

Atefeh Seyed Mousavi. *Narrative Illustration on Qajar Tilework in Shiraz*

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Atefeh Seyed Mousavi. *Narrative Illustration on Qajar Tilework in Shiraz*. Dortmund: Verlag für Orientkunde, 2018, Vol. 1, 335 p. (texts); Vol. 2, 268 p. (coloured images), ISBN: 9783936687463

- 1 This book is the forty-sixth volume of an interdisciplinary series in Islamic and Middle Eastern studies, *Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte des Islamischen Orients*, published by Verlag für Orientkunde since 1949. Based on the author's doctoral dissertation, *Narrative Illustration on Qajar Tilework in Shiraz*, explores a group of illustrated tiles from nineteenth-century public and private buildings in Shiraz.
- 2 This unique artistic phenomenon has received little scholarly attention, compared with a growing number of publications on the Persian manuscript painting of the pre-modern period. Together with recent publications on related subjects (see Hadi Seif, *Persian Painted Tile Work from the 18th and 19th Centuries: The Shiraz School*, 2014), this book is another notable contribution to the Persian visual culture of the nineteenth century, when tilework played an integral role as another medium of narrative illustration.
- 3 This book consists of two volumes: Volume 1 is composed of the following six chapters: 1) Introduction; 2) Shiraz Tile Painting; 3) The Production of Tile Paintings; 4) Themes of Shiraz Tile Paintings; 5) Detailed Descriptions of the Surveyed Sites; and 6) Conclusion. The chapters are followed by a summary of themes and a bibliography. Volume 2 is a catalogue of the material collected during the author's extensive fieldwork in Shiraz. It contains a large number of photographs and ten maps, all published in colour.
- 4 The author has chosen 42 historical buildings (e.g., private residences, bazaars, bathes, gardens) in Shiraz with the variety of architectural style and tile decoration. Each

catalogue entry documents a tiled building and analyses every detail of imagery, while identifying and classifying iconographic themes, as well as featuring craftsmen and their technological achievements. Among the notable chapters are Chapter 3 (pp. 57-68), which is based on interviews with the last generation of traditional craftsmen in Shiraz, and Chapter 4 (pp. 69-148), where various iconographic themes from some 700 tile paintings are classified according to religious and non-religious subjects.

- 5 Any researchers who are interested in the art of Qajar tilework will see *Narrative Illustration on Qajar Tilework in Shiraz* as an essential resource for understanding diverse aspects of Persian visual culture, both modern and pre-modern.

AUTHORS

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