

Arts of Asia Lecture Series Fall 2014
The Arts of the Islamic World
Sponsored by The Society for Asian Art

Imagining Europe at the Persian Court in the 17th Century (1590-1720)
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I. A Few Historical Markers to Frame Lecture and Discussion

Shah 'Abbas (1587-1629)

1604: Armenians from Julfa on the Ottoman-Safavid border forcibly relocated to New Julfa, outside the Safavid capital at Isfahan

1610: Receipt dated February 17, 1610 listing a number of Venetian paintings bought on behalf of the Shah by Armenian *Khwaja* Safar. The receipt lists such paintings as Nativity, Madonna, and a female nude.

1620s: beginning around 1620 evidence that Dutch painters working for the court

During the reign of Shah 'Abbas Latin missionaries granted permission to reside in Isfahan; Trade agreements between Safavid court and Dutch and English East India companies are signed

Shah Safi (1629-1642)

1636: Books printed by Armenians in New Julfa, first operating printing press in Iran

1638: English envoy Thomas Merry presents portraits of King Charles I, Henrietta Maria and their children to Shah Safi

Shah 'Abbas II (1642-1666)

1640s: Chehel Sutun, one of the great Safavid palaces, being built, finished 1647

1644: Raphael du Mans, the French Capuchin arrives in Persia and lives there until his death in 1696. During this extended period of time, he serves as a court interpreter.

1645: Jesuits begin arriving in Safavid Iran

1658: Armenians from New Julfa outside of Isfahan establish a printing press in Amsterdam

During the reign of Shah 'Abbas II the court hired many European craftsmen, especially Frenchmen. The foreign painters working for the court are largely Dutch.

Shah Sulayman (1666-1694)

1668: Safavid shah comes to the throne for the second time, after court astrologers recommend second coronation after misfortune plagues initial year
1670: Hasht Behest palace finished
1675: Muhammad Zaman adds paintings to two royal manuscripts kept in royal library
1694: Gemelli-Carreri reports seeing glass baubles from Nuremberg and Venice in shop in the royal square of Isfahan

Shah Sultan Husayn (1695-1722)

1696: Raphael du Mans dies
1722: Afghan invasions

II. Buildings Discussed

Isfahan's palace precinct and its relationship to the Armenian suburb of New Julfa
Chehel Sutun
Hasht Behest
All Savior's Cathedral in New Julfa

III. Select Bibliography

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