

# The Arts of Rum Seljuks Era Between the Duality of Originality and External Influences

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## **Preface**

It is well known that Seljuk arts especially architecture, flourished greatly in this era where the Rum Seljuks succeeded in shaping the Islamic characterization and prominence it in the field of arts and architecture, which still remains to present time.

Although the Seljuk arts in Asia Minor is associated with various influences which were represented by the art of previous countries such as the Byzantine state, as well as the Great Seljuk arts in Iran, at the same time there was a clear distinction of the local arts styles of the Seljuks which reflect their traditions and civilization. Thus, the duality of originality of the local character and the external influences of the past and contemporary have a general feature of the art and architecture of Rum Seljuks.

This paper deals with the most important general features of the arts that flourished in the era of the Rum Seljuks and became one of the most important aspects of Turkish civilization later, and the identification of the arts that were purely local Seljuk or those that were subject to external influences, and the forefront of these arts is architecture such as mosques and places of worship Sufism or civil installations such as places.

The research deals with the other arts that flourished in the Rum Seljuks State such as ceramic mosaics, and the art of engraving on wood, as well as sculpture in stone and marble and the carpet industry, which was described as one of most beautiful carpets in the world and other.

The city of Konya and other cities in the Rum Seljuks are among the most prominent centers in the Islamic world, which showed the Seljuk art with clear features and prominent features.

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The Seljuk art flourished in the thirteenth century AD from the time of Kikheru I(1204-1210) and his successors Izzedine Kikaus(1210-1216) and Alaeddin KikbadI(1219-1236). The reign of Sultan Alaaddin Kikabad was the culmination of the flowering gation of Seljuk art in Asia Minor<sup>1</sup>.

The Rum Seljuks succeeded in the Islamic characterization and prominence in the field of architecture and other Islamic arts, which until now has been the transformation of the city of Konya and other cities of Asia Minor from the Byzantine civilization to Islamic civilization<sup>2</sup>.

### **The Architecture Art**

The Seljuks began to build and build religious buildings in the cities of Asia Minor since the twelfth century AD, i.e., during the years they were struggling to establish an Islamic state in that country<sup>3</sup>.

The Rum Seljuks, in keeping with other Islamic countries, were able to establish Islamic buildings, especially those that existed in Persia and Iraq during the reign of the Great Seljuks. As the influence of Persian literature in the Seljuks of the Roman Empire was shown, the influence of Persian architecture also appeared. In Konya and other cities of Asia Minor, buildings influenced by the style of Persian architecture appeared in the buildings built in Konya, a tradition of the Persian style and a simple influence of local Roman traditions. The influence of the presence of Roman architects who were diligent and made their own news has been many reported in the stories of Alflaki<sup>4</sup>.

As for the Persian influence, it can be said that the characteristics of Seljuk architecture in Asia Minor consisted of the collection of the architecture of the Persian architectural style inherited by the Seljuks of the Roman Seljuks bone in Iran and Iraq, which is the engineering planning of religious cities (mosque and school), although it has undergone some modifications <sup>5</sup>. Persian influence was also evident in the cylindrical minaret that dominated the mosques of Asia Minor cities, especially the capital city of Konya<sup>6</sup>.

1 Zeki M. Hassan, *The Arts Of Islam*, Cairo 1970, p. 86

2 Nora Abdulah, *Konya, Historical study*, Riadh 1994, p. 300.

3 Tamara Rise, *The Seljuks, their history and civilization*, Baghdad 1968, p. 157

4 Claud Cahen, *Pre Ottoman Turkey*, Cambridge 1970, p. 264.

5 Nora Abdulah, *op. cit*, p. 300.

6 Claud Cahen, *op. cit*, p. 263.

The influence of Persian art is evident in the use of the hallway, but the Rum Seljuks introduced it and added a new design that is characterized by straight lines (rectangular halls)<sup>7</sup>.

As for the Roman influence, it does not exceed the use of the Rum Seljuks reuse the ancient columns with crowns, which remained of the collapsed Roman buildings in the roofs of the corridors of schools and mosques in the city of Konya<sup>8</sup>. Thus, we can say that although the Seljuk architecture in Asia Minor was associated with the Seljuks in Iran, we see a clear change in the local styles of the Seljuks<sup>9</sup>. The architecture of the Rum Seljuks was able to eliminate the Roman color that was It is prevalent in Asia Minor since ancient times<sup>10</sup>.

The Rum Seljuks took into consideration the local conditions that had a significant impact on the architectural character of Asia Minor.

The most important of these conditions was the harsh climate (cold winter and rain) of Asia Minor, which forced them to develop a system of canoes, for ablution inside the building. On the other hand, the abundance of certain raw materials, such as alabaster, stones and wood in Konya and other cities, was another factor distinguishing the Seljuk art of architecture in Asia Minor. The marble was extracted from the ancient quarries near Konya. Sometimes there is black marble<sup>11</sup>.

The marble occupied an important place in the art of engraving on the stone known as the Rum Seljuks where the doorways and window frames were mostly made of marble, as well as the paintings that were written by the founder and builder and the date of the construction of the architecture of marble<sup>12</sup>.

The Rum Seljuks worked on the use of wood to roof some of the roofs and in the manufacture of columns that support the roofs of buildings, and used in the manufacture of platforms of mosques, which have mastered in the manufacture and engraving and other industries<sup>13</sup>.

7 Tamara Rise, op. cit, p. 159.

8 Ibid, 186.

9 Ni'mat A'lam, The arts of Middle East in the Mediaeval, Cairo, p. 160-171

10 Nora Abdulah, op. cit, p. 301.

11 Ni'mat Alam, op. cit, p. 16.

12 Mehmet Onder, Konya Mezar Traslarinda Sekilve Susier, p. 5.

13 Tamara Rise, op. cit, p. 158-159.

As for the stones, they used the large stones regularly cut and decorated with intricate ornamentation and intricate decoration in the creation and decoration of the main entrances of the religious sects. It can be said that the era of the Rum Seljuks marked by the artist's skill in digging on stone and plaster<sup>14</sup>.

In the comparison of Seljuk architecture in Asia Minor with Seljuk architecture in Iraq and Iran, it is worth mentioning that the use of stone building material in Konya and other small Asian cities helped to preserve many Seljuk buildings while the materials used in Seljuk In Iraq and Iran is not solid, which is to the disappearance of most of them <sup>15</sup>. It is worth mentioning that the Seljuks of the Romans when building mosques did not prefer the style of the mosque with the (Iwan) and open dish known in Persia, as these mosques without a dish and its design depends on the (Iwan) prayer covered multi-hallway showing several pillars of regular, this is a classic model of the Rum Seljuk architecture<sup>16</sup>.

The Rum Seljuks used this traditional model in building their mosques to the harshness of the air in Asia Minor, which forced them to replace the open courtyard with indoor covered ones<sup>17</sup>.The fountains for ablution were placed inside the building in some cases, Rectangle, and this is characterized by the mosque Alaeddin, which is one of the oldest mosques established by the Rum Seljuks in Konya<sup>18</sup>.

As for the architectural style of the schools, which was used in Konya and other cities of Asia Minor in the thirteenth century AD is a closed hall with a dome and a basin of water replaced by the open dish with the fountain, which was known in Iraq and Iran. In fact, every school in the Seljuk era in Asia Minor is a great example and a masterpiece both in terms of architecture and artistic decoration<sup>19</sup>.

### **The Ceramic Mosaic**

The encouragement and patronage of the Seljuk Sultans and princes of the arts is the most important factor in the flourishing of the arts. They used to attract skilled

14 Ibid, p. 159.

15 Ni'mat Alam, op. cit, p. 16.

16 Nora Abdulah, op. cit, p. 304.

17 Ibid, p. 307.

18 Tamara Rise, op. cit, p. 169.

19 Mohamed Abd Al-aziz, op. cit, p. 72.

artists from the various Islamic regions and encourage them with the costs of their work and spend so much money<sup>20</sup>. It is not unlikely that some of the Persians, who were pious ceramics industry, fled to Asia Minor after the Mongol invasion in the thirteen century and settled in that country and learned artists artists in the state of Rum Seljuks pottery and the use of ceramic mosaics<sup>21</sup>. The Rum Seljuks developed the mosaic industry when they replaced the glass lobes with small pieces of porcelain, as the craftsmen reduced the size of the ceramic pieces to as little as possible. Then, they attached these small pieces of ceramic tiles, in different shapes and sizes, to a layer of plaster. Accuracy and magnificence, and the colors used are limited to light blue, white, brown, black, white and gold<sup>22</sup>.

This technique was the most common technique of symmetry and harmony of the road wall decoration of the Rum Seljuks, and they used it to cover the niches and domes<sup>23</sup>. This is evident in the Aladdin (mihrab) where it was filled with triangular tiles made of ceramic mosaics<sup>24</sup>, and in the dome of the Qaratai School, a stellar ceramic mosaic of turquoise and lazurite mosaics from the top and bottom of the Kufic inscriptions<sup>25</sup>. It is likely that this process of engineering development was carried out by the same artists artists Persians who came to Asia Minor by art and found encouragement and assistance from the Rum Seljuks <sup>26</sup> .

The decoration of the ceramic tiles found in the ruins of Konya Palace is evident in its Iranian style<sup>27</sup>. The presence of the name of the architect Mohammed bin Mohammed bin Othman al-Banna al-Tusi on the mosaic of the walls of the Sirajali School in Konya, which is the presence of centers for the production of this type of decoration in Konya after the Mongol invasion of Persia, is also supported by the fact that there was a close cultural and artistic connection between both regions in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries AD<sup>28</sup>.

20 Ibid, p. 72.

21 Nora Abdulah, op. cit, p. 369.

22 Ni'mat Alam, op. cit, p. 170.

23 Arnest Conel, The Islamic Art, Bairut 1966, p. 77.

24 Ibid, p. 77.

25 Nora Abdulah, op. cit, p. 370.

26 Ibrahim Konyali, Konya Tarih, Konya 1964, pp. 490-491.

27 Ni'mat Alam, op. cit, p. 169.

28 Ibid, pp. 169-170.

The encouragement and patronage of the Seljuk sultans and princes of the arts is the most important factor of prosperity<sup>29</sup>. They used to attract skilled artists from the various Islamic regions and encourage them with the cost of doing business and spending so much money<sup>30</sup>. It is not unlikely that some of the Persians who were skilled in the porcelain industry had fled to Asia Minor after the Mongol invasion of the country in the thirteenth century AD and settled in those countries and learned artists artists in the state of the Rum Seljuks porcelain industry and the use of ceramic mosaics<sup>31</sup>. The wood carving

The Rum Seljuks in the art of wood engraving were highly skilled. The wooden artifacts made in Asia Minor in the Seljuk era were very beautiful and creative<sup>32</sup>. The wood was meticulously engraved like stones in clear and intricate geometric patterns of doors, staircases and sides of platforms<sup>33</sup>.

This art is reflected in many antiques, ranging from the doors and chairs of the Koran, where it shows star formations, plant elements and various lines that included verses from the Koran and are still preserved in the museums of Istanbul and Konya<sup>34</sup>

### **The Sculpture in stone, marble and frescoes**

The Rum Seljuks were concerned with the decoration of their houses from inside and outside with carved motifs of stone and plaster<sup>35</sup>. This is an art that is distinguished by the Rum Seljuks and used to decorate various types of buildings such as mosques, schools and palaces, one of the most remarkable of these models is the stone decoration on the buildings of Konya<sup>36</sup>.

The Rum Seljuks contributed to the renaissance of the Islamic arts from new developments and innovations, thus making their capital a city full of statues and beautification and decoration of entrances and fences in ways that suggest luxury, beauty and creativity<sup>37</sup>.The carpets in the Seljuk era.

29 Nora Alam, op. cit, p. 371.

30 Ibid, p. 371.

31 Mohamad Abd al-aziz, op cit, p. 14.

32 Zeki Mohamed, op. cit, p. 479.

33 Mohamad Abd al-aziz, op. cit, p. 17.

34 Zeki Mohamed, op. cit, p. 479.

35 Ni'mat Alam, p. 165.

36 M.C Diamand, the Islamic Arts, Cairo 1982, p. 102.

37 Nora Abdulah, op. cit, pp. 375-377.

Most of the Seljuk era carpets in Turkey's museums and other museums of the world were found in Konya, the capital of the Rum Seljuks Empire, the carpet was named "Konya Carpet Group in the Seljuk Period"<sup>38</sup>.

There are travelers who say that the most beautiful carpets of the world is the carpets of the Seljuks Asia Minor and these travelers Marco Polo, who said that the most beautiful carpets in the world existed in his time has been woven in the major cities of the Seljuk state in Asia Minor, such as Sivas and Konya<sup>39</sup>. In the words of the author Tamara Rice, in response to Marco Polo, who suggested that the Seljuk carpets were made by Christian workers and artists when she said, "The Seljuk carpets were famous and famous at that time, and the saying that the Christians were weaving their words, is not true absolutely"<sup>40</sup>. As the manufacture of rugs was purely handmade and adds that the carpet industry was not known in the Byzantine environment at the time<sup>41</sup>.

It seems from the writings of Marco Polo that he was biased to the Byzantine state attributed to them the civilization that was then in Asia Minor forgetting the role of Turks and other Muslims, he attributes the civilization to the Roman and Armenians only and considers them residents of cities and fortresses and textile makers value, while looking at the inhabitants of the Seljuks. They are hard-working Muslims who run behind the walls and the pastures <sup>42</sup>.

### **The Conclusion**

Through this research paper we can conclude that the art of the Seljuks of the Roman country was affected by some external influences, especially art in the great Seljuk state in Iran and Iraq, especially in the field of architecture, decoration, mosaics and sculpture, as well as the effects of these arts with the influences of the local Byzantine art. Limited has occurred because of the presence of many artists and makers.

But it is important to say that art in general in the state of the Rum Seljuks distinguished by the originality of the ancient traditions in the country of Anatolia, and the Seljuks even if inspired by some of the arts from neighboring countries

38 Mehmet Onder, op. cit, p. 46.

39 Marco Polo Travels, Cairo 1977, p. 30.

40 Tamara Rise, op. cit, p. 223.

41 Ibid, p. 223

42 Nora Abdulah, op. cit p. 380

and their former countries in Asia Minor, they did not stop at the limits of this impact, but developed those arts in accordance with the specificity and specificity of the country of Anatoli.