

## Tamta's World

The Life and Encounters of a Medieval Noblewoman from the  
Middle East to Mongolia

This book tells the compelling story of a Christian noblewoman named Tamta in the thirteenth century. Born to an Armenian family at the court of Queen Tamar of Georgia, she was ransomed in marriage to nephews of Saladin, after her father was captured during a siege. She was later raped and then married by the Khwarazmshah and held hostage by the Mongols, before being made an independent ruler in eastern Anatolia under them. Her tale stretches from the Mediterranean to Mongolia and reveals the extraordinary connections across continents and cultures that one woman could experience. Without a voice of her own, surviving monuments – monasteries and mosques, caravanserais and palaces – build up a picture of Tamta's world and the roles women played in it. It explores how women's identities changed between different courts, with shifting languages, religions and cultures, and between their roles as daughters, wives, mothers and widows.

ANTONY EASTMOND is A. G. Leventis Professor of Art History at the Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London. He has published extensively on the world of eastern Christianity and its connections with the Islamic world around it, especially in Georgia and the Caucasus, and Trebizond. He has also published on Late Antique and Byzantine art, with a particular interest in ivories and the visual power of inscriptions. Notable among his works are *Royal Imagery in Medieval Georgia* (1998), *Art and Identity in Thirteenth-Century Byzantium: Hagia Sophia and the Empire of Trebizond* (2004), *The Glory of Byzantium and Early Christendom* (2013) and *Viewing Inscriptions in the Late Antique and Medieval World* (ed., 2015).

# Tamta's World

The Life and Encounters of a Medieval  
Noblewoman from the Middle East to Mongolia

---

ANTONY EASTMOND

Courtauld Institute of Art, London



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi - 110025, India

103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781316618066](http://www.cambridge.org/9781316618066)

DOI: 10.1017/9781316711774

© Antony Eastmond 2017

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2017

First paperback edition 2021

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data*

Names: Eastmond, Antony, 1966– author.

Title: Tamta's world : the life and encounters of a medieval noblewoman from the Middle East to Mongolia / Antony Eastmond.

Description: Cambridge, United Kingdom : Cambridge University Press, 2018. |

Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2016052045 | ISBN 9781107167568

Subjects: LCSH: Christianity and other religions – Islam. | Islam – Relations –

Christianity. | Christian women – History – To 1500. | Middle East – History – To 1500.

Classification: LCC BP172 .E37 2018 | DDC 956/.014 – dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2016052045>

ISBN 978-1-107-16756-8 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-316-61806-6 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-316-61806-6 — Tamta's World  
Antony Eastmond  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

---

*To Helen and Stephen*

# Contents

<i>Illustrations</i>	[page viii]
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	[xx]
<i>Transliteration</i>	[xxii]
<i>Abbreviations</i>	[xxiii]
1 A New World of Encounters: The Life of Tamta Mqargrdzeli	[1]
2 Tamta's Origins: The World of the Mqargrdzelis	[21]
3 Tamta, Ivane and Akhlat in 1210	[66]
4 Al-Awhad and Tamta's First Marriage	[79]
5 Women and Power	[103]
6 Akhlat: Identity and Life in the Medieval City	[124]
7 Tamta: Ayyubid Wife of al-Ashraf Musa	[172]
8 Tamta: A Christian at the Ayyubid Court	[206]
9 Tamta at Court	[242]
10 Akhlat, Builders and Buildings	[282]
11 Tamta and the Khwarazmians	[322]
12 Tamta and the Mongols	[342]
13 Tamta as Ruler of Akhlat	[368]
14 Afterlife	[391]
<i>Bibliography</i>	[395]
Primary Sources	[395]
Secondary Sources	[400]
<i>Index</i>	[425]

*Color plates of the following after page 123 and again after page 281*

## Illustrations

### Maps

- Map 1: The Near East at the start of the thirteenth century [page xxv]  
 Map 2: The Caucasus at the start of the thirteenth century [xxvi]  
 Map 3: Anatolia at the start of the thirteenth century [xxvii]  
 Map 4: The Mongolian world c. 1250 [xxviii]

### Figures

1. View of the main church of the monastery of Akhtala, Armenia, in its fortified complex, built by Ivane Mqargrdzeli; c. 1205. © Antony Eastmond [29]
2. Goshavank, Armenia; 1191–1291. General view from the south west of the cluster of buildings in the monastic complex around the catholicon (main church). © Antony Eastmond [31]
3. Ground plan of the monastic complex at Goshavank, Armenia. A: catholicon of the Mother of God (1191); B: zhamatun (1197); C: church of St Gregory (1208); D: chapel of St Gregory (1237); E: library (1241, with church of the Holy Archangels built over it in 1291); F: scriptorium (thirteenth century); G: small chapels (thirteenth century) [32]
4. Decoration on the east façade of the main church at Akhtala, Armenia; c. 1205. © Antony Eastmond [33]
5. View of the apse, showing post holes for templon screen at Akhtala, Armenia; c. 1205. © Antony Eastmond [34]
6. View of the apse of the catholicon, at Harichavank, Armenia, showing altar platform; c. 1200. © Antony Eastmond [36]
7. Communion of the Apostles with Greek inscription, in the apse at Akhtala, Armenia; c. 1205. © Antony Eastmond [37]
8. Bilingual Greek and Georgian inscription accompanying St John in the north-east pendentive in the church of St Gregory the Illuminator of Tigran Honents, Ani, Turkey; 1215. © Antony Eastmond [38]

9. St Luke and trilingual inscription of the painter Abas in the Red Gospels of Gandzasar; early thirteenth century (University of Chicago Library, Goodspeed MS 949, fol. 139v; 26.5 × 20 cm). Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library [40]
10. Detail of the Last Judgement on the west wall at Akhtala, Armenia; c. 1205. © Antony Eastmond [41]
11. The Glorification of the Cross in the dome of the church at Timotesubani, Georgia; c. 1220. G. Chubinashvili National Research Centre for Georgian Art History and Heritage Preservation (S. Kobuladze photo-laboratory) [42]
12. Georgian monastic saints (Sts Ekvtime Mtatsmindeli, Hilarion Kartveli and Giorgi Mtatsmindeli) on the north side of the door on the west wall at Akhtala, Armenia; c. 1205. © Antony Eastmond [44]
13. General view of the monastic complex at Harichavank, Armenia, from the south; 1201. Photo: Hiosn [47]
14. Ground plan of the monastic complex at Harichavank, Armenia; 1201. A: church of St Gregory (seventh to tenth century); B: catholicon of the Mother of God (1201); C: zhamatun (c. 1224) [49]
15. View of the church of St Sargis at Khtskonk, Turkey, from the north; early eleventh century. © Antony Eastmond [50]
16. Zakare and Ivane Mqargrdzeli on the east façade at Harichavank, Armenia; 1201. © Antony Eastmond [51]
17. Canon tables from the Haghbat Gospels; 1211 (Yerevan, Matenadaran, MS 6288, fols. 8v–9r; 30 × 22 cm). The inscription by the figure holding the fish in the lower left corner reads, somewhat mysteriously: 'Sahak, next time bring fish!' © Matenadaran, Yerevan [52]
18. The Anchiskhati icon; painted panel: seventh century; silver gilt frame by Beka Opizari, c. 1190 (gilt cover of the body of Christ: eighteenth century) (Tbilisi, Art Museum of Georgia; 105 × 71 cm). G. Chubinashvili National Research Centre for Georgian Art History and Heritage Preservation (S. Kobuladze photo-laboratory) [56]
19. The vision of St Gregory the Illuminator in the west arm of the church of St Gregory the Illuminator of Tigran Honents, Ani, Turkey; 1215. © Antony Eastmond [61]
20. The vision of St Nino and the life-giving pillar in the west arm of the church of St Gregory the Illuminator of Tigran Honents, Ani, Turkey; 1215. © Antony Eastmond [61]

21. Khatchkar at Kosh, Armenia, set up to celebrate the liberation of Armenia from the Seljuk Turks; 1195. Photograph: Marina Kamenskaya [68]
22. The massacre of monks by Seljuk Turks, depicted in the chapel of the martyrs (Motsameta) at Udabno monastery, Gareja desert, Georgia; c. 1200. Photo: © Antony Eastmond; drawing: © Zaza Skhirtladze [70]
23. Lustreware dish showing a wedding procession. Kashan, Iran; first quarter of the thirteenth century (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1983.247; diameter 41.7 cm). © Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, [www.metmuseum.org](http://www.metmuseum.org) [95]
24. The arrival of the bride, from a Byzantine *epithalamion* (bridal poem) manuscript; late twelfth century (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, gr. 1851, fol. 3v; 22.5 × 17 cm). © 2017 Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana [97]
25. Inscription commemorating al-Awhad's rebuilding of the walls of Mayyafariqin (Silvan), Turkey; 1203. © Antony Eastmond [100]
26. King Giorgi III (r. 1156–84) and Queen Tamar (r. 1184–1210), north wall of the church of the Koimesis at Vardzia, Georgia; 1184–6. G. Chubinashvili National Research Centre for Georgian Art History and Heritage Preservation (S. Kobuladze photo-laboratory) [114]
27. Queen Tamar (r. 1184–1210) and Giorgi IV Lasha (r. 1210–23), north wall of Bertubani monastery, Gareja desert, Georgia (now in Azerbaijan); c. 1210. After Chubinashvili [115]
28. Gold dinar of Shajar al-Durr, minted in Cairo; 1250 (British Museum, inv. 1849,1121.294). © Trustees of the British Museum [118]
29. Tree of Pearls mosaic in the conch of the *mihrab* in the mausoleum of Shajar al-Durr, Southern Cemetery, Cairo, Egypt; 1250–80. © Antony Eastmond [122]
30. View of the Muslim cemetery at Akhlat, Turkey. © Antony Eastmond [125]
31. View of Van, Turkey, from the south, showing the jumble of minarets and church domes rising above the city walls, with the Rock of Van behind (from C. Texier, *Description de l'Arménie, la Perse et la Mésopotamie* (Paris, 1842), 1: pl. 36) (the medieval city was razed to the ground after 1915). © British Library Board [128]
32. Mosque of Minuchihr, Ani, Turkey, from the south-west; twelfth–thirteenth century. © Antony Eastmond [131]

33. Cathedral (1000–1001) and Mosque of Minuchihr (twelfth–thirteenth century) seen from the east, at the edge of the ravine of the river Akurean, Ani, Turkey. © Antony Eastmond [132]
34. The minaret outside the walls at Mayyafariqin (Silvan), Turkey, begun by al-Awhad in 1203, completed by his brother al-Ashraf in 1212. © Antony Eastmond [135]
35. The minaret of the Great Mosque at Aleppo, Syria; 1090–2 (destroyed April 2013). Photograph: Michal Salaban. wikimedia (CC BY-SA 3.0) [135]
36. Kars Gate at Ani, Turkey; thirteenth century. © Antony Eastmond [137]
37. Mangonel from Murda b. 'Ali b. Murda al-Tarsusi, *al-Tabsira fi 'l-Hurub* (The explanation of the masters of the quintessence [of military knowledge]), made for Saladin; late twelfth century (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Huntington 264, fols 135a–134b; 25.5 × 39 cm). Oxford, Bodleian Library [138]
38. Polychrome stonework cross and khatchkar on tower 5 at Ani, Turkey; thirteenth century. © Antony Eastmond [139]
39. The Ulu Baden tower, Amid (Diyarbakir), Turkey, constructed by Nasir al-Din Artuq Arslan; 1207–8. © Antony Eastmond [141]
40. The tower of Mamkhatun (tower 62) at Ani, Turkey; 1219. © Antony Eastmond [143]
41. Bilingual inscription of Badr al-Din Abu Bakr, Emir of Simre, on the walls of Sinop, Turkey; 1214. © Catherine Draycott [145]
42. Ceramic bowls (*bacini*) inserted into the walls of Ani, Turkey; thirteenth century. © Antony Eastmond [146]
43. Re-used spolia on the walls of Konya (engraving from L. de Laborde, *Voyage en Orient* (Paris, 1838), fig. 117). Bibliothèque numérique de l'INHA – Bibliothèque de l'Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art, collections Jacques Doucet [148]
44. Copper dirham of Najm al-Din Alpi, Artuqid ruler of Mardin, 1152–76. © The Barber Institute of Fine Arts, The University of Birmingham [149]
45. Silver tetradrachm of Antiochos VIII, issued 121–113 BC. © The Barber Institute of Fine Arts, The University of Birmingham [150]
46. Gateway at Konya (engraving in C. Texier, *Description de l'Asie Mineure faite par Ordre du gouvernement Français de 1833 à 1837* (Paris, 1839–49), 2: pl. 97). © British Library Board [151]

47. Lion and bull relief at the citadel arch in Amid (Diyarbakir), Turkey; 1206/7. © Antony Eastmond [152]
48. Processional gate to the north of Ani, close to Horomos monastery, Turkey; tenth–eleventh century (engraving by Julius Kästner in M. F. Brosset, *Les ruines d'Ani, capitale de l'Arménie sous les rois Bagratides, aux Xe et XIe siècles: histoire et description. Atlas* (St Petersburg, 1860), pl. 29). © Bibliothèque nationale de France [153]
49. The so-called palace of the baron, Ani, Turkey; early thirteenth century. Image courtesy History Museum of Armenia. No. 611 [157]
50. Christian cemetery, Akhlat, Turkey (photo by Walter Bachmann, c. 1913). Image courtesy Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Berlin, Werner Bachmann Nachlass [158]
51. Muslim cemetery, Akhlat, Turkey (photo by Walter Bachmann, c. 1913). Image courtesy Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Berlin, Werner Bachmann Nachlass [159]
52. Tax inscription of 1269 on the exterior of the zhamatun of the church of Holy Apostles, Ani, Turkey [164]
53. Albert Gabriel's 1931 reconstruction drawing of the Sultan Han, near Kayseri, Turkey; 1230s (from *Monuments turcs d'Anatolie I: Kayseri–Niğde* (Paris, 1931)). Reproduction with permission of the Orient-Bibliothek, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Berlin [168]
54. Courtyard mosque with hall portal beyond, Sultan Han, near Kayseri, Turkey; 1230s. © Antony Eastmond [169]
55. Portal of the Zor Han, near Iğdir, Turkey; early thirteenth century (from A. Loris'-Kalantar', 'Razvaliny drevniaiu karavansaraia', *Khristianskii Vostok* 3 (1914)) [170]
56. Portal to the Madrasa al-Atabakiyya, al-Salihiyya district, Damascus, Syria; 1229–42. © Dick Osseman, <http://www.pbse.com/dosseman/profile> [182]
57. Dome of the Dar al-Hadith al-Ashrafiyya, al-Salihiyya district, Damascus, Syria; 1229–37. © Tom Nickson [183]
58. Monastery of Dadivank, Nagorno-Karabagh, Azerbaijan (disputed); 1214. Photo: Dadivank [187]
59. Plan of the vaulting of baths at the Sitti 'Adhra complex, Damascus, Syria; 1185 [190]

60. Entrance to the covered hall at the Hatun Han in the village of Pazar, north-west of Tokat, Turkey; 1238. © Antony Eastmond [192]
61. Bridge over the river Debed at Sanahin, Armenia; 1192, built by Vaneni © Antony Eastmond [193]
62. Albert Gabriel's 1931 reconstruction drawing of the Mahperi complex, Kayseri, Turkey; 1237–8 (from *Monuments turcs d'Anatolie I: Kayseri-Niğde* (Paris, 1931)). Reproduction with permission of the Orient-Bibliothek, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Berlin [199]
63. Screen in front of the tomb of Mahperi Khatun, facing the gate into Kayseri, Turkey; 1238. © Antony Eastmond [200]
64. Tomb of Malika 'Adiliyya, Kayseri, Turkey; 1247/8. © Antony Eastmond [203]
65. Niche from the west façade of Deir Mar Benham, south-east of Mosul, Iraq; first half of the thirteenth century. © Amir Harrak [208]
66. *Mihrab* niche from Great Mosque, Mosul, Iraq; first half of the thirteenth century. © Museum für Islamische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin [208]
67. View of the monastery of Gandzasar from the south, Nagorno-Karabagh, Azerbaijan (disputed): catholicon (1216–38); zhamatun (c. 1261). © Harout Tanielian [216]
68. Wooden door with Arabic text from the church of the Nativity, Bethlehem, Palestine; 1227. © University of Haifa – the Library [218]
69. Wooden door with Armenian text from the church of the Nativity, Bethlehem, Palestine; 1227. © University of Haifa – the Library [219]
70. The Annunciation and a polo match; details from the 'Freer' basin made for Najm al-Din Ayyub, Sultan in Cairo. Brass with silver and gold inlay; 1247–9 (Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC: purchase, F1955.10; height: 22.5 cm; diameter: 50 cm). © Smithsonian Institution [222]
71. Fragment of a marble vessel made for al-Muzaffar Mahmud, the Ayyubid ruler of Hama, d. 1244 (Kolaşin Collection, inv. Y730; 35 × 35 cm). © Ali Konyali [223]
72. Syrian ceramic figurine showing a woman breast-feeding her child; thirteenth century. Height: 27.5 cm. © Philippe Maillard/akg-images [230]

73. Detail of the Talisman Gate, Baghdad, Iraq, built by the Caliph Nasir li-Din-Illah; 1221 (destroyed 1917). © Museum für Islamische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin [232]
74. The angel of the course of the sun from the *Daqa'iq al-Haqa'iq*, copied in Aksaray and Kayseri, Turkey; 1272–3 (Paris, BNF, MS Pers. 174, fol. 115; 25.5 × 17 cm). © Bibliothèque nationale de France [235]
75. *Minai* bowl with a noblewoman listening to a musician, Iran, early thirteenth century (Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC: purchase, F1938.12; diameter 23 cm). © Smithsonian Institution [236]
76. Twenty of the XL Martyrs of Sebaste, from a Syriac lectionary, copied at the monastery of Mar Mattai, near Mosul, Iraq; 1219–20 (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Syr. 559, fol. 93v; 43.5 × 33.5 cm). © 2017 Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana [237]
77. The Resafa Hoard, a mixed set of Christian liturgical and other silver, buried at Resafa in Syria 1243–59. Photo © Thilo Ulbert. Image courtesy Resafa-Archiv DAI Berlin [238]
78. Silver dirham of Kaykhusraw II, minted in Sivas; 1242. © Trustees of the British Museum, <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/> [240]
79. Levon, prince of Cilicia, wearing a robe embroidered with roundels containing a lion beneath the sun, in a Gospel book presented to the prince by his godfather, Catholicos Constantine I; c. 1255 (Yerevan, Matenadaran, MS 8321, fol. 15r; 15.8 × 11.3 cm). © Matenadaran, Yerevan [240]
80. The tents of a caravan, from the fourth *Maqama* of al-Hariri, c. 1230 (St Petersburg, Institute of Oriental Studies, Ms c-23, fol. 12a; 25 × 19 cm). Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, Russian Academy of Sciences, St Petersburg [246]
81. Gateway to the palace in the citadel at Aleppo, Syria, built by al-Zahir Ghazi; 1186–1216. Photo © Dick Osseman, <http://www.pbase.com/dosseman/profile> [248]
82. Ruler portraits from the opening of a copy of al-Hariri's *Maqamat* (the Schefer Hariri), probably made in Baghdad, Iraq, 1237 (Paris, BNF, arabe 5847, fols. 1v–2r; 37 × 28 cm). © Bibliothèque nationale de France [250]
83. Niche with reliefs of warrior guards from the Gu'Kummet at Sinjar in Iraq, possibly made for al-Ashraf in the 1220s (National Museum of Iraq, Baghdad). © Yasser Tabbaa [251]

84. Gate of the Two Baptisms, Deir Mar Benham, south-east of Mosul, Iraq; first half of the thirteenth century. © Amir Harrak [251]
85. View of the main iwan beyond the entrance to Geguti palace, near Kutaisi, Georgia; twelfth–thirteenth century. © Antony Eastmond [252]
86. Real and fantastic fights on the basin of al-ʿAdil II. Brass with silver and gold inlay; 1238–40 (Paris, Musée du Louvre, 5991; height: 19.2 cm; diameter: 47.2 cm). Photo © Musée du Louvre, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais/Hughes Dubois [254]
87. Ceramic fountain spout of a sphinx-like chimera, excavated from Rafiqa, early thirteenth century (Copenhagen, David Collection, inv. Isl. 56; height: 37 cm). The David Collection, Copenhagen. Photo: Pernille Klemp [256]
88. Tiles from the Seljuk palace at Kubadabad on the edge of Lake Beyşehir, Turkey, built by the Sultan Kaykubad; 1220s. Courtesy Rüçhan Arık (from R. Arık and O. Arık, *Tiles: Treasures of Anatolian Soil: Tiles of the Seljuk and Beylik Periods* (Istanbul: Kale Group Cultural Publications, 2008)) [257]
89. The killing of the dragon by the hero Amiran, from the Georgian poem *Amiran-Darejaniani*, painted on the south wall of the church of the Archangels, Lashtkhveri, Svaneti, Georgia; fourteenth century. © Antony Eastmond [259]
90. Stucco fragments excavated at Ani, Turkey, and Dvin, Armenia; twelfth–thirteenth century (Yerevan, History Museum of Armenia). Photo: Vram Hakobyan [260]
91. Stucco fragments from the Seljuk palace at Beyşehir and the kiosk at Konya, Turkey; early thirteenth century (Los Angeles County Museum of Art, The Madina Collection of Islamic Art, Gift of Camilla Chandler Frost, M.2002.1.675, 11.4 × 9.4 cm; M.2002.1.683a-h, height approx. 5.7 cm). Photo © Museum Associates/LACMA [262]
92. Badr al-Din Lu'lu' and his court entertained by female musicians, from volume 4 of the *Kitab al-Aghani*, Mosul, Iraq; 1219 (Cairo, Egyptian National Library, Ms Farsi 579, frontispiece). © Alfredo Dagli Orti/The Art Archive/Corbis [265]
93. Twelfth-century Iranian brass ewer, excavated at Ani by Nikolai Marr in 1906 (Yerevan, History Museum of Armenia, inv. 123–1322). Photo: Vram Hakobyan [267]
94. Crusader doorway from Acre, re-used as the entrance to the madrasa–mausoleum complex of the Mamluk Sultan

- al-Nasir Muhammad in Cairo, Egypt; 1296–1303. © Antony Eastmond [269]
95. Back of the astrolabe of al-Ashraf, made by ‘Abd al-Karim, Mesopotamia. Brass with gold and silver inlay; 1227 (Oxford, Museum for the History of Science, inv. 37148; diameter: 27.7 cm; weight: 3.75 kg). © Museum of the History of Science [274]
96. Aries from a Georgian astrological treatise, 1188 (National Manuscripts Centre, Tbilisi, MS A-65, fol. 352; 23 × 30.5 cm). © National Manuscripts Centre, Tbilisi. Courtesy Zurab Samarghanishvili [276]
97. The preparation of the theriac of Aflaguras from the *Kitab al-Diryaq* [Book of antidotes], written and illustrated in Mesopotamia; 1199 (Paris, BNF, arabe 2964, fol. 15; 36.5 × 27.5 cm). © Bibliothèque nationale de France [278]
98. Detail of the celestial globe of Frederick II, Holy Roman Emperor, a gift from al-Kamil Ayyub, showing Gemini and Cancer, with Orion and Hydra below. Brass with gold and silver inlay; 1225/6 (Naples, Museo di Capodimonte; diameter 22.1 cm). Museo di Capodimonte, Napoli. Photo © Luciano Pedicini/Archivio dell’Arte [280]
99. North portal of the Alaeddin Camii, Konya, Turkey; 1219–20. © Antony Eastmond [284]
100. Portal of the Sultan Han near Aksaray, Turkey; 1229 (photo by Gertrude Bell, 1907). Gertrude Bell Archive, Newcastle University. I\_196 [285]
101. Sitte Melik, Divriği, Turkey, tomb of Shahanshah, Mengujekid ruler of the city; 1196. © Antony Eastmond [289]
102. Tomb of Mumine Khatun, Nakhchivan, Azerbaijan, built for the first wife of Jahan Pahlavan, *atabeg* of Azerbaijan; 1186. © Steve Rapp [290]
103. Portal of the mausoleum of Mama Khatun, Tercan, Turkey; early thirteenth century. © Antony Eastmond [291]
104. Ground plan of the mausoleum of Mama Khatun, Tercan, Turkey, early thirteenth century [292]
105. Tomb of Mama Khatun, Tercan, Turkey; early thirteenth century. © Antony Eastmond [294]
106. Convent of the Virgin, Ani, Turkey, from the north; early thirteenth century. © Antony Eastmond [295]
107. Ground plan of the convent of the Virgin, Ani, Turkey; early thirteenth century [296]

108. Muqarnas stonework in the central vault of the zhamatun of the monastery of Harichavank, Armenia; c. 1224. © Antony Eastmond [297]
109. Muqarnas stonework in the central vault of the Yakutiye Madrasa, Erzurum, Turkey; 1310. © Antony Eastmond [298]
110. West façade of the chapel of St Gregory, Goshavank, Armenia; 1237. © Antony Eastmond [299]
111. Tympanum over the west door of the zhamatun, Harichavank, Armenia; 1234. © Antony Eastmond [300]
112. Cantilevered staircase in the main church at Harichavank, Armenia; 1201. © Antony Eastmond [301]
113. Armenian inscription on east façade of main church at Harichavank, Armenia; 1201. © Antony Eastmond [302]
114. East façade of the zhamatun of the church of the Holy Apostles, Ani, Turkey; before 1217. © Antony Eastmond [302]
115. Polychrome vaulting in the zhamatun of the church of the Holy Apostles, Ani, Turkey; before 1217. © Antony Eastmond [303]
116. Polychrome vaulting in the mosque of Minuchihr, Ani, Turkey; twelfth–thirteenth century. © Antony Eastmond [304]
117. Ground plan of the mosque–hospital complex at Divriği, Turkey; 1229 [305]
118. North portal of the mosque at Divriği, Turkey; 1229. © Antony Eastmond [307]
119. Detail of rhombuses and foliate decoration on north portal of the mosque, Divriği, Turkey; 1229. © Antony Eastmond [308]
120. Detail of interlace medallions and palmettes on north portal of the mosque, Divriği, Turkey; 1229. © Antony Eastmond [309]
121. Detail of the depth of carving of the decoration on the north portal of the mosque, Divriği, Turkey; 1229. © Antony Eastmond [310]
122. West portal of the mosque, Divriği, Turkey; 1229. © Antony Eastmond [311]
123. West portal of the hospital, Divriği, Turkey; 1229. © Antony Eastmond [312]
124. Detail of a vault in the south-east corner of the mosque, Divriği, Turkey; 1229. © Antony Eastmond [313]
125. Iwan of the hospital, Divriği, Turkey; 1229. © Antony Eastmond [314]
126. Detail of a tombstone at Akhlat; late thirteenth century. © Antony Eastmond [315]

127. Side wall of the portal of the madrasa of the Mahperi Huand Hatun complex, Kayseri, Turkey; 1237. © Antony Eastmond [316]
128. View from the south-west of Hovhannavank monastery, Armenia: church (1215–21); zhamatun (1250–5). © Antony Eastmond [318]
129. Tympanum over the west entrance to the zhamatun at Saghmosavank monastery, Armenia; 1250–5. © Antony Eastmond [318]
130. Altar platform in main the church at Makaravank monastery, Armenia; 1205. © Antony Eastmond [319]
131. *Mihrab* commissioned by al-Muzaffar Ghazi in the Ulu Camii at Mayyafariqin (Silvan), Turkey; 1227. © Antony Eastmond [320]
132. Roman temple at Garni, Armenia; first century AD (rebuilt 1960s). © Antony Eastmond [323]
133. Detail of the ornate brick and tile work on the south iwan of the madrasa at Zuzan, Iran; 1218. © Sheila Blair and Jonathan Bloom [332]
134. Copper ingot of Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah counterstamped by Queen Rusudan of Georgia; 1228 (Copenhagen, David Collection, inv. C330; 49.2 g). The David Collection, Copenhagen. Photo: Pernille Klemp [334]
135. *Minai*-ware dish showing a siege; c. 1210–20 (Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC: purchase, F1943.3; diameter: 47.8 cm). © Smithsonian Institution [334]
136. Black stone of Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah; November 1230 (British Museum, inv. ME OA 1990.6–12.1; 47 × 29 cm) [337]
137. The great Buddha at Bamiyan, Afghanistan; sixth century AD (photo by Robert Byron, 1933/4). Image courtesy Conway Library, Courtauld Institute of Art, London [354]
138. Guillaume Boucher's drinks fountain at the Mongol court, as imagined by Pierre Bergeron to accompany *Illustrations de Voyages faits principalement en Asie* (Paris 1735). Muséum national d'histoire naturelle (Paris) – Direction des bibliothèques et de la documentation [359]
139. Design for a peacock fountain for cleaning hands, from al-Jazari's *Book of Knowledge of Ingenious Mechanical Devices*; 1206 (TSMK. Ahmet III, 3472, fol. 136a) [361]
140. Tiles from the summer palace at Takht-i Sulayman, Iran; 1270s (Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Shinji Shumeikai Acquisition Fund, AC1996.115.1–4; each tile 24.8 cm high). Image: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, [www.lacma.org](http://www.lacma.org) [365]

141. John, bishop of Grner and brother of King Hetum II, consecrating a priest, from a Gospel book made in 1289 (Yerevan, Matenadaran 197, fol. 341v; 26.3 × 18 cm). © Matenadaran, Yerevan [366]
142. Coin of Tamta from Akhlat; c. 1250 (Tübingen no. 99–14–54). Tübingen University coin collection, FINT inv. no. 99–14–54. [375]
143. Sts Constantine and Helena with Mongolian features, from a Syriac lectionary, copied at the monastery of Mar Mattai, near Mosul, Iraq; 1219–20 (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Syr. 559, fol. 223v; 43.5 × 33.5 cm). © 2017 Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana [385]
144. Family mausoleum bell-tower for Zakare III and his wife Vaneni Mqargrdzeli at Kobayr, Armenia; 1279. © Antony Eastmond [387]
145. Usta Sakirt Türbe, Akhlat, Turkey; 1273. © Antony Eastmond [388]

## Acknowledgements

Tracing Tamta's life has forced me to move far beyond the corners of the medieval world which I studied as a student. I am acutely conscious of how much I owe to the scholars who have mastered the languages, histories and cultures of each of the groups that Tamta encountered and who have written about them with such erudition and knowledge. This is truly a book that was written standing on the shoulders of giants. Wherever possible in this book I have used materials that are available in English or other European languages in the hope that it points readers usefully to the extraordinary work that historians have carried out over the past 150 years to bring the world in which Tamta lived to a wider audience, beginning with the travel accounts and translations of Marie-Félicité Brosset. Indeed, I could not have carried out my research without much of this material. However much I might wish I had the polyglot skills of Vladimir Minorsky, the first scholar to write seriously on the Mqargrdzelis in Ani and who had mastered all the languages of the region – as well as a plethora of European ones – I do not. I am only too aware of the limitations this imposes upon my research. However, I wrote this book hoping that the benefits of presenting a cross-cultural study might outweigh the weaknesses imposed by my access to the material in all its diversity.

This book was written whilst I held a Major Research Fellowship from the Leverhulme Trust, which gave me invaluable space and time to travel around (some of) Tamta's world, and then to think and write. I received generous financial support towards the cost of images from the A.G. Leventis Foundation and the Research Committee of the Courtauld Institute of Art. I am grateful to all of these foundations for their backing and their encouragement.

I am particularly grateful to Liz James, Ioanna Rapti, Scott Redford and Zaza Skhirtladze, who have either read parts of the manuscript or travelled through Tamta's world with me, and have shown unflagging interest in my work, whatever they were actually thinking or feeling. Others who have answered more specific questions and queries include Sussan Babaie, Doris Behrens-Abouseif, Massimo Bernabò, Anna Contadini, Eleni Dimiriadou, Theresa Fitzherbert, Eurydice Georganteli, Tim Greenwood, Judith

Herrin, Konrad Hirschler, Renata Holod, Lynn Jones, Hugh Kennedy, Irina Koshoridze, Bernard O’Kane, Bob Ousterhout, Andrew Peacock, Venetia Porter, Mariam Rosser-Owen and Christine Stevenson. My medieval colleagues at the Courtauld, Alixe Bovey, Joanna Cannon, John Lowden and Tom Nickson, have provided the supportive but critical research community that every scholar needs. Finally, I have recently been able to rehearse many of my ideas on site with my colleagues on two Getty Foundation Crossing Frontiers research expeditions to Tamta’s world, where I was challenged and stimulated by, from A–Z: by Arpine, Christina, Diana, Elif, Gohar, Hadi, Hale, Ioanna, Maxime, Natia, Nato, Nazenie, Oya, Polina, Sima, Sussan, Zarifa and Zaza.

For photographs, I am enormously indebted to Karin Kyburz at the Courtauld, who has pursued images with a tenacity and vigour that is extraordinary. The obscurity of some of the images, and the range of sources from which they came, compelled her to be at her most enterprising, and she more than rose to the challenge. Additional help with images came from Ruçhan Arik, Sheila Blair, Jonathan Bloom, Mariam Didebulidze, Catherine Draycott, Nazenie Garibian de Vartanan, Amir Harrak, Oğuz Kolaşın, Richard McClary, Tom Nickson, Dick Osseman, Banu Pekol, Steve Rapp, Yasser Tabbaa, Harout Tanielian and Thilo Ulbert. Lara Frentrop very efficiently helped to prepare the index.

My wife, Marion, has had a greater impact on this work than perhaps she realises; but the book is dedicated to my children, Helen and Stephen, who continue to put my research into its proper perspective.

## Transliteration

As anyone who has worked on materials that cross linguistic and alphabetic frontiers knows, trying to impose consistency of spelling is well nigh impossible, not helped by the absence of consistency in the primary sources. No single system can cope with the diversity of names and sounds employed by the peoples that Tamta met, spoke and wrote with, so I have preferred to present names in ways that do not deter the casual reader. Whilst *Hałarc'in* or *mcignobart'uxuc'esi* may please purists, they are not easy on the eye.

Abbreviations

<i>BEO</i>	<i>Bulletin d'études orientales</i>
<i>BSOAS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i>
<i>DOP</i>	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
<i>RCEA</i>	<i>Répertoire chronologique d'épigraphie arabe</i> , 18 vols. (Cairo, 1936)
<i>REArm</i>	<i>Revue des études arméniennes</i>
<i>REB</i>	<i>Revue des études byzantines</i>
<i>RHCHO</i>	<i>Recueil des historiens des croisades: historiens orientaux</i>
<i>TEI</i>	Thesaurus d'Epigraphie Islamique ( <a href="http://www.epigraphie-islamique.org/">http://www.epigraphie-islamique.org/</a> )