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DYNASTIC IMAGERY IN EARLY TIMURID WALL PAINTING

It has become abundantly clear that Persian painting and drawing can no longer comfortably be seen as a monolithic visual or even intellectual entity. Recent studies have widened research well beyond the traditional confines of the "miniature" and encouraged a closer examination of the nature and purpose of Persian painting in its various forms. One avenue toward clarification of painting's role in the Islamic Iranian context is the evidence of wall painting. Often accorded a status equal to that of manuscript illustration, its material remains are scarce, and it is literary evidence that in large part has fashioned current notions of the function, extent, and significance of painting programs on interior wall surfaces. Past general studies have not only repeatedly stressed the continuity of this ancient practice from the Sasanian period into the Qajar era, but have also viewed it as a formal extension of manuscript painting.¹

Earlier investigations focused on pre-Mongol or later Safavid examples, but what is less well known is the evidence from those centuries when a variety of Turco-Mongol military dynasties held sway over the medieval Iranian cultural area, a period of accelerated activity for the development of Persian painting. Meager physical evidence, particularly from a royal, secular context, and the seeming absence of the human form have obviously accounted for much of this gap.

What still remains to be examined is the evidence of non-epigraphic wall painting as depicted in contemporaneous illustrated manuscripts as well as related material in the Diez album in Berlin and the Topkapi albums in Istanbul.² This body of work provides a more complete record of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Persian painting, and the Timurid period (ca. 1370–1506) offers a promising framework for study. Securely attributed royal manuscripts are numerous for the reign of Shahrukh b. Timur (r. 1405–47) and during this period, primarily in the capital of Herat, Persian manuscript painting under the sponsorship of the ruling family assumed its canonical form which would be viewed by later elites and modern-day historians as critical to subsequent developments in Islamic painting.³ Timurid painting is nearly always viewed solely from the perspective of the illustrated manuscript, but if wall painting was prevalent during this key period, as the literary evidence seems to tell us and past studies have certainly implied, then one might expect to find not only a parallel formal development to book illustration, but also a comparable significance. The focus of this study will be directed toward the relationship between wall painting as it appears in illustrated manuscripts and the visual stratification that marks Persian painting and drawing during this time. The issues raised not only reveal something of Timurid dynastic aims and ideological programs, but also underscore the very different ways they chose to conceptualize visual information in a variety of contexts.⁴

The literary evidence for wall painting during the fifteenth century is generally well known and has been summarized by Stchoukine.⁵ Only one account offers a detailed view of how painting was used on walls under the Timurid ruling elite. The description by Ibn Arabshah of the wall paintings ordered by Timur (r. 1370–1405) for the palaces in his gardens at Samarqand reveals the existence of an extensive figural program centered around the "Great Amir" himself: representations of Timur ("now smiling, now austere") and his assemblies; his battles and sieges (including his victories in the Dasht-i Qipchaq, Iran, and India); conversations with kings, amirs, lords, and sages; sultans offering homage and gifts; his hunting nets and ambushes; likenesses of his sons, grandsons, amirs, and soldiers; public feasts; cupbearers and musicians; his dalliances and representations of his concubines and royal wives.⁶ Other accounts are largely generalized, and mention paintings in the Bagh-i Shamal and Dilgushay gardens built by Timur at Samarqand and those in the tarabhana ("joyhouse") in the Bagh-i Safid garden at Herat ordered by Abu Sa'id (r. 1459–1469).⁷

To this evidence can perhaps be added a brief statement from the workshop document known as the *ars-adash* found in the Topkapi album H. 2153. It has been convincingly attributed to the scribe Ja'far al-Baysunghuri, head of the kitabkhana of Baysunghur b. Shahrukh (d. 1433), and is datable to ca. 1427–28; in a listing of current projects it mentions in contradistinction to the
kitabkhana ("which was built for the painters ... painters and scribes are now working there") a structure known as the surakhana. That term can be translated as "picture house" or "portrait gallery," and may refer to a building whose interior walls were covered with paintings.

Not surprisingly, these scattered accounts reveal that subject matter was royal and historical in nature, perhaps reflecting the selective bias of these sources. Extant wall painting for the fifteenth century hardly coincides with these written accounts, and no known remains match these descriptions. What does survive, of course, is painted wall ornament based on elements developed during the Ilkhanid period (1256–1353). Published examples show that these pre-Timurid forms are almost all found in western Iran on the wall surfaces and vaults of mosques and funerary structures, often as painted stucco relief. Most of these devices are also common elements of wall painting in contemporary Ilkhanid manuscript illustration, with certain formal correspondences to manuscript illumination of the period.

The remaining fragments of wall painting from Timur's reign show similar elements but with floral and landscape elements now more in evidence (fig. 1), and the same trend is found under his son Shahrukh in religious or funerary structures throughout Khurasan. This is the somewhat dismally general picture that emerges from Timurid material remains. In light of what is known of the formal relationship of Timurid book painting to its immediate predecessors, the dynasty's adherence to earlier wall painting motifs is predictable: the basic pre-Timurid categories are continued, influenced by building type and function which at times seem to dictate interior decoration, as in the frequency of landscapes in funerary structures.

The evidence from Timurid manuscript painting and related album material more accurately preserves what was typical on the walls of Timurid audience chambers, reception rooms, and pavilions during the first half of the fifteenth century. Despite the common practice of using manuscript illustration to study textiles and decorative objects of the period, the argument can be raised that the themes and expressive qualities employed for wall painting in manuscript illustration represent arbitrary aesthetic choices, secondary details that are whimsical and incidental, modified in a visual shorthand for a smaller format. This view, however, does not necessarily coincide with what royal Timurid manuscript illustration during the first half of the fifteenth century implies about the role of the artist. In royal painting, iconography and expressive idiom would not likely be pictorial elements open to extensive artistic manipulation. In this most restricted of "performing arts," only individual style, perhaps palette, and to some extent composition seem to have been areas open to individual interpretation.

Whether or not the use of Timurid manuscript illustration as historical documentation is accepted, one can still perceive wall paintings in manuscript illustration as representative of an ideal, an embodiment of what was both desired and deemed necessary among the Timurid cultural elite. Their manuscript painting may be blatantly artificial in its presentation, an aspect which intentionally filters its contents, but the constructed world it portrays embodies real attitudes and ideas about the Timurids' evolving political and cultural ideology, including their views of the aesthetic process.

In many instances early Timurid illustrations simply reinforce the evidence of surviving contemporary wall paintings, but one can also detect in this source a movement away from structural constraints toward independent compositions. A clear example is the representation of medallions and arabesques; their prominent, often isolated, position on wall surfaces in both extant Timurid architecture and in manuscript illustration is emphasized, and their general configurations — celestial imagery and elaborate vegetal arabesque networks — may signify levels of meaning not yet understood.

Certain illustrations representing royal, secular contexts during the reign of Shahrukh make clear the dynasty's characteristically elegant modification of earlier vocabulary. A case in point is a series of arabesque wall medallions found in the illustrations to a 1431 Khamsa of

Fig. 1. Interior painted decoration on plaster. Samarqand, Shah-i Zinda, 1385–86. (Photo: after Golombek and Wilbur, Timurid Architecture of Iran and Turan, vol. 2, pl. 94)
This synthesizing attitude was pervasive in the depiction of landscape, which poses more complex conceptual problems. During the centuries under discussion, the landscape in wall painting clearly retained the stamp of “Chinese” influence; i.e., with the incorporation into the Islamic Iranian artistic vocabulary of numerous elements of Chinese-inspired landscape, an Islamized Chinese landscape emerged. The palette and execution characteristic of landscapes on walls in manuscript painting, as well as in surviving structures, clearly mimic the linear monochrome style of Chinese ink painting and ceramic decoration, developments which tend to render even specifically Islamic subject matter in a “Chinese” guise.  

A well-known example from a Jalayirid manuscript simultaneously demonstrates the pre-Timurid use of chinoiserie and suggests the very different manner in which visual information could be conceptualized. A manuscript illustration now in the Topkapi album H. 2154, but originally part of the British Library’s 1396 Divan of Khwaju Kirmani, shows on the upper interior walls of a princely chamber a scene depicting a mother and child in a landscape. The subject matter would hardly be construed as Chinese, but the painting’s appearance is otherwise with its monochrome dark-blue palette, the rapid ink-like manner of execution, and the distinctive Chinese-inspired rock formation. What is most important, however, is its difference in execution from the manuscript painting in which it appears; significantly, the painter has emphasized that as a painting on a wall this scene is both separate and distinctive in conception.  

The maintenance of this landscape formulation in Timurid illustrations is seen in examples from two Nizami manuscripts (fig. 3). These wall paintings, moreover, often feature fantastic landscapes with mythical beasts of Chinese origin. Imaginary landscapes of this type do not appear per se as royal Timurid manuscript illustration. Their fantastic and specific subject matter represents an obvious impediment, but it is also their conception and execution, so different from a Timurid narrative image, that seems to preclude their acceptance as a text illustration. The pictorial conception peculiar to this type of landscape has also changed, however, as these mythical creatures no longer simply inhabit the landscape, but are isolated within it. As with the Timurid integration and refinement of Chinese elements with the Islamic arabesque, these creatures are assuming new roles independent of both their original Chinese context and their initial usage in the Iranian world.
This departure is underscored by a series of independent drawings in the Topkapi and Diez albums that display similar landscapes inhabited by real and mythical fauna and flora of Chinese origin. What is again striking is the shift in expression away from the formal restraint and decorum of manuscript illustration, which seems to have governed much of the initial Persian perception of this exotic imagery, toward greater movement and demonstrative emotion. The more expressive character of these landscapes — deemed proper for walls and independent drawings, but not text illustration — was not, however, absent from the Timurid book. In a decorative role they appear in bindings, marginal illumination, as full-page compositions unrelated to the text, and, most strikingly, isolated in medallions in manuscript decoration and in wall painting found in manuscript illustration (fig. 5). The Diez album preserves a series of large medallions that have literally compressed and channeled the energy and dynamism of these subjects into taut, highly conventionalized independent compositions. A Timurid attribution is clear from their characteristic codification of chinoiserie as well as stylistic and thematic correspondences in manuscript decoration. What is important is that the visual exuberance and subtle calligraphic flourishes so integral to these works have not been subordinated but rather recast by their idealization, their restructuring based upon symmetry and repetition. The result is a highly original excursion into conventionalized virtuosity unlike anything seen in royal Timurid manuscript illustration.

Floral decoration as an important component of early Timurid wall painting has already been noted, and one scheme in particular featured a network of cartouches and lobed medallions atop a background of floral and vegetal sprays, as seen in the Aq Saray mausoleum of ca. 1470 at Samarqand. A related drawing has been found in the Topkapi album H. 2152 (fig. 4), previously identified as a study for a textile design. The evidence of the panel found at Aq Saray suggests that it is just as likely a cartoon or study for a wall painting, but it has additional significance by virtue of its inscription, which shows in a faint secondary script behind an honorific the name "Baysunghur". Its independence from text illustration of the period is underlined by the technique: pale, shaded washes and an animated, decidedly calligraphic line.

There can be little doubt that the name refers to Baysunghur b. Shahrukh, even though this imagery is absent from his own known manuscripts. This attribution is corroborated by the presence of the same decoration, minus the birds and medallions, on a page in the St. Petersburg Khamsa done for his father that is clearly under the influence of Baysunghur's atelier, if not done by a member of that same workshop. With the appearance of the prince's name on the H. 2152 drawing, as well as the use of the same imagery in a Shahrukhid manuscript, an entire series of drawings in the albums can be attached to the court at Herat during the early fifteenth century. Not only does this associate a different visual system with Baysunghur, the supreme patron of manuscript illustration during the early fifteenth century, it also reinforces the notion that at least two separate and very different visual idioms were practiced at Herat — one asso-
this device among the Timurids. Second, while found earlier, its appearance on walls in Timurid manuscripts displays an increased degree of emotion and expressiveness, including traces of three-dimensional modeling, that is substantially different from other vegetal and floral counterparts in wall painting. These suspicions of a special status are furthered by a large enigmatic drawing found in H. 2152 depicting a luxuriant hybrid lotus plant (fig. 7). Delicate and absolute in its symmetry, its base features, above a Chinese duck-and-wave motif, a snake devouring a duck and a dragon attacking a wolf, both serpents slithering around a writhing lotus leaf. Reminiscent of winged victories are Timurid angels who appear above to water this creation, their heads crowned by leafy hats composed of the same lotus leaves.35

What is again intriguing about these non-narrative Timurid representations are their emotive qualities. While hardly examples of raw energy, compared to the static restrictions of manuscript illustration their idiom represents a controlled vehicle for emotion, dynamism, and virtuosity. It subtly embraces the qualities largely excluded from book illustration: modeling, movement, even elements of perspective and foreshortening at times. Similar qualities are present in a related motif also found on walls in Timurid manuscript painting: a spiral volute that is volumetric in conception, sometimes emerging from a vase, and found in monochrome and polychrome illustrated versions to mid-century.36 It also appears as an illuminated colophon device,37 throughout a Topkapi album of calligraphy compiled for Bayshungur,38 and in earlier manuscript illumination.39 Despite its more or less abstract qualities, the same freedom of motion and modeling absent from manuscript illustration is present in its swelling, inflected contours.

Given that Timurid stature in painting was in large part based upon idealization of the human figure, the virtual absence of such representations in the evidence so far discussed remains puzzling. Human figures in the same idiom as manuscript illustration, however, do appear in Timurid wall painting, as an illustration from Iskandar Sultan’s Anthology of 1410–11 demonstrates (fig. 8). From Nizami’s Haft Paykar (“Seven Portraits”), the painting shows the entrance of Bahram Gur into a palace chamber graced with paintings of seven princesses. These wall paintings are undeniably in the same idiom as the illustration in which they appear, with no discernable difference in expression, palette, or quality of line. Their appearance could perhaps be explained by other factors, such as narrative content, but the latter would not normally provide specific idiomatic guide-

Fig. 4. Cartoon. Herat, ca. 1430. Topkapi Palace Museum, Istanbul, H. 2152, fol. 96b.
lines for an artist. These representations of princesses clearly suggest that some wall painting during the early Timurid period was, as earlier writers have maintained, an expanded version of manuscript illustration, with images simply blown up for the wall.

If increased size in this idiom can be accepted as a criterion for wall painting imagery, then an additional number of Timurid figural works in H. 2152 can be proposed as possible evidence for wall painting. Chief among these are a drawing (fol. 93b) of a female member of the court (fig. 9), as well as two separate drawings on the same page (fol. 49b) in H. 2152 of additional female court figures, at least one a princess by virtue of her crown. In all likelihood these images represent works for transfer, not only because of their relatively rough execution, but because all are drawn in red ink and are pounced. While clearly related to the illustrative idiom, they do not adhere to the scale customary in early Timurid royal manuscripts. In the majority of illustrated manuscripts executed for Baysunghur b. Shahrukh, the average height of the figures is less than 5 centimeters, and those in his father’s much larger and less refined illustrated histories approximately 10 centime-
ters; by comparison, the female figure on fol. 93b stands 42 centimeters tall, the seated princess on fol. 49b measures 28 centimeters, and the other standing female figure nearly 42 centimeters. Also included on fol. 49b is a drawing of a pair of male figures, possibly a courtier and attendant, that is also pounced and executed in red ink (fig. 10); the larger figure reaches nearly 27 centimeters. The fact that these pounces were grouped together on the same page may be indicative of a past recognition of their original function. Another pounced red ink figure (fol. 57b) of an attendant by the same hand as the previous drawings measures nearly 30 centimeters.

Related to these five drawings is yet another large pounced drawing in H. 2152 in red ink (fig. 11), this time representing a figure kneeling beside a flowering tree offering a cup with outstretched arms, perhaps to another figure that would have sat or stood on the opposite side. It is difficult not to be somewhat startled by the imposing size and appearance of figures usually seen, at least by modern eyes, in miniature. The formal qualities associated with the illustrative idiom are suddenly more clearly exposed, its detached formality and stiffness so often explained by limitations of scale and format still upheld and, in fact, obviously emphasized.

Somewhat different and even more curious in H. 2152 is a large painting (43 x 63.5 cm.) of a mounted prince
and attendant (fig. 12). Placed against a blank background and standing on a horizontal groundline, the style is highly unusual because of its prominent, almost histrionic, use of shading to model the contours of the horses. It somewhat resembles a more careful and polished version of the so-called historical style used in historical manuscripts executed for Shahrukh around 1425. Not only does this painting’s bold, dramatic size and presentation suggest the possibility of either a study or model for a wall painting, but its subject matter—a demonstration of royal hunting skill—is consistent with the earlier description by Ibn Arabshah of wall painting executed for Timur at Samarkand; in fact, all the H. 2152 figural examples discussed here fall into that category.

From this preliminary overview a more complex picture of early Timurid painting and drawing begins to emerge. Encompassing more than a simple division of figural and non-figural subject matter, it clarifies the existence of different visual idioms, some linked directly or indirectly to text illustration, others operating outside the influence of narrative requirements and consequently assuming different formal properties. In a fun-
damental sense these idioms, perhaps merely subsets of broader divisions known for the late sixteenth century, represent different ways of picturing visual information, and suggest a number of hypotheses regarding the early Timurid aesthetic and the role of the artist.

The majority of Timurid wall painting as found in surviving evidence would appear to be not only decorative, but also non-narrative in its orientation. The various subgenres of this idiom, such as chinoiserie, not only cover wall surfaces, but are also found on extant objects and in illustrations. Of special significance to this idiom under Shahrukh was the prominence of chinoiserie, a not unexpected development considering its earlier presence under Ilkhanid rule. Different, however, was its later role as a conceptual matrix for much of Timurid imagery in this idiom. It is well known that the renewed diplomatic exchanges of the Ming and Timurid courts during this period brought a new and different wave of Chinese influence to Iran. This influx triggered no catalytic changes in the form or development of Timurid manuscript painting, but instead served as an expressive framework for a new aesthetic and intellectual vision in painting and drawing outside of text illustration. Far beyond imitation, the decorative idiom articulated the emergence of a refined and dynamic Turko-Iranian visual synthesis during the early fifteenth century.

As with manuscript production under Timurid patronage, many of the elements of this new synthesis were likely already in place. Consequently, the ultimate Timurid contribution appears to be a restructuring of this exotic imagery into distinctive conventions that are new creations. Despite this dynastic usurpation of an earlier visual tradition, it is also likely that the Timurids simultaneously attempted to exploit the potent symbolic and cultural connotations of “Chinese” imagery then current in the eastern Islamic world. The eye-witness report of the 1419 Timurid mission to China by the painter Ghiyath al-Din Naqqash to Baysunghur b. Shahrukh is instructive in this regard: descriptions of the rich imagery on walls and objects in Chinese temples and palaces are clearly not simply literary clichés but expressions of genuine admiration and wonder, and the taste and demand for things “Chinese” among the dynasty was strong. In Timurid lands the fabulous creatures and exotic flora now synonymous with the dynasty represented more than exotic allusions to a distant land of material wealth and artistic brilliance: they reflect a conscious program or sensibility that transformed these motifs into generalized Timurid signifiers of wealth, sophistication, and, perhaps most important, artistic prowess. In the past linked with China and the Mongols but now appropriated for internal dynastic purposes, this recast, idiomatic imagery is a subtle demonstration of Timurid control and manipulation of aesthetic resources and traditions for new purposes.

Apart from this pervasive implementation of chinoiserie, the decorative idiom also emphasized formal traits greatly suppressed in manuscript illustration of the period. While the reduction of diverse imagery to a new conventionalized system may be a fundamental premise of this idiom, it was also seen as a more appropriate vehicle for individual expression. The illusionistic qualities evoked in this idiom reflect the capabilities and likely even the inclinations of individual artists outside the restrictions of text illustration. Viewing these works as part of an idiom not linked to narrative requirements also
contradicts a tendency in recent years to assign any exuberant, calligraphic or dynamic Persian painting or drawing of the fifteenth century to western Iran and Turkmen workshops; those qualities are more likely characteristic of an idiom, not a geographical location or school.

Equally apparent from the evidence is that figural painting was part of Timurid wall-painting programs, but in a different guise. Its genesis was obviously in the illustrative idiom, and like that idiom, was ideally suited to repetition and standardization. With the restriction of all elements to virtual stereotypes and emblematic portrayals, their placement arranged according to the logic of the picture plane rather than that of the natural world, it, like the illustrative idiom, was never really an arena for individual virtuosity in the usual Western post-Renaissance sense. Its presence on walls instead apparently served a dual purpose, one evoking narrative and non-narrative connotations. The formal visualization in manuscript illustration of Timurid elite life through the lens of Persian poetry and literature endowed the illustrative idiom with implications beyond the limits of the text, for it elevated and inserted Timurid royal activity into the rarified ethos of the Persian literary tradition. This visual grafting was one of a series of devices, like the dynasty's architectural programs or their relentless religious propagandizing, that encouraged an image and behavior capable of obscuring brutal political and military policies. It appears that this idiom, once transferred to walls, divorced from a narrative context, and enlarged, continued to exploit the linkage between pictures and words that loaded manuscript illustration with secondary messages that were literary, cultural, and, of course, ultimately political. In the process of moving from page to wall, with their increased size generating a heightened theatricality, these images were no longer
strictly illustrative. They can instead be designated as pictorial in idiomatic expression, evoking the illustrative idiom in a new and different context.\textsuperscript{48}

As with the illustrated manuscript, the intended audience was of critical importance for a correct reading of these wall painting images. In a closed self-referential system of this kind the shared perspective and values of the Timurid elite were essential to both the creation and decoding of idealized images. Drawn from manuscript illustration, the contrived theatrical combinations of pose, glance, gesture, color, dress, and setting offered multiple, and in all likelihood predetermined, possibilities for expression whose meanings at this point can only be guessed at by the modern viewer.\textsuperscript{49}

One impression gained by looking at Timurid wall painting in any idiom—decorative or pictorial—is a strong sense of established formats, of a systematization of expression. While subject matter was inherited, it was the stratification, refinement, and dissemination of this imagery that appears to be the major Timurid contribution, for these distinctions suddenly became clear during the first half of the fifteenth century and are repeated on a widespread scale under their patronage. Less clear is the relationship between idioms. For example, representations in the decorative idiom are found on walls and objects in manuscript illustration, but manuscript illustration itself is rarely, if ever, executed in this decorative idiom.\textsuperscript{50} What this suggests about the relationship of these idioms is that they were employed for specific purposes depending on motive and context.

The illustrations painted for the great manuscripts done under early Timurid patronage can be seen, despite their private nature and generic qualities, as an "official" imagery of the ruling house, a kind of internal state painting. This specific role seems to be retained when it is transferred to walls. In their enumeration of subject matter the literary accounts of Timurid wall painting show historical motives behind the commissioning of murals which recorded for contemporary viewers, as much as for the Timurids themselves, the celebration of the Timurid past and present. Ibn Arabshah's statement of Timur's intentions with wall painting affirms this notion: "He intended, that those who knew not his affairs, should see them as though present."\textsuperscript{51} Recorded for the viewer were the confirmations and prerogatives of Timurid power—victory in battle, feasting, assemblies and audiences, the submission of rivals, the pleasures and luxuries of the royal house. Yet this picturing of the Timurid self-view was both commemorative and panegyrical. Because of its formal choices and selectivity of view, it can be regarded on one level as a linked visual counterpart to the panegyric histories of the Timurid house, highly stylized, rhetorical accounts that present an idealized, flattering view of the dynasty.\textsuperscript{52} Just as text illustration visualized the legends and lessons of Iranian literature in Timurid guise, wall painting appears in turn to have appropriated the formal connotations of text illustration to mythologize contemporary Timurid aspirations. Despite their generic visual properties and dissociation from a narrative context, these wall images that exploit the illustrative idiom are nonetheless specific in their choice of formal expression for the articulation of official views.\textsuperscript{53}

It might be suggested that once outside the physical format and contextual associations of the book the unique formal power associated with narrative imagery would be compromised and diminished when employed on walls in the pictorial idiom. Although painted on more expansive surfaces and larger in size than typical Timurid manuscript illustration, it remains uncertain how on some physical and psychological levels it may have differed from its manuscript counterpart. While the one-to-one visual intimacy characteristic of the relationship between an illustrated manuscript and its viewer would no longer be strictly operative, literary accounts of their placement suggest that these wall paintings were public only in the sense that more people could view them than an illustration in a book. The evidence from H. 2152 suggests that these transplanted narrative images remained faithful to the internal rules of manuscript illustration, regardless of increased size. The viewing audience may have been enlarged, but the interaction between picture and viewer was still an exclusive experience, presumably intended only for those individuals allowed entry into Timurid royal compounds and their inner spaces.

Timurid cultural activity during the early fifteenth century played a vital role in the state's effort to establish internal and external symbols of authority and legitimacy.\textsuperscript{54} By a subtle and systematic refinement of inherited traditions, a Timurid self-view emerged in painting that codified images capable of identifying and defining the dynasty not only as new rulers, but as inheritors of a cultural tradition with the prerogative to modify it for their own purposes. Wall painting cannot likely be characterized as simply an extension of manuscript illustration, as its utilization of different idioms makes clear, and the implication is similar for all painting and drawing under the Timurids. Their conceptualization of artistic production, implemented by a restructuring of percep-
tion through the formation of distinct visual categories or idioms, may also refine the concept of "style" to the individual interpretation of an idiom: whatever signs or meanings a motif or an artist might bring to this process, they are ultimately subordinated to the process itself.

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NOTES


8. Thackston, Century of Princes, p. 326.


10. Wilber, Architecture of Islamic Iran, pls. 41, 60, 76, 77, 143, 206; Pope, Survey of Persian Art, pls. 382, 384, 387.


17. Ibid.; see also the wall medallion on fol. 3b of the ca. 1425–50 Ms’váníma (Marie-Rose Séguy, The Miraculous Journey of Mahomet [New York, 1977], pl. 2). See Linga, Quranic Art of Calligraphy, pp. 74–75, for one such interpretation within a Qur’anic context.

18. Arabesque medallions are also found on fols. 283b, 288b, 304a, 310b, 385b; flowering vases on fols. 135a, 294a, 295a; and landscape scenes on 272a, 283a.


20. These landscape scenes can be viewed as creating their own "pictorial space," see Grabar and Blair, Epic Images, p. 35.


24. Landscapes on fols. 272a and 283a in the St. Petersburg Khamsa consist of rock formations, bending trees, birds, and Chinese clouds. The land of-Dunya Khamsa (H. 781, Topkapı Palace Museum, Istanbul) contains landscapes on fols. 82a and 244b that feature mythical creatures.

25. See n. 9 above, as well as Lentz and Lowry, Timur and the Princey Vision, p. 165, fig. 53, for a typical page from Topkapı album H. 2152 with these landscape elements.


sists of a series of medallions and lobed cartouches bearing landscape elements and animals.


29. Ibid., p. 194, cat. no. 96.


33. It can be found on the entrance arch of Timur’s Masjidi Jamé at Samarqand; see Golombek and Wilber, *Timurid Architecture*, vol. 2, pl. 73.

34. E.g., fols. 135a, 294a, and 295a in the St. Petersburg Khamsa (VP 1000) for Shahrkh; a version in stencil form is found on fols. 9b-10a of the 1431 Poetic Anthology (Or. 8193, British Library, London).

35. See fol. 49b in the ca. 1425-50 Khamsa, where houris wear lotus-leaf hats (Seguy, *Miraculous Journey*, pl. 42). The H. 2152 drawing raises a number of hypotheses regarding a possible celestial or paradisiacal significance and also suggests a specific source for the better known and more mannered Turkmen drawings from western Iran; see Walter Denny, "Dating Ottoman Turkish Works in the Saz Style," *Mugarnas* 1 (1983): 103-6 and pl. 4.

36. See Grube and Sims, "The School of Herat from 1400 to 1450," p. 155, fig. 89; other examples (fols. 50b, 279a) are found in the ca. 1444 Khamsa executed for Muhammad-Juki b. Shahrkh (Lentz and Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision*, p. 184, cat. no. 43).


40. Lentz and Lowry, *Timur and the Princely Vision*, p. 171, fig. 55, and p. 172, fig. 60, for the figures on fol. 49b. Transfer devices such as these were also used for non-figural painting in Timurid architecture; see Golombek and Wilber, *Timurid Architecture*, 1: 132.

41. The jama of the standing female figure on fol. 49b carries an inscription with color instructions, partly readable, that call for the outer garment to be painted white and a kind of embroidery to be represented (Wheeler M. Thackston Jr., personal correspondence).


44. Other large figural paintings, without narrative text but drawing from text illustration, can be attributed to the Timurid period. One group, some on silk and highly refined, is primarily in the Topkapi albums (see Grube and Sims, *Between Iran and China*, figs. 128-30). Another cruder group is found in H. 2152; and it has been proposed that they represent illustrations for Shahname recitations (Nurhan Atasoy, "Illustrations Displayed during Shahname Recitations," *Memorial Volume of the 1st International Congress of Iranian Art and Archaeology, April 1968*, vol. 2 [Tehran, 1972], pp. 262-72).


50. Works that can fall into this category are problematic: they may include the ink drawings in the ca. 1400 Dāšān of Sultan Ahmad Jalayir (see n. 93 above) and the illustrations found in a ca. 1470 Khamsa of Nizami (Glenn D. Lowry and Milo Cleveland Beach, *An Annotated and Illustrated Checklist of the Vever Collection* [Washington, D.C., 1988], no. 237, pp. 206-11).


52. John E. Woods, "The Rise of Timurid Historiography," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 46, 2 (April, 1987): 99-105. This linkage of idiom and text is supported in at least one instance of wall painting under the Turkmen (see n. 7 above).
