

## **Studying and Analyzing the Motifs of Haft-Rang Tiling in Atrvash House in Shiraz to Explore the Variety of Motifs and their Forms**

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### **Introduction**

From the Safavid era to the end of the Qajar era, Shiraz has been one of the most important cities in terms of tile development. Shiraz statesmen and wealthy families played a significant role in developing the art of decorative tiling for their houses, and in this sense Shiraz houses have a special place compared to houses in other cities. Among these beautiful tiling practices, the tiling that was done by the local tile painters at the request of families such as Qawam al-Mulk, Mushir al-Mulk can be mentioned. Undoubtedly, the good taste of Shirazi people, the works of two great Iranian poets, Hafez and Sa'adi, religious beliefs, the existence of historical gardens, and the proximity to historical and ancient monuments such as Persepolis reliefs have been effective in the variety of motifs. Among Haft-Rang tiling of Shiraz's Qajar houses, the tiling of Atrvash House, Narenjestan Qawam, Zinat al-Mulk House, Dokhanchi House, Mohtasham House, Sa'adat House, and Salehi House can be mentioned.

### **Research Method**

In Shiraz, among Qajar houses with tiling, Atrvash House has represented various and important examples of Haft-Rang tiling, some of which have been destroyed. Therefore, the aim of the present research is to study and analyze the motifs of Haft-Rang tiling of Atrvash House to explore the variety of motifs and their forms in the Qajar era and, thus, to provide linear images of those motifs to help recreate tiling being destroyed in Atrvash House. The research focuses on this question: Which motifs and in which forms have been used in Haft-Rang tiling of Atrvash house in Shiraz? The method of research is descriptive-analytical; the method of data collection is library-based, and the method of analysis is qualitative. The statistical population of this research is 10 Haft-Rang tiling (5 tiling in the yard and 5 tiling in the pool house) from Atrvash House in Shiraz.

### **Research Findings**

The findings of the research showed that in the pool house of Atrvash House, plant motifs (flowers, leaves, and trees), human motifs (men, women, and children), animal motifs (horses and dogs), a mythological motif (winged angels), motifs with religious-narrative themes (Holy Mary, Christ,

Joseph, and bergamot), motifs with literary-narrative themes (Shirin taking a bath), motifs expressing daily-narrative themes (feasts, the meeting of clergymen and house holders), and a military motif (soldier) can be seen. The dimensions of pool house tiling are 80×100 cm. In the yard of Atrvash House, plant motifs (flowers, leaves, vases, and trees), a human motif (man), a mythological motif (lion, sword, and sun), motifs expressing religious-narrative themes (throwing Joseph into the well and Joseph's kingdom), a motif expressing literary-narrative theme (the battle of Rostam and China's Khan), motifs expressing daily-narrative themes (hunting and washing), and animal motifs (horses, elephants, dogs, lions, gazelles, peacocks, and ringdoves) can be seen. The dimensions of yard tiling are 90×200 cm. The colors used in the tiling of the pool house and of the yard include fresh and lively colors. In all tiling, the faces are completely Qajar like, with wide and elongated eyebrows, and their clothes are also partly influenced by the fashion common to the Qajar era. Religious motifs represent the beliefs of the house holder and the people in the Qajar era. These motifs have been partly influenced by what people heard in mosques and the sermons of clergymen. The literary-narrative motif of Shirin taking a bath dates back to the end of the Sassanid era. Ferdowsi and, then, Nizami turned this narrative into poetry. This motif, along with the motif of Rostam and China's Khan are influenced by the lithographic books in the Qajar era. The military image of the soldier is influenced by the political conditions in the Qajar period and the paintings that the Qajar kings having made of their soldiers and military equipment. The motifs of hunting and horsemen are among the favorite Iranian scenes and can be seen in the works belonging to the Sassanid era. The presence of guns and hounds in the hunting scenes has been influenced by the European hunting patterns. The motif of lion and sun has existed in Iranian visual culture for a long time, and the sword added to this motif is a symbol of the sword of Imam Ali (peace upon him) and his courage. The motifs such as clergymen, house holders, and servants in tiling are influenced by the professions and the serf-lord society of the Qajar era. Flower and vase motifs are among the decorations of Iranian art and architecture, which were more elegant and detailed in the Qajar era. Winged angels are depicted inspired by the Sassanid era and are linked to European examples.

## Conclusion

The motifs of tiling in the Qajar era had a great variety. The tile painters of the Qajar era portrayed realistically or abstractly what they saw in nature along with the beliefs and stories that were passed down from generations to generations. There is a wide variety of motifs such as plants, animals, mythological motifs, motifs expressing narrative themes, and motifs expressing military themes in tiles of Atrvash House. The variety of plant motifs is in the form of flowers, leaves, plant stems, trees, and vases. The variety of human motifs includes the female, the male, and children. Human motifs have been depicted either along with other humans and animals or alone in different scenes including those of nature, hunting, feast gatherings. Human motifs have been depicted unskillfully. A variety of mythological motifs is in the form of a pair of winged angels, and a lion, a sword, and the sun. The motifs expressing religious-narrative themes are in the form of references to the Quranic stories and include different periods in the life of Prophet Joseph and Holy Mary and Christ. The motifs expressing literary-narrative themes are in the form of references to the stories of Shahnameh and Nizami's Panj Ganj, including Rostam and China's Khan or Shirin's taking a bath respectively. The variety of motifs expressing daily-narrative themes are in the form of feasting, hunting, the meeting of clergymen and house holders, and washing. Hunting tiling show the lion and gazelle huntings. In these types of tiling, hunters are depicted individually or in pairs with dogs, and they have put on Qajari clothes. The variety of animal motifs include birds, quadrupeds, and wild animals. The military motif is the soldier. In tiling of Atrvash House, liveliness, vitality, and innovation can be seen. In some tiling, the name of orderer has also been written.

**Keywords:** Shiraz, Atrvash House, Qajar Art, Qajar Tiling, Haft-Rang Tile Motifs.