



IRAN Handicrafts & Traditional Arts

(Concise Version)
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In the Name of GOD



IRAN Handicrafts & Traditional Arts



IRAN Ministry of Cultural Heritage,
Tourism and Handicrafts



Department of Handicrafts and
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The book's content is fully translated and edited by Azadeh Nikouei



Preface

andicrafts in Iran include a wide variety of crafts and traditional arts that involve making products while complying with ritual and religious canons, focusing on creativity, taste, and local aesthetics using available raw materials. The production process, individually or in groups, is mainly done by hand, using special tools. Since discovering and listing all the majors is hardly feasible due to existing identical fields, which are called with numerous locally different names, 18 main groups and 299 subdivisions have been identified until 2023 by the Department of Handicrafts and Traditional Arts at the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts (MCTH).



Sanāye'-e Dastī-ye Felezzī

Metal Handicrafts

Creating metal objects in Iran has a rich history, which shows its high importance. Raw materials for this leading group are iron, steel, copper, brass, bronze, gold, silver, and other alloys. The main products are sugar nips, pliers, scissors, knives, different dishes, 'Alam (processional standard), etc. In the following, the most renowned categories are described.



Qalam-zanī

Qalam-zani is one of the metalwork decoration techniques in which the desired pattern is chased by using a hammer and various chisels on a metal surface (supported by a thick layer of tar).



Qofl-sāzī

It refers to the making all types of locks and padlocks by hand, including zoomorphic and cryptic padlocks.



Zivarālāt-e Sonnatī

Traditional jewelry includes objects which are designed to be worn or decorate clothes. They have aesthetic values and, in some cases, are used as amulets.



Malīleh-sāzī

Malileh-sazi is a craft in which gold or silver metal is turned into thin and fine wires, and then the prepared wires are shaped and patterned in a mold using fine pliers and are used to decorate all types of ornaments and objects. The main centers are Zanzan and Esfahan.



Kūfteh-garī | Talākūbī

It indicates the act of inlaying a metal on another one by hammering, so the hammered metal is inlaid into the base metal and becomes a part of it.



Chalangarī

Chalangari is the art of blacksmithing mainly portable objects which used to be common among ethnic societies and also gypsies. Yazd, Qazvin and South Khorasan provinces are attributed centers.



Hakkākī-ye Felez

Metal engraving is the art of etching on a metal surface to form a pattern using chisels and a hammer. The products are swords, trays, different sorts of boxes, and so forth.



Mesgarī

Mesgari refers to producing copper objects by hammering which is common in Yazd, Isfahan, Zanjan, and Kerman provinces. The products are pots, pans, kettles, and so on.



Moshabbak-e Felez

Moshabbak means a pierced surface. Piercing metal panel is done by fret saw. The main motifs are inscriptions and interlacing foliages and arabesques.

It should be noted that other majors in the group are zomūd-garī, Afzār-sāzī, zerehbāfī, davāt-garī, kham-kārī-e felezzāt, Varsho-sāzī, Jondeh-kārī, sākht-e ahjām-e fūlādī-e sonnatī, zarīh-sāzī and alāmat-sāzī.

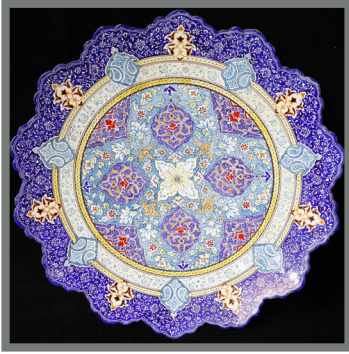




Mīnākārī

Enameling

The history of enameling goes back to ancient eras. During the process of minakari, the base object is coated twice, first with a white enamel glaze to form the background, and then other colors are applied to the base metal. After each phase, the object is fired in the kiln.



Minā-ye naqāshī

In this type, the object is first coated with white enamel powder at first. Then the design is added using a fine brush and enamel in various colors.



Minā-ye khāne-bandī

The decoration is formed by adding compartments to the metal object by soldering or affixing silver or gold as wires placed on their edges. Then, the compartments are colored with enamel powder and the object is finally fired in the kiln.



Minā-ye Sobbi

Mina-ye Sobbi is an enameling on gold and silver in which the ground or the motifs are coated with black vitreous enamel. The main patterns and motifs are derived from the environment and also ritual and religious values of the Sabeen community. Ahvaz is the main center for this major.

It should be noted that other majors in the group are Minā-ye morassá and Minā-ye moshabbak.



Kāshī-ye sonnatī, sofāl va serāmīk

Traditional tiles, pottery & ceramics

Traditional tiles are thin and square or rectangular objects made of baked clay and decorated by being glazed with different techniques.

Pottery refers to making objects, significantly different types of containers of clay, which need to be hardened by heating to a high temperature.

Ceramics covers a broad spectrum of inorganic non-metal substances, including pottery.



Kāshī-ye Zarrīnfām

It refers to glazed square or star-shaped tiles with a brown-golden color which is resulting from reduced copper, silver and iron oxides. Today the main centers are Natanz, Mashhad, Kashan, Semnan and Tehran.



Kāshī-ye Haft-rang

These tiles are also square, and a number of them make a single panel. the word haft-rang means seven colors and indicates the colorful characteristic of the tile. Isfahan and Shiraz are the main centers, in the country.



Sofāl-e Naqshbarjasteh

It indicates the art of incising patterns and inscriptions into the leather-hard clay body, which can be a flat surface or an object, by using special carving tools. The major is common throughout Iran.



Sofāl-e Lo'ābdār

Many pottery products are glazed due to being waterproof and more attractive. Lalejin, Meybod, Tabriz, Isfahan, Tehran, Karaj, Semnan and Rasht, are renowned for this product.



Kāshī-ye Mo'arraḡ

Mosaic tiles are small pieces of tile that are cut according to the pattern by using a diamond glass cutter, then placed side by side to form a whole.

It should be noted that other majors in the group are sākht-e lo'āb, Naqāshī-ye rūlo'ābī, Naqāshī-ye zīrlolo'ābī, Kāshī-ye Mināeī, Kāshī-ye Mo'aqeli and Tarāsh-e kāshī.





Wooden Handicrafts & Basketry

Wooden handicrafts encompass a wide range of majors in which the primary materials are various kinds of wood, stems, and leaves. Also, Each major refers to a specific technique to create an artwork.

Basketry also includes numerous crafts of making different objects by weaving pliable vegetable fibers like twigs, grasses, osiers, bamboo, rushes, palm fronds, etc.



Khātam-kārī

Khatam-kari refers to producing a decorative mosaic layer by putting polygonal (usually triangular) pieces together based on a geometric design. The pieces are made of wood, bone or metal. The main centers are Shiraz and Isfahan.



Gereh-chīnī

The craft includes making joints of tenon and mortise, which form a lattice structure. The spaces of the structure filled with pieces of wood or colored glass (depending on usage). Isfahan, Shiraz and Qazvin are the main centers.



Monabbat

The word Monabbat means "to bring up (plant)" and refers to the craft of carving on different woods' surfaces, based on a traditional design. Sanandaj, Abadeh, Arak, Tehran, Malayer and Sari are the main centers.



Sūkht ru-ye Chūb

It is the process of burning designs on wood by using the wood burning tool, which resembles a soldering iron.



Moshabbak

Moshabbak is the technique of producing decoration by creating holes following the main design. The craft is common throughout Iran.



Mo'arraaq

Mo'arraaq is the craft of producing a decorative mosaic layer by putting pieces together. The pieces are cut from different sorts of wood and mother of pearl, based on a geometric design. The main centers are Isfahan, Arak and Tehran.



Lāktarāshī

It refers to a technique that produces utilitarian wooden objects, by using a saw, hatchet, and incising tools. The craft is common in Mazandaran and Gilan Provinces.



Nāzok-kārī

It is an economical technique of things made of less precious wood with a layer of more precious wood to make the object more attractive. Sanandaj is the main center of the craft.



Mo'arraq-e Sāqe-ye Gandom

It is the craft of making patterns through cutting wheat stalks and putting pieces together according to the design.



Kapū-bāfi

Coiling is a basketry method where one material (natural fiber of yarn) is wrapped around another. The products includes different containers. Bushehr and Khuzestan are two main centers of the craft.



Tarkeh-bāfi

It is a sort of basketry that is done with willow twigs to make baskets, ladles, and so forth. Southern Khorasan and Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Provinces are the relevant centers.

It should be noted that other majors in the group are jovak-kārī, bāmbo-bāfi, Ālāchīq-bāfi, Ālāchīq-sāzī, Khātām-sāzī, Chīq-bāfi/Chīt-bāfi, Būria-bāfi, Sevās-bāfi, Kūb-bāfi, Sīs-bāfi, Gālī-bāfi, Pakhal-bāfi, Kharrātī-ye chūb, Peykar-tarāshī, Ahjām-e chuūbī-ye sonnatī, Kande-kārī rū-ye chūb, Orossī-sāzī, Qavāreh-borī, Naqāshī rū-ye chūb, Monabbat-Moshabbak, Mo'arraaq-monabbat.



Traditional Fabric Weaving

Traditional Fabric Weaving has a long history in Iran. This group includes different methods of organic textile production in which two distinct sets of yarns or threads (warp and wefts are interlaced to form a fabric, utilizing simple or complicated weaving non-industrial machines, in that shedding devices or cards (in card weaving) help weaver to insert the weft yarns more conveniently. Before the 1850s, all sorts of fabrics in Iran were handcrafted and had a rich variety. Today, some of them are not produced anymore.