», by Navaee, AbdolHosseini,)Tehran, 1368 (, P., 513-514; Jamal, Torabi Tabatabaee, Azarbaeijan, AsarBastani(Tehran,1355), 2/ 143-145; , Henerfer, Lotfulah, Isfahan, GanjinaAsarTarikhi, Isfahan, AsarBastaniVaAlvāhVaKitubhayehTarikhidarOstun (Isfahan ,1344) 82.
- 30- He is one of contemporary scholars and the author of the biography called «*Nafa'is Al-Ma'athir*».
- 31- For more details, see: Ma'ani, Ahmad Golchin, *The History of Persian Biographies*, (Tehran, 1349), 364-2/389.
- Ibric, Almir, *Islamches Bilderverbot vom Mittel- bis ins Digitalzeitalter*,) Wien ,2006(.
- 32- Korki, *ibid*, 154/16-; for more details, see: Pakatchi, Ahmad, «*An Approach to Shii Religious Jurisprudence to Islamic Art*». In: *Hunts for the Identity of Islamic Art*, performed by Rabi'ee, Hadi, (Tehran, 1388);
- Pourjavadi, Nasrallah, «*The Historical Precedence of Prohibiting to Portray in Islamic Religion*», Ketab e Mah e Honar, (Tehran, October/November, 1380), see also:
- 33- Shirazi, Abdi beyk Zein al-Abedin ibn Abd al-Mo'men Navidi, *Janna al-Athmar, Zina al-Awraq, Sahifa al-*

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- Ikhlas*, (Moscow), p. 105; see also: Monshi, Judge Ahmad Qomi, *Kholasa al-Tawarikh*, performed by Eshraghi, Ehsan, (Tehran, Tehran University, 1359), 1991/.
- 34- *Takmila al-Akhbar*, p. 165.
- 35- Ibid, p. 77.
- 36 - The problem finally led to tendency of the Christian commanders to Russia government (for more explanation, see: Navaee, Abd al-Hosseini, Ravabete Siasi Eghtesadi, Iran dardoore Safavid, (Tehran, 1377) P. 202-203.
- 37-Seiwari, *ibid*, p. 46.
- 38 - In fact the king ordered him to recite Quran but he replied: «I have no ability of reading». (Mehrabadi, Rafiei, VaKhattatan, *Tarikh Khat*, (Tehran, 1345) P. 130. And then left the court. According to some sources Kamaloddin answer way, caused the anger and unkindness of the king towards him. (Ibid) some other accounts expressed the king happiness and satisfaction (Isfahani, *Ibid*), 248. It is obvious that if this answer way caused the gladness of the ruler, this question then raises: why did Kamalod-din leave the palace and for a long time traveled from one city to another one?
- 39 39-Sanson generally writes in this regard: If the king in Remazan month doesn't fast or drinks wine, doesn't commit sin, because he is the son of Imam and belongs to the holy prophet descendants. He is exempted from prosecution and observation all principles and rules.
- See also: Sanson, *Sanson's Travel Account*, performed and translated by Tafazzoli, Taghi, (Tehran, 1346), p 36.
- 40 -Monshi, Judge Ahmad Qomi, *Garden of Art*, p. 137.
- 41- Monshi, *ibid*, p. 1741/.
- 42- Qazwini, *Jawahir al-Akhbar*, p. 51.
- 43- Welch, S.C., *Persian Painting: Five Royal Safavid Manuscripts of the Sixteenth Century*, (1976), 107; *id*, *Persian Painting*, (New York, 1976).
- 44- This copy is already preserved in General Library of Saint Petersburg. Bayani, Mahdi, *Calligraphists' Biography and Works*, (Tehran, 1348), 3352/.
- 45 - Canby, Sheila R, "Safavid Painting". In: *Hunt for Paradise Court Arts of Safavid Iran, 1501-1576*, Edited by Thomson, Jon and Sheila R. Canby, (2004), 82; and see: Scarica, G.R., "Safavid Art". In *Encyclopedia Of World Art*, Vol xii, (London, 1966)
- 46 - Dickson, M.B, and Welch, S.C., *Notes on the Houghton Shahnameh*, (Cambridge, 1981), 134-33/.
- 47 - Practically Shahname painting started since 928 A.H. in the time of king Ismaeil. But when Shah Tahmasp took the power, the Tabriz Turkaman painting method wasn't welcomed by him. So he ordered to paint it again. At least two calligraphers and two decorators were the number of the artist who cooperated in it's painting. See: Dickson, M.B, and Welch, S.C., *ibid*, 84; Canby, *ibid*, 84
- 48 - Welch S.C. *Wonders of the Age Masterpieces of Early Safavid Painting*, (Cambridge, 1979), 25.
- 49 - Eventually the king in 976 A.H gave this masterpiece as a gift to Soltan Salim II (974-982 A.H). Up to 1903 when this painting was exposed to the sight of visitors, it's ownership wasn't clear. If it

belonged to handwriting books of ToopGhapossary Museum or it was in somewhere else. There is no authentic document in this regard. But what we know, is that after BaroonAdmonder and Ghild someone by the name of ArtorHoton possessed this great masterpiece and in 1959 some of its drawings were published and after a short time they were exposed to people sight. 75 paintings from the whole miniatures which were in the hand of Hoton were delivered to New York metropolitan Museum; and some were sold in international auction. According to Tabrizi who witnessed himself the last sales 14 pieces of that masterpiece in London Sales were accomplished on Tuesday, 11th October, 1988.see:

Tabrizi, Mohammad Ali Karimzadeh, *The Biography and Works of Iranian Ancient Painters and Some Notables among Ottoman Indian Portrayers*, (London, 1369), 13473/.

50 - Canby, Sheila .R, *The Goldden Age of Persian Art 15011722-*, *British museumpress*: (London,1999),53.

51 - Moragha which considers nowadays as an artistic album consisted of some pieces in the field of calligraphy of painting and designing. Some of artists provided them for their supporters and sometimes they wrote an introduction for it. Since 9th century there were two sorts of Moraghas. One sort calligraphy Moraghas and the other one the combined Moraghas in which painting Pieces, designing and calligraphy were gathered.

In 10th century the Moraghas in which the pictures and calligraphy were applied along with each other, increased. So the pictures turned into independent phenomena and were separated from the painted

texts. It means that in the past the relation between the picture and the text was usually close and accurate, but after that, this relation was weakened and we have paintings that have a little or no relation with the texts. See:

Roxburgh, David J., *Prefacing the Image: The Writing of Art History in Sixteenth-Century Iran*, *Studies and Sources in Islamic Art and Architecture: Supplements to Muqarnas*, vol 9,)Brill.Leiden, 2001(;id, *The PersianAlbum.1400-1600*,) New Haven and London, Yale University Press. 2005(also:

Dust Mohammad Herawi, an introduction to Bahrammirza 's scrapbook, a copy of its picture is available in the Library of Islamic Grand Encyclopaedia Center

52- Canby,ibid,50

53- Pricilla, Suchak, *Iranian Artists in India in the Gourkhanian Era,Remnants and Changes*, translated by Abbas Aghajani In: *Garden of art*, no. 2, Autumn and Winter, Tehran, 1384), p. 128130-.

54 - Welch, S.C, *Persian Painting*,(New York, 1976),33

55- Kurkian, A.M.; Sicker, J.P., *Gardens of Imagination, 7 Centuries of Iranian Miniature*, translated by Marzban, Parwiz, day, (Tehran, Foruzan press, 1387), p. 42.

56 - Welch, S.C, "TheFahlnameh of Shah Tahmasp". In:Treasures ofIslam, edited by Falk, Tody,(Geneva,1985(,94-95.

57 - Welch, S.C, ibid.

58 - Welch, Anthony, ,*Artists for the Shah: Late Sixteen-CenturyPainting at The Imperial Court of Iran* ,) 1976(,p.25

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59- Monshi, Judge Ahmad Qomi, *Garden of Art*, p 41.

Navaee without mentioning any sources, writes: The king after Abdossamd's journey to India gave him the title «ShirinGhalam» namely: the sweet pen. He called Mir Seyyed Ali, NaderolMolk. It means: Scarce in the kingdom. Abdossamd's son who was a prominent painter received the title «noble instructor». Navaii, *Political relationships*, 48.

60 - Welch, Anthony, *Artists for the Shah: Late Sixteen-Century Painting at The Imperial Court of Iran*, 1976, (p.25

61 - Many artists such as Mir Ali Heravi (880- 951 A.H.) and AbdossamadShirazi and Mir Ali Seyyed had a great role in the field of book making and book imagining in the era of Indian Monguls (923-1008A.H). In 957 A.H. Mir SeyyedAlis by designation of the king started painting Amir Hamzah's book (HamzahNameh). In this Mission some of Iranian and Indian painter collaborated with him. See: Stchoukine, Ivan, *Les Peintures de la Khamseh de Nizami du British Museum*, 1950, (126-140

62- Navaee, *ibid*, p 49

63 - Some believe the deplorable situation of the city resulting of spread of plague disease and some the incompetence of the king in the removal difference and hostility among the sects of Neamati and Heidari, was the main reason for capital transfer. (Room (U, *ibid*, P. 145, Safar NamehVenizyandar Iran, TarjomehManoocherAmiri, Kharazmi, (Tehran, 1349 H., P), 445). Qomi also believes: while the king put behind SmaeilMeirza important issue and the disputes and the clashes around the border of Roam led to peace, decided to choose Ghazvin as the capital, due to its suitable position and its neighboring to other regions. (*Khulasat al-Tawarikh*, P. 378379-).

64- Monshi, *Garden of Art*, p. 138

65 - See: Simpson, Marianna Shreve, *Sultan Ibrahim Mirza's "HaftAwrang" A Princely Manuscript from Sixteenth-Century Iran*, New Haven and London, 1997; (id, "A Manuscript made for the Safavid Prince BahramMirza". In: *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 13, (May – August , 1991(

66 - Canby, *ibid*, 83

