

## المباخر المعدنية القططية السلجوقية : رؤية جديدة

**The Seljuk's Cat Censers: A New Study**

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**Summary**

The Islamic works crowned the arts produced in the Seljuk era (5-8 AH / 11-14 AD). The Seljuk art succeeded in competing with other Islamic arts maintaining a special place in the History of art, despite absorbing many influences of previous civilizations as well as the contemporary works which were reflected in this art. However, these influences were presented in new artistic solutions, and the care of the rulers in that era helped to create a creative artistic environment for conceiving art as well as providing raw materials. Artistic productive centers and workshops were spread throughout the Seljuk lands, and the integration of the triangle of creativity with the participation of the manufacturer, artist, decorator and designer in the formation of its angles, giving that era a legacy to be celebrated until now, influenced by the legacy of civilizations that were settled by the Seljuks and other civilizations to follow.

Metal works became distinguished and was considered as one of the most important fields of artistic creation of the Seljuk school of art. In fact, these works reflected the great talent of the artist and the craftsman in forging various kinds of metals and transforming them into pieces of art of functional and aesthetic forms. The artists and craftsmen unleashed both their imagination and good observation of the environment to bring out their artistic production which was distinguished in the golden age of Islamic civilization. Their artistic creation of making “Censers” occupied a special place in the metal work of Islamic art, in general, and Seljuk metals, in particular. During that era, those artists focused on making the censer due to its importance in secular and religious aspects.

There were many shapes of those Islamic censers made of metals that were distinguished for their rich surfaces, rich decorative designs coming out of a variety of elements and shapes such as: "geometrical, calligraphy, plant and human forms, in addition to legendary creatures, birds and animals.” One of the most distinguished Islamic censers is the "animal censers", especially those produced in the Seljuk era in Khorasan province, among them emerged a set of censers listed as "lion censers" in books, articles and museums. This research aims to confirm the error in which historians and archaeologists and researchers mis-classified those censers as “lion censers” and whoever use this classification is mistaken, for after keen study and analyzing a large number of those censers, it is affirmed that they were not forged in a lion form and it is suggested that it was a kind of cat species known as “carcal”. This analysis relies on several focal points to confirm and consolidate this idea which is the main point to be discussed in this research.