

HAA 120n Pro-Seminar: Syllabus and Readings
Fall 2008: Thursday 3:00–5:00, Sackler 406
Office hours: Wednesday 3:00–5:00

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Art of the Timurids in Greater Iran and Central Asia

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

Shiro Ando, *Timuridische Emire nach dem Mu'izz al-Ansab. Untersuchung zur Stammesaristokratie Zentralasiens im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert*

John Woods, *The Timurid Dynasty*

OCT. 2 THE WRITTEN SOURCES

PRESENTATION

Khvandamir's history, "Beloved of the Age," as a source. Ghiyath al-Din b. Humam al-Din al-Husayni Khvandamir, *Habib al-siyar fi akhbār-i afrād-i bashar*, trans. Wheeler Thackston, *Habibu's-Siyar. Tome three, The reign of the Mongol and the Turk*, part 1, pp. 227–306; browse part 2

READINGS

Dawlatshah Samarqandi, *Tadhkirat al-shu'ara'*, excerpts translated in Wheeler Thackston, *A Century of Princes*, pp. 11–62

Ghiyath al-Din Naqqash, "Report to Mirza Baysunghur on the Timurid Legation to the Ming Court at Peking," translated by Wheeler Thackston, *Album Prefaces and Other Documents*, pp. 53–67.

Sharaf al-Din 'Ali Yazdi, *Zafarnama*, excerpts translated in Wheeler Thackston, *A Century of Princes*, pp. 63–100

John Woods, "The Rise of Timurid Historiography." **Available on JSTOR**

OTHER RESOURCES ON RESERVE

Dawlatshah b. 'Ala' al-Dawla Samarqandi, *Tadhkirat al-shu'ara'*, edited by Muhammad 'Abbasi

Sharaf al-Din 'Ali Yazdi, *Zafarnama*, edited by Muhammad 'Abbasi

OCT. 9 THE WORKSHOP (*KITABKHLANA*)

PRESENTATION

Analysis of the Rab'-i Rashidi articles of endowment. Portions of *waqf-nama* translated by Wheeler Thackston in Sheila S. Blair, *A Compendium of Chronicles. Rashid al-Din's illustrated history of the world*, pp. 114–15

READINGS

Anonymous, *Arzadasbt*, translated by Wheeler Thackston, *Album Prefaces and Other Documents*, pp. 43–46

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”

David J. Roxburgh, “Persian Drawing, ca. 1400–1450: Materials and Creative Procedures.” **Available on JSTOR**

OTHER RESOURCES ON RESERVE

M. S. Ipsiroglu, *Saray-Alben: Diez'sche Klebebände aus den Berliner Sammlungen*

OCT. 16 TIMURID ARCHITECTURE: SAMARQAND

PRESENTATION

The monuments of Shahr-i Sabz. Lisa Golombek and Donald Wilber, *Timurid Architecture in Iran and Turan*, cat. nos. 39–44

READINGS

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

OTHER RESOURCES ON RESERVE

Galina A. Pugachenkova, *Chefs-d'oeuvre d'architecture de l'Asie Centrale, XIVe-XVe siècle*

OCT. 23 NO MEETING

OCT. 30 TIMUR’S PALACES AND GARDENS

PRESENTATION

Approaches to Timur’s palaces/gardens. Assessment of essays by Lisa Golombek, “The Gardens of Timur: New Perspectives”; Monica Gronke, “The Persian Court Between Palace and Tent: From Timur to Abbas I,” in *Timurid Art and Culture: Iran and Central Asia in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Golombek and Subtelny, pp. 19–22; and Bernard O’Kane, “From Tents to Pavilions: Royal Mobility and Persian Palace Design”

READINGS

Roy Gonzalez de Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, 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. Subtenly, “A Timurid Educational and Charitable Foundation: The Ikhlasiiyya Complex of ‘Ali Shir Nava’i in 15th-Century Herat and its Endowment.” **Available on JSTOR**

Maria E. Subtenly, “Socioeconomic Bases of Cultural Patronage under the later Timurids.” **Available on JSTOR**

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 Shab-i Zinda in Samarqand*

Beatrice F. Manz, *Power, Politics, and Religion in Timurid Iran*

Nov. 13

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

PRESENTATION

Ibrahim Sultan as a patron of the arts of the book. Firuza Abdullaeva and Charles Melville, *The Persian Book of Kings: Ibrahim Sultan’s Shabnama*, and Eleanor G. Sims, “Ibrahim-Sultan’s Illustrated *Zafar-Nameh* of 839/1436”

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 *Shabnama* Commissioned by Princes of the Houses of Timur”

Eleanor G. Sims, “Ibrahim-Sultan’s Illustrated *Zafarnama* of 1436 and its Impact in the Muslim East,” in *Timurid Art and Culture: Iran and Central Asia in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Golombek and Subtenly, pp. 132–43

Priscilla P. Soucek, “The Manuscripts of Iskandar Sultan: Structure and Content,” in *Timurid Art and Culture in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Lisa Golombek and Maria Subtenly, pp. 116–31

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

Anonymous, “Synoptic Account of the House of Timur,” translated by Wheeler Thackston, in *A Century of Princes*, pp. 237–46

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"

Richard Ettinghausen, "An Illuminated Manuscript of Hafiz-i Abru in Istanbul. Part 1"

Güner Inal, "Miniatures in Historical Manuscripts from the Time of Shahrukh in the Topkapi Palace Museum," in *Timurid Art and Culture: Iran and Central Asia in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Golombek and Subtelny, pp. 103–15.

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, "Timürlü Seceresi (Topkapi Sarayı 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

Linda Komaroff, "Persian Verses of Gold and Silver: The Inscriptions on Timurid Metalwork," in *Timurid Art and Culture: Iran and Central Asia in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Golombek and Subtelny, pp. 144–57

Thomas W. Lentz and Glenn D. Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision*, chap. 4

Mir 'Ali Shir Nava'i, *Mubakamat 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

V. V. Barthold, *Four Studies on the History of Central Asia*, vol. 3, *Mir 'Ali Shir*

DEC. 11 LATE TIMURID PAINTING

PRESENTATION

Sultan Husayn's *Zafarnama*. Eleanor G. Sims, "The Garrett Manuscript of the Zafar-Name: A Study in Fifteenth-Century Timurid Patronage," Ph.D. diss.; browse color reproductions in Ebadollah Bahari, *Bihzad, Master of Persian Painting*, pp. 68–82

Thomas W. Lentz, "Changing Worlds: Bihzad and the New Painting"

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