

Arts of Asia Lecture Series Fall 2017
Art on the Move Across Asia and Beyond - Part I
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The Arts of Byzantium, Armenia & Islam: Age of Transition

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Useful Terms:

Alexander the Great – 356 BCE – 323 BCE – conquered world from Macedonian Greece to India

Roman Empire – 27 BCE – 1453 CE – controlled much of the world from
Rome – its capital till 330 CE

Constantinople – New Rome – 330 – 1453 CE - when established as a Christian state
(often called Byzantine era)

Umayyad– 660/661 – 750 CE - first Islamic state ruled from
Damascus – its capital, formerly major Roman city

Abbasid – 750 – 1258 CE – successor Islamic state ruled from its capital
Baghdad – near ancient Persian capital of Ctesiphon

Seljuks – 1037 – 1194 – converted to Islam - extended their territories so far across Byzantine
lands that called itself the “Sultanate of Rum”

Mongols – 1162 – 1227 CE – founder Ghengis Khan - originally animists from Mongolia who
extended their rule across Asia to Hungary before retreating and forming several kingdoms

Ilkhanids – 1256 – 1335/1353 CE - Mongols who reached the Mediterranean and
established a
state under Hulagu Khan that became Muslim in 1295 CE

Yuan Dynasty – 1271 – 1368 CE – Mongol state that controlled China; greatest leader
Kublai Khan who converted to Tibetan Buddhism

Golden Horde – or Kipchak Khanate - 1240’s – 1480/1582 CE –Mongol state established
in

Russia by Batu Khan with Moscow as its tax collector; converted to Islam under Uzbek (1312 – 1341); Russians won freedom in 1480

Timurid Empire – 1370 – 1507 CE - established by Timur/Tamerlane, related to the Mongols, Muslim

Ottoman Empire – 1299 – 1922 CE - captured Constantinople in 1453 and made its capital, Muslim

Safavid Persians – 1501 – 1736 CE – peak under Shah Abbas (1571 - 1629), Muslim, had Armenians control external trade from New Julfa, their section of the imperial city Isfahan.

Armenia – people who established the first Christian nation and controlled trade routes from China to the West

Reading List:

Helen C. Evans, *Armenia*, forthcoming, 2018

Helen C. Evans with Brandie Ratliff, *Byzantium and Islam: Age of Transition (7th – 9th Century)*, Metropolitan Museum of Art exhibition catalogue, 2012, entire catalogue, esp. pp. 4-11, 124-133, 200-208, and 244-257 (essays by Helen C. Evans, Thelma Thomas, Anna Ballian, and Barry Flood and read associated catalogue entries).

Helen C. Evans and William D. Wixom, *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D. 843-1261*, Metropolitan Museum of Art exhibition catalogue, 1997, essays on Byzantium, Armenia, and on Islamic connections.

Helen C. Evans, ed., *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261-1557)*, Metropolitan Museum of Art exhibition catalogue, 2004, essays on Byzantium and on Islam.

Expedition: SILK ROAD: Journey to the West: Treasures from the Hermitage, Hermitage Amsterdam, 2014.

Frances Wood, *The Silk Road: Two Thousand Years in the Heart of Asia*, Berkeley, 2002.