

## Falconer and courting couple: Figurative tilework in 19th-century Iranian architecture

Tilework is a distinguishing feature of Iranian architecture. For centuries it was one of the main art forms to express the Islamic world view in geometric, floral and figurative patterns and inscriptions. Turquoise glazed domes, doorways clad in brightly coloured mosaic faience or lavishly painted lustre tiles demonstrate the potters' skills until today.

On the basis of selected buildings and examples of tiles from museum collections this lecture will give an overview of the types of tilework in architecture and the aesthetic principles underlying their use. In particular it will focus on figurative painted tiles, which emerged as the favoured means of symbolic expression under the Qajar dynasty in the 19th century.



Image 1: Kermanshah, Takieh Mo'wen ol-Molk, entrance, early 20<sup>th</sup> century  
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Image 2: Kermanshah, Takieh Mo'wen ol-Molk, detail of tilework, early 20<sup>th</sup> century  
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Image 3  
Kermanshah, Takieh Mo'wen ol-Molk, detail of  
tilework, early 20<sup>th</sup> century  
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Image 4  
Kerman, Friday mosque, portal, detail of tilework  
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