

AET2

Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Tripos, Part II

Tuesday 02 June 2015 9 to 12.00 pm

Paper MES39

Special subject in the pre-modern Middle East: Image and Text in Islamic Manuscripts

*Answer **three** questions. All questions carry **equal** marks.*

*Write your number **not** your name on the cover sheet of **each** answer booklet.*

Colour versions of the images are provided in the image booklet, which is inserted in this paper.

STATIONERY REQUIREMENTS

20 page answer booklet

Rough Work Pad

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS TO BE SUPPLIED FOR THIS EXAMINATION

None

You may not start to read the questions printed on the subsequent pages of this question paper until instructed to do so.

Answer **three** of the following questions

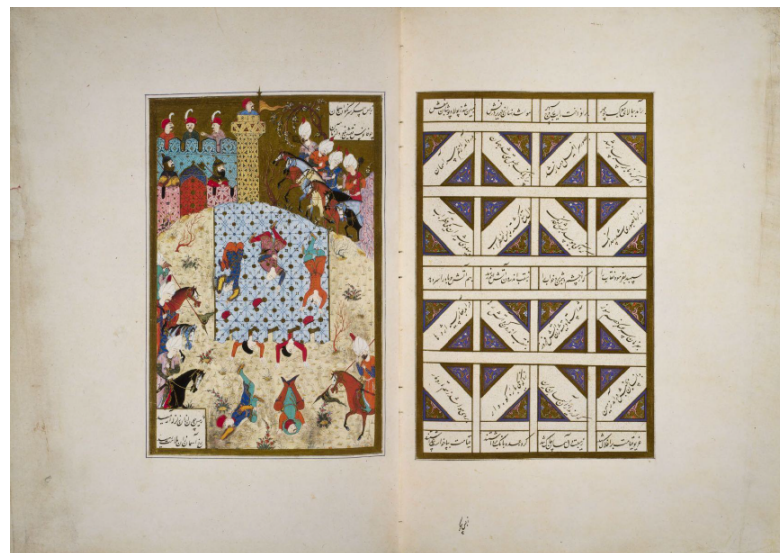
1. Discuss whether the history of Islamic book painting is one of the increasing independence of images, and if so, how do you account for this development?
2. **Either (a):** Why did the illustration of universal chronicles begin in the Mongol period in Iran and what were the main characteristics and role of the paintings in the text?

Or (b): Account for the proliferation of illustrated court histories in **either** the Ottoman **or** the Mughal context, and discuss what makes these histories distinctive within the wider tradition of Islamic manuscript painting.

3. 'Ahmad Musa [active early 14th century] . . . lifted the veil from the face of depiction and the [style of] depiction that is now current was invented by him' (Dust Muhammad). Why might Dust Muhammad have held this view, and to what extent does the relationship between Persian painting and earlier Arab painting bear out his assertion?
4. With reference to at least three books or albums, compare and contrast the ways in which Islamic painters responded to Far Eastern models on the one hand and European models on the other, and suggest reasons for these respective responses.
5. With reference to specific examples, discuss why images in Islamic manuscripts might diverge from the texts that they are illustrating.
6. Discuss the different ways in which viewers of illustrated books left evidence of their responses to the images, and consider what this evidence reveals about the use and reception of such books.
7. **Either (a):** Identify the manuscript to which these pages belong, describe their codicological relationship to one another, and discuss their importance to our understanding of the development and function(s) of Islamic book painting. Your answer should refer to the text as well as to the images.



Or (b): Identify the manuscript to which this two-page opening belongs. Describe the visual and textual strategies that the artists of the opening have employed to serve the manuscript's intended function, and consider what light these strategies shed on the production of illustrated Islamic books more generally.



(TURN OVER)

8. **Either (a):** Identify the type of work to which this page belonged and suggest a likely place and period of production. With reference to their content, meaning(s), and sources, discuss the images and their relationship to one another.



Or (b): Identify the media of these two objects and describe the story that they depict. With reference to format and function, compare and contrast the ways in which the objects represent the narrative and engage the viewer.



END OF PAPER