

Lives of the Prophets: The Illustrations to Hafiz-i Abru's 'Assembly of Chronicles'. By MOHAMAD REZA GHIASIAN. Studies in Persian Cultural History, vol. 16. Leiden: BRILL, 2018. Pp. xv + 343. \$159, €132.

The volume under review, specifically concerned with images, is profusely illustrated with color plates, about which see below, and black-and-white sketches. Its subject-matter treats one work, *Majma' al-tavārikh* (Assembly of Chronicles), by the Timurid court historiographer Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū (d. 1430). He was ordered by his patron, Shāhrukh, to find and restore remnants of Rashīd al-Dīn's world history, *Jāmi' al-tawārikh*, which had been copied and partly illustrated in Tabriz in the early fourteenth century. The production of Rashīd al-Dīn's manuscripts had ended with his execution in 1318, and all the copies found by the Timurid historian were incomplete. Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū therefore assembled fragments of unrelated manuscripts and replaced the missing parts with the text of his own history. He also asked Herati painters to fill the empty spaces in the hybrid volumes with illustrations in the spirit of original fourteenth-century manuscripts. Wherever illustrated episodes were found in the ancient remnants, they were used as models for the new replacements; in other cases, the Timurid painters introduced new iconographical schemes, which better reflected their contemporary artistic preferences. Their efforts resulted in a specific style, archaic in comparison with the new artistic taste at the turn of the fifteenth century, which has been coined "the Timurid historical style" by historians of Islamic art.

One of these hybrid volumes of Rashīd al-Dīn's cum Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū's illustrated text is conserved at the Topkapı Sarayı Museum Library (Hazine 1653) and another—a manuscript that is now dispersed—has been identified as such for the first time by Mohamad Reza Ghiasian. Hazine 1653, an autograph of Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū, combines his own account of the pre-Islamic period with a section of Rashīd al-Dīn's second volume. This section recounts Islamic history up to the fall of the Abbasids, and includes contemporaneous non-Muslim dynasties. The manuscript, which bears the earliest known Timurid colophon (829/1425) detailing the circumstances of its production, comprises in all: a fragmented Ilkhanid copy of *Jāmi' al-tawārikh*; another fragment from a lost Ilkhanid copy (which Ghiasian calls "the divided copy"); the Shāhrukhī section transcribed by Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū; and later illustrations that were painted over lines of text. A reconstruction of the second hybrid *Majma' al-tawārikh* manuscript ("the dispersed manuscript") supplies further evidence for Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū's use of two different Ilkhanid copies. Its Timurid part presents three different styles or phases of painting. This manuscript was divided and sold in pieces during the twentieth century.

Faced with the complex history of the two manuscripts and their puzzle-like structure, Ghiasian took upon himself the gargantuan task of sorting the various fragments and reconstructing the copying and painting phases of each manuscript. Hence, the first part of his book constitutes a minutely detailed codicological study of each piece. Additionally, it compares the illustrations of the two refurbished manuscripts with those in both an Arabic version of Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū's other historical text, titled *Kulliyāt al-tavārikh* (Topkapı Sarayı Museum Library, B. 282), and the known fragments of Rashīd al-Dīn's fourteenth-century *Jāmi' al-tawārikh*, which served as models for the Timurid painters (Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Museum Library, H. 1654; London, the Khalili Collection, MSS. 727; Edinburgh University Library, Or. MS 20; Copenhagen, David Collection; Teheran, Reza Abbasi Museum; and others). These comparisons follow a presentation of the historical context, the pattern of patronage, and a detailed list of known illustrated manuscripts from Shāhrukh's Herat, and convincingly reconstruct the history, the physical combination, and the various phases of the illustrations (chaps. two and three). As it is not always easy to follow the many details of the actual chaotic situation and the many steps toward reconstruction, Ghiasian wisely helps us with detailed tables showing the inserted folios in Hazine 1653 and in the dispersed manuscript (pp. 84, 97–103).

The next chapter offers, in words and pen drawings, an illustrated description of the painting style in Shāhrukh's days. Ghiasian asks "why this [Timurid] 'Historical Style' lacks the majestic refinement of other paintings produced for Baysunghur, Iskandar Sultan and Ibrahim Sultan?" and proposes that it was devised in order to complement the Rashīdī manuscripts in accordance with their scale and appearance (pp. 108–9). With regard to the typical color scheme of these illustrations, which are more saturated and less gray than their Ilkhanid equivalents, the author cites a most interesting paragraph

from Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū's text, in which he refers to the symbolic and psychological value of the colors yellow, green, and red.

A long iconographic analysis follows, titled "Catalogue," which focuses only upon illustrations of the biblical prophets and the Prophet Muḥammad in the two copies of *Majma' al-tavārikh*. Altogether, the various *Majma'* manuscripts contain twenty episodes with these figures, and these are described and compared among themselves and with other Ilkhanid and Timurid illustrations of parallel texts. An English translation of the relevant text, which in most cases surrounds the paintings, makes a very useful addition to understanding the iconography and its interpretative role. On the other hand, given the individual paintings' descriptive qualities, a question arises regarding the necessity of the practice, so common in publications about Islamic painting, of recounting in words what the average reader can see, even without having professional knowledge. This question refers in particular to details of the background, which are insignificant in terms of the story and the message. Another common practice that Ghiasian follows is identifying a rounded or twisted horizon as "a hilly landscape" (for example, p. 172). In fact, the conventions used for depicting hills and mountains, on the one hand, and nuanced horizons, on the other, are different. I believe that when the separating line between the land and the sky is arched, it represents the round optic end of the earth rather than a hill. When this arched line is somewhat twisted, however, with a series of short parallel lines drawn below it, then the horizon seems to be remote, stretching over valleys and mountains.

A few more references to meaningful iconographic devices would have enriched the narrative and, perhaps, its interpretation. As an example we can take the pictorial expression of pious awe in the form of hands covered by long sleeves, which appears frequently in this prophetic cycle (for the Byzantine origins of the long sleeves, see A. Contadini, *A World of Beasts* [Leiden: Brill, 2012], 73). Ghiasian refers to this convention in the illustration of Cain and Abel, pointing out that the two brothers are "wearing extremely long-sleeved robes" (p. 134), but he ignores the fact that long sleeves are common in depictions of all upper garments. In normal situations, the sleeves are folded or raised, and only in front of holy men or sacred phenomena do certain figures let their sleeves down, to cover their palms. Even in said illustration, only Abel's hands are covered, perhaps as a sign of his sincere devotion, while Cain is seen with one sleeve hanging down and the other one raised, to allow him to make a gesture of protest with his exposed hand. A similar use of this iconographic device is seen in the illustration of Jacob and his sons, where alternation between long sleeves and uncovered hands expresses the brothers' displeasure with Joseph's favored status (cat. no. 6). And in another instance the Egyptian lady who was in love with Joseph expresses her feelings by letting down one of her sleeves at the moment of his arrival (cat. no. 7).

All in all, however, the general iconographic discussion of the individual episodes, the interpretation of their meaning, and remarks about their religious importance are clear, well presented, and very informative. Readers who are not versed in the Islamic iconography of the prophets will find this to be a thorough introduction to this fascinating topic. The "Catalogue" thus provides a conclusive survey of "prophetic" iconography under the patronage of Shāhrukh, who unlike his illustrious father, Tīmūr, and the Ilkhanid dynasty before him rooted his royal legitimacy mainly in his Islamic devotion. When compared with Rashīd al-Dīn's *Jāmi' al-tawārikh*, the stronger pronounced religiosity in the Timurid interpretation of the various episodes is convincingly used by Ghiasian to answer his initial question of why these historical accounts were so lavishly illustrated during Shāhrukh's reign.

The last, but no less important, part of the volume comprises two appendices: "Translation of the Illustrated Episodes of the Lives of the Prophets Based on Hazine 1653," and "Headings and Illustrations in Hazine 1653." There is a certain amount of repetition, as some sections in the first appendix already appear under "Catalogue" next to the relevant entries. But this repetition is justified as the reader's attention remains focused throughout the iconographical description. Moreover, the appendix transmits large sections of Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū's original text, including nonillustrated passages, which are otherwise inaccessible to the reader. This initiative on Ghiasian's part, as well as his decision to add the poetic verses in Persian script, is praiseworthy.

A word of criticism regarding the quality of the color plates in the new publication is unavoidable. As if to spite the fact that the book deals with Persian painting, in which brilliant colors are so essential,

almost all of the reproductions are printed either too green or too orange. The latter case is less serious, as the warm red hue somewhat emphasizes the contours of the depicted objects, thus rendering them clearly visible. The gray-green tonality, on the other hand, weakens many contours, especially in paintings that are already in bad condition. It is to be hoped that the publisher will pay better attention to the paintings in the second edition. Indeed, a second edition of this publication is warranted to improve the color, even if the illustrations are far from spectacular and the stylistic analyses rather modest in scope and intention. The real power of this book is in the brilliant reconstruction of the fragmented or dispersed manuscripts of both *Jāmi' al-tawārīkh* and *Majma' al-tawārīkh*, the translation of sections from Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū's text, and the sets of iconographic comparisons. Together these form a solid basis for future studies in the field, and, at the same time, offer an interesting picture of Islamic biblical and prophetic iconography within a specific historical context.

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The Codification of Islamic Criminal Law in the Sudan: Penal Codes and Supreme Court Case Law under Numayrī and al-Bashīr. By OLAF KÖNDGEN. Studies in Islamic Law and Society, vol. 43. Leiden: BRILL, 2018. Pp. xii + 480. \$171, €149.

Olaf Köndgen's revised 2013 dissertation at the University of Amsterdam enhances the blossoming literature critical of the reintroduction of Islamic penal law in several states because of its incompatibility with human rights. It presents a wealth of knowledge about the application of Islamic penal law in the Sudan commencing in the Penal Code of 1983, followed by the Criminal Act of 1991, as amended in 2015. He compares the Sudan statutory amendments with one another and with the court decisions interpreting the statutes, both comparisons against the backdrop of the historical classical opinions of the legal scholars (mainly Sunni) along with the opinions of some modernist Islamic jurists.

The volume's aim is to point out how the Sudanese interpretations contradict the majority opinions of the classical legal scholars to a large extent and represent minority opinions. For criminal law his book is on the order of Y. Linant de Bellefonds's work on comparative Islamic family and civil law. The legal offenses covered in the book are homicide, bodily harm, extramarital sexual intercourse, unfounded accusations thereof, theft, apostasy, alcohol consumption, highway robbery, and non-quranic punishments (*ta'zīr*). Why the offense of abortion in Arts. 135ff. of the Sudan Criminal Act of 1991 is omitted is not clear—there is reference to only one *fiqh* opinion on embryo killing (p. 305) despite there being a variety of traditional opinions; see R. Lohlker, *Schari'a und Moderne: Diskussionen über Schwangerschaftsabbruch, Versicherung und Zinsen* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft, 1996). The book concludes that the Sudanese political authorities responsible for the re-Islamization of penal law wanted to make the people believe their version was Islamic when in fact it was not. It was a national version, a Sudanese version—a pseudo-Islamic law rather than an authentic replication of Islamic penal law.

From a lawyer's point of view the book makes a significant contribution to legal studies using case law, in the tradition of common law. The judgments are only those that are reported in the *Sudan Law Journal Reports* (SLJR) from 1983 to 2002, the highest number cited being from 1984, 1985, and 1989; there are three judgments from the twenty-first century (pp. 438–40). The reported court cases are restricted to the Supreme Court only and do not cover the two volumes published by the Constitutional Court (1998–2003, 2006–2010). As Köndgen notes, there are certainly many unreported cases that would have given an even richer insight (p. 385 n. 39); any future research could hopefully include them. A promise to Köndgen to make available the judiciary statistics about unreported cases never materialized. Why alternative sources of judgments were not consulted is not mentioned. For example, in my own work in Sudan I had access to detailed police crime statistics and to activist advocates who argued before the courts against application of Islamic penal law to the