The course examines the art and architecture sponsored by Timur (Tamerlane) and his successors in Greater Iran and Central Asia in the years between Timur’s campaigns and the demise of the dynasty’s political power in 1507. Modeling himself after Genghis Khan, Timur and his armies traversed Iran, Central Asia, Afghanistan, India, the Middle East, Anatolia and the Caucasus to create the last great nomadic empire. Timur’s strategies and achievements were modeled after and mediated through the Mongol Ilkhanid dynasty established by Hulegu in 1256; in the cultural realm the Timurids adopted the model of patronage fostered by several dynasties that grew up alongside the Ilkhanids and in the power vacuum left by its demise in 1353. Timur’s imperial order perpetuated the relationship between nomadic groups and sedentary societies, an ongoing symbiosis of “steppe” and “sown” that increased after his death in 1405. To bolster their claim to rule, Timur and his successors exploited the knowledge of indigenous bureaucrats and craftsmen to execute their cultural program. Regional artistic traditions were manipulated and transformed into new hybrids that could demonstrate the ruler’s might and beneficence to the nomadic elite as well as to the multi-cultural urban populations under their control. As complex embodiments, these works reveal an evolving political structure and social order.

Seminar meetings alternate between the study of art and architecture (arranged in broadly chronological fashion), and a thematic treatment of critical issues (for example: patronage as a means of legitimization and cultural assimilation; exploitation of steppe and sown sources of power and prestige; change in socio-economic structure; regional/metropolitan architectural traditions; the formation of a canonical visual idiom in public and private space). Students will be introduced to key works and sites and to the questions that have animated them in scholarship.

Key readings extracted from a wealth of recent literature and primary sources made available in English translation will be used. No previous classes in Islamic art and architecture or in Middle East history and culture are required.

READINGS:
All required books and articles are on reserve at the Fine Arts Library and should be read before the weekly meeting of the seminar for which they are assigned. Some books are on open reserve, others are on closed reserve (sections of books assigned as readings are not copied separately). The articles are arranged alphabetically by author in a binder. Articles that are available on JSTOR are marked as such.

The work of the seminar will involve discussion of the readings. A bibliography accompanies the syllabus. This is by no means comprehensive, but includes the main sources for the study of Timurid art, architecture, history, and literature.

REQUIREMENTS:
The final grade is broken down as follows: weekly participation in classroom discussion 40%; presentation no exceeding 20 minutes [to be accompanied by a bibliography] of one of the weekly case studies marked by an asterisk* 20%; final paper on a topic of the student’s choice in consultation with the professor 40%. The final paper is due on January 16, 2009.
WEEKLY TOPICS AND READINGS

SEPT. 18  INTRODUCTION

SEPT. 25  THE TIMURID DYNASTY

READINGS
Thomas W. Lentz and Glenn D. Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision: Persian Art and Culture in the Fifteenth Century*, chap. 1
Beatrice F. Manz, *Rise and Rule of Tamerlane*
Roger Savory, “The Struggle for Supremacy in Persia After the Death of Timur”

OTHER RESOURCES ON RESERVE
John Woods, *The Timurid Dynasty*

OCT. 2  THE WRITTEN SOURCES

PRESENTATION

READINGS

OTHER RESOURCES ON RESERVE

OCT. 9  THE WORKSHOP (KITABKHANA)

PRESENTATION
READINGS
Thomas W. Lentz and Glenn D Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision*, chap. 3
Francis Richard, “Nasr al-Soltani, Nasir al-Din Mozahheb et la Bibliothèque d’Ebrahim Soltan à Shiraz”

OTHER RESOURCES ON RESERVE
M. S. Ipsiroglu, *Saray-Alben: Diez’sche Klebebände aus den Berliner Sammlungen*

OCT. 16 TIMURID ARCHITECTURE: SAMARQAND

PRESENTATION

READINGS
Lisa Golombek and Donald Wilber, *Timurid Architecture in Iran and Turan*, chaps. 1–10

OTHER RESOURCES ON RESERVE
Galina A. Pugachenkova, *Chefs-d’œuvre d’architecture de l’Asie Centrale, XIVe-XVe siècle*

OCT. 23 NO MEETING

OCT. 30 TIMUR’S PALACES AND GARDENS

PRESENTATION

READINGS
Roy Gonzalez de Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamerlán*, edited by Francisco López Estrada, pp. 213–323; or *Embassy to Tamerlane (1403–1406)*, translated by Guy Le Strange, pp. 200–300

NOV. 6 TIMURID ARCHITECTURE: HERAT

PRESENTATION
Shrine culture. Lisa Golombek, *The Timurid Shrine at Gazur Gab*
READINGS
Terry Allen, *Timurid Herat*
Bernard O’Kane, *Timurid Architecture in Khurasan*, chap. 5, and cat. nos. 2 and 14
Maria E. Subtelny, “Socioeconomic Bases of Cultural Patronage under the later Timurids.” [Available on JSTOR](https://www.jstor.org)

OTHER RESOURCES ON RESERVE
Terry Allen, *A Catalogue of the Toponyms and Monuments of Timurid Herat*
Roya Marefat, *Beyond the Architecture of Death: The Shrine of Shah-i Zinda in Samarqand*
Beatrice F. Manz, *Power, Politics, and Religion in Timurid Iran*

Nov. 13

**ARTS OF THE BOOK: EPIC, ROMANCE, AND PANEGYRIC**

**PRESENTATION**

**READINGS**
Basil Gray, ed., *Arts of the Book in Central Asia, 14th-16th Centuries*, pp. 121–78
Thomas Lentz and Glenn Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision*, chap. 2
David J. Roxburgh, “Baysunghur’s Library: Questions Related to its Chronology and Production”
Eleanor G. Sims, “The Illustrated Manuscripts of Firdausi’s *Shahnama* Commissioned by Princes of the Houses of Timur”

**OTHER RESOURCES ON RESERVE**
David J. Roxburgh, *The Persian Album, 1400–1600: From Dispersal to Collection*

Nov. 20

**ARTS OF THE BOOK: HISTORY AND GENEALOGY**

**PRESENTATION**

**READINGS**
Emel Esin, “Hanlar Ulaki (The Succession of Kings): On the Illustrated Genealogy, with Uygur Inscriptions, of Mongol and Temurid Dynasties, at the Topkapi Library”
Sholeh Quinn, “The Mu’izz al-Ansab and Shu’ab-i Panjganah as Sources for the Chaghatayid Period of History: A Comparative Analysis”
Osma Fikri Sertkaya, “Timürli Seceresi (Topkapi Sarayi Müzesi, Hazine 2152, v. 32–43)”

OTHER RESOURCES ON RESERVE
Marie-Rose Séguy, The Miraculous Journey of Mahomet: Miraj-Nameh

Nov. 26
THANKSGIVING

Dec. 4
THE COURT OF SULTAN HUSAYN (1470–1506)

PRESENTATION
Late Timurid metalwork. Linda Komaroff, The Golden Disk of Heaven: Metalwork of Timurid Iran

READINGS
Thomas W. Lentz and Glenn D. Lowry, Timur and the Princely Vision, chap. 4
Mir ‘Ali Shir Nava’i, Muhakamat al-lughatayn, trans. R. Devereux
Maria E. Subtelny, “Scenes from the Literary Life of Timurid Herat”
Maria E. Subtelny, “A Taste for the Intricate: The Persian Poetry of the Late Timurid Period”

OTHER RESOURCES ON RESERVE

Dec. 11
LATE TIMURID PAINTING

PRESENTATION

Rachel Milstein, “Sufi Elements in the Late Fifteenth Century Painting of Timurid Herat”
David J. Roxburgh, “Kamal al-Din Bihzad and Authorship in Persianate Painting.” Available on JSTOR

JAN. 20 RESEARCH PAPERS DUE JANUARY 16, 2009