

# *Glittering Remnants of Diplomacy and Trade*

*A Study of Visitors to The Tsars and the East: Gifts from Turkey and Iran in the Moscow Kremlin*



Office of Policy and Analysis  
Smithsonian Institution  
October 2009

Front cover photo: Dagger and sheath  
Iran, first half 17th century  
© The Moscow Kremlin Museums

Back cover photo: Detail, Helmet with mask  
Iran, 16th century  
© The Moscow Kremlin Museums

The term “glittering remnants” in the title of this report is attributed to Julian Raby in his Foreword to the exhibition catalog, *The Tsars and the East: Gifts from Turkey and Iran in the Moscow Kremlin*, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, 2009

# Preface

This study represents the latest contribution to an ongoing collaborative effort between the Freer and Sackler Galleries (FSG) and the Smithsonian Office of Policy and Analysis (OP&A) aimed at understanding who visits the Galleries, what they are looking for, what they encounter when they are there, and what they come away with.

I wish to thank FSG Director Julian Raby for his sustained interest in visitor studies, which is driven by his concern to serve FSG's audience. Likewise, I thank Head of Education and Public Programs Claire Orogas and Chief Curator and Curator of Islamic Art Massumeh Farhad, who worked with OP&A to shape the exhibition-specific areas of inquiry for this study, and who provided the input and support without which studies of this nature would not be possible.

I also wish to thank the OP&A personnel who put this study together. OP&A intern Annie Lefebure took the lead in designing and administering the survey, along with OP&A analysts Kathleen Ernst and Lance Costello. OP&A interns Ikuko Uetani, Givi Khidesheli, Sarah Block, Rebecca Lester, and Kristine Sudbeck assisted with the survey administration and processing. Lance and Kathleen were responsible for quantitative analysis of the survey data and Kathleen wrote the final report. Special thanks go to OP&A senior analyst Andrew Pekarik for his knowledge of FSG and input to the research questions and data analysis.

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## Background and Methodology

*The Tsars and the East: Gifts from Turkey and Iran in the Moscow Kremlin* (henceforth *Tsars and the East*) was on view at the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery of the Freer and Sackler Galleries (FSG) from May 9 through September 13, 2009. The selection of 65 objects from the Kremlin Treasury – dazzling gold and jewel-encrusted helmets, shields, swords, daggers, equestrian trappings, and drinking vessels, along with sumptuous textiles and other unique objects – are predominantly diplomatic gifts and trade items presented to 16<sup>th</sup>- and 17<sup>th</sup>-century Russian tsars by their counterpart Ottoman sultans and Safavid shahs, as well as wealthy merchants, looking to further economic and political ties.

The theme of diplomacy was carried forth in the loan of these rare and one-of-a-kind objects through an unprecedented partnership between FSG and The Moscow Kremlin Museums, which allowed the extraordinary works of art to be on view for the first time in the United States. President Dimitry Medvedev of the Russian Federation granted the exhibition his high patronage; the Sackler was the only venue for the exhibition.

The exhibition occupied the Sackler's main exhibition space on the second level of the Gallery. The Persian and Ottoman objects were displayed in separate galleries, with a final gallery showcasing the work of Russian craftsmen, where the assimilation of Eastern design with traditional Russian motifs demonstrated the influence of diplomatic and trade exchange on a new Russian aesthetic.

In conducting this study, the OP&A study team used two main research methods:

- *In-depth qualitative interviews with visitors to the exhibition.* Some interviews were done prior to the survey for the purpose of informing its content. The study team conducted 15 interviews with a total of 26 people. Interviews were analyzed by the study team to search for common themes and well-articulated insights.
- *A census survey of visitors exiting the exhibition.*<sup>1</sup> The survey was conducted on three weekdays and one weekend day, August 18, 19, 20, and 23, 2009. Visitors completed 395 self-administered survey questionnaires, with a response rate of 84 percent. The questionnaire is provided in Appendix A and frequencies of responses to the questions on the survey are provided in Appendix B.

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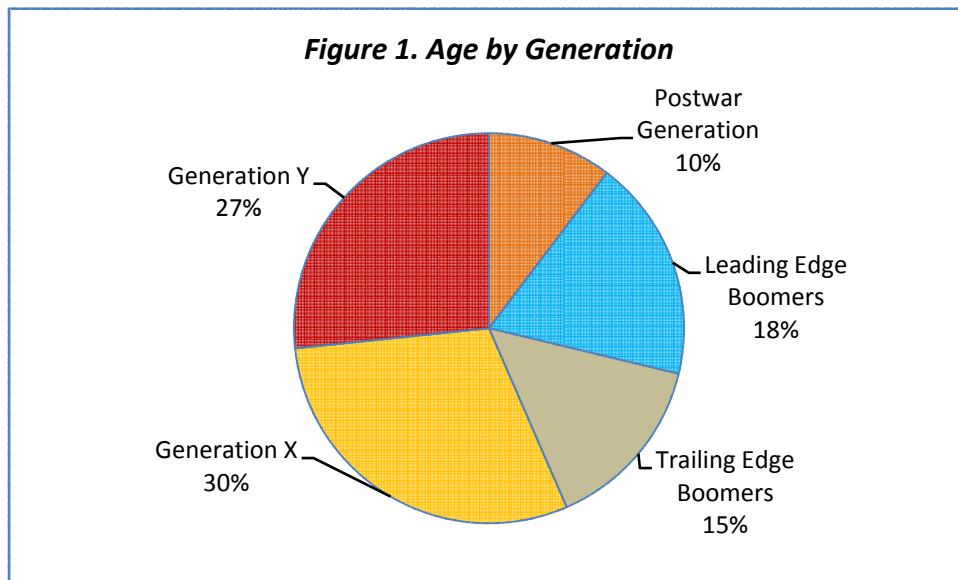
<sup>1</sup> Children under 12 and organized groups were not eligible to take the survey.



## Findings: Survey

### *Demographics*

**Age:** The average age of visitors to *Tsars and the East* was 41 and the median age was 45<sup>2</sup>—very close to the figures for visitors to FSG exhibitions over the past several years of ages 45 and 47, respectively. Divided by generation, 10 percent were from the Postwar Generation (born 1925-1945); 18 percent were Leading Edge Baby Boomers (born 1946-1955); 15 percent were Trailing Edge Baby Boomers (born 1956-1964); 30 percent were Generation X (born 1965-1981); and 27 percent were Generation Y (born 1982-2001). (See Figure 1.)



For purposes of this analysis, more distinct differences in behavior and response to the exhibition are observed when the audience is divided into three age cohorts of roughly the same size: 28 percent of the audience were **younger visitors** (ages up to 30); 33 percent were **middle age visitors** (ages 30 to 50); and 29 percent were **older visitors** (ages 51 and up).

**Sex:** As is typical of art museum visitation, more visitors to *Tsars and the East* were female (56 percent).

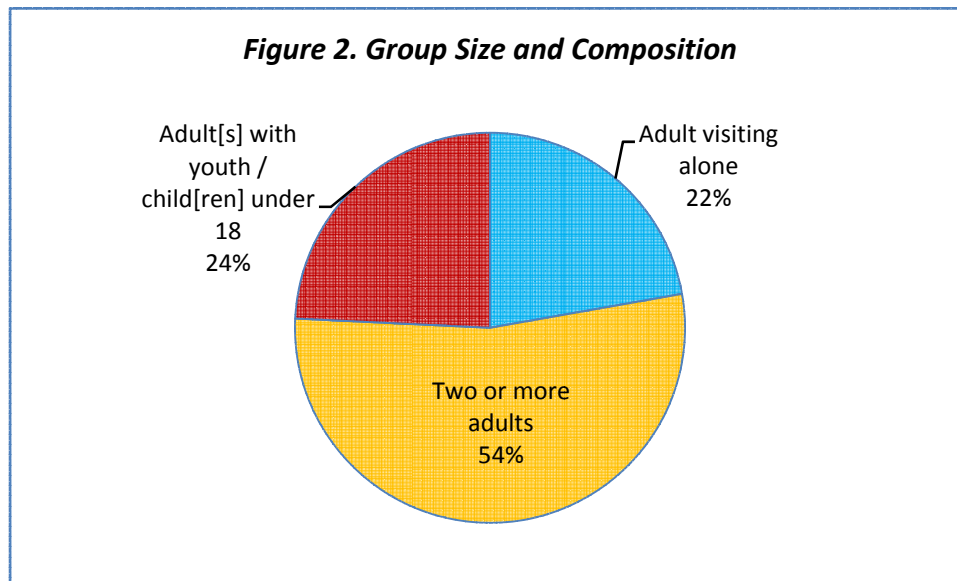
**Residence:** Over four-fifths of respondents (85 percent) were residents of the United States and the other 15 percent lived in another country. About one-quarter (26 percent) were **local visitors**, i.e., from the Washington DC metropolitan area. Two-

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<sup>2</sup> The median is the mid-point in the data; half the values are lower than the median and half are higher.

thirds of *local visitors* (66 percent) had been to FSG before the day they were surveyed and the other third were visiting the museum for the first time. Over half of *local visitors* (52 percent) said they came specifically to see *Tsars and the East*.

**Group size and composition:** On average, visit groups were made up of between two and three people. Slightly more than one-fifth of the visitors approached for the survey consisted of one adult visiting alone (22 percent), over half (53 percent) were adults visiting with one or more other adult[s], and about one-quarter (24 percent) came in a group with one or more youth/child[ren] under eighteen. (See Figure 2.)



### ***Visitor Characteristics***

**Visit history:** Three in five survey respondents (61 percent) were *new visitors* who had come to FSG for the first time, while two in five (40 percent) were *repeat visitors*. Half of the *repeat visitors* were *recent repeats* who had visited the museum on average between three and four times during the previous year; the other half had visited FSG more than 12 months ago.

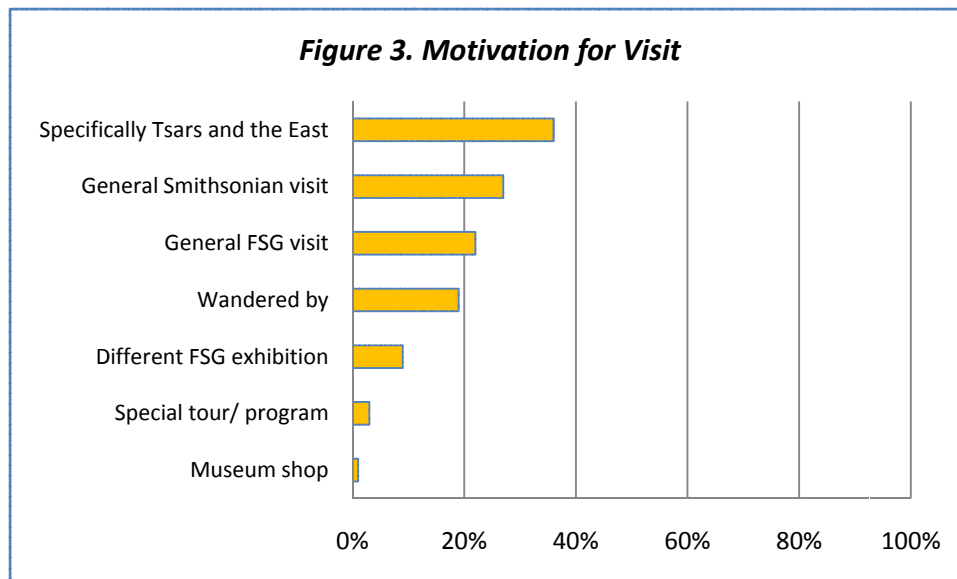
About two in five *repeat visitors* were also *local visitors* (42 percent), whereas one in seven (14 percent) *new visitors* were local.

*Repeat visitors* were more likely than others to say they *came to see this exhibition, The Tsars and the East* (56 percent versus 23 percent).



**Repeat visitors** were also more likely to be older – using the three age cohorts described above, 49 percent were **older visitors**, 29 percent were **middle age visitors**, and 22 percent were **younger visitors**.

**Motivation:** The majority of visitors to *Tsars and the East* arrived at the exhibition by happy accident. When asked what led to their decision to visit the museum on that particular day, and given the option of selecting one or more of seven answers, popular reasons were *wandered by* (19 percent), *came to see the Freer and Sackler Galleries in general* (22 percent), and *came on a general Smithsonian visit* (27 percent). (See Figure 3.)



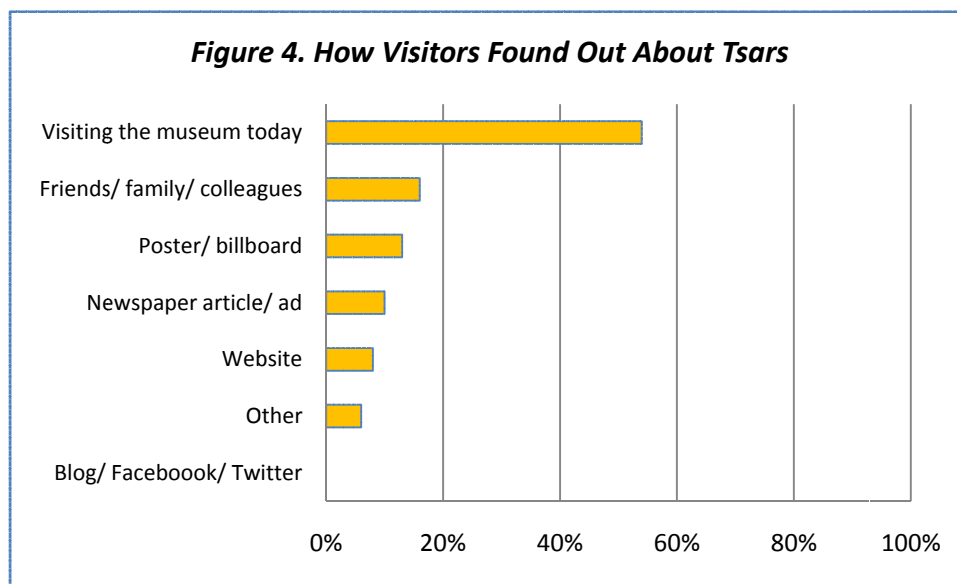
Slightly more than one-third of visitors said they *came to see this exhibition, The Tsars and the East* (36 percent). We will refer to these visitors as **exhibition specific visitors** and others as **general visitors**. The number of **exhibition specific visitors** to *Tsars and the East* was somewhat lower than the average (50 percent) and median (56 percent) numbers of visitors who come to the Sackler specifically to see the exhibition at which they are surveyed.<sup>3</sup>

About three-fifths of **exhibition specific visitors** were also **repeat visitors** (61 percent) and the other two-fifths were visiting FSG for the first time. Close to half of **exhibition specific visitors** were **older visitors** (47 percent), about one-third were **middle age visitors** (31 percent), and the remaining one-fifth were **younger visitors** (21 percent).

<sup>3</sup> Based on a meta-analysis of 14 separate visitor survey studies at FSG. See Smithsonian Institution. Office of Policy and Analysis. *An Analysis of Existing Data on Visitors to the Freer and Sackler Galleries*. November 2007. <http://www.si.edu/opanda/docs/Rpts2007/FSG.metadata.071114.final.pdf>

## Awareness

The most common way visitors reported finding out about *Tsars and the East* was *visiting the museum today*, marked by just over half of respondents (54 percent). Other sources from which visitors learned about the exhibition were *friends/family/colleagues* (16 percent), *poster/billboard* (13 percent), *newspaper article/ad* (10 percent), and *website* (8 percent). No visitors chose *blog* and less than one percent selected *Facebook, Twitter, etc.* Another six percent indicated they found out about *Tsars and the East* through some other source; among these were signs in Metro, Smithsonian Castle, the FSG calendar, general Smithsonian literature, and *Russian Life* magazine. (See Figure 4.)



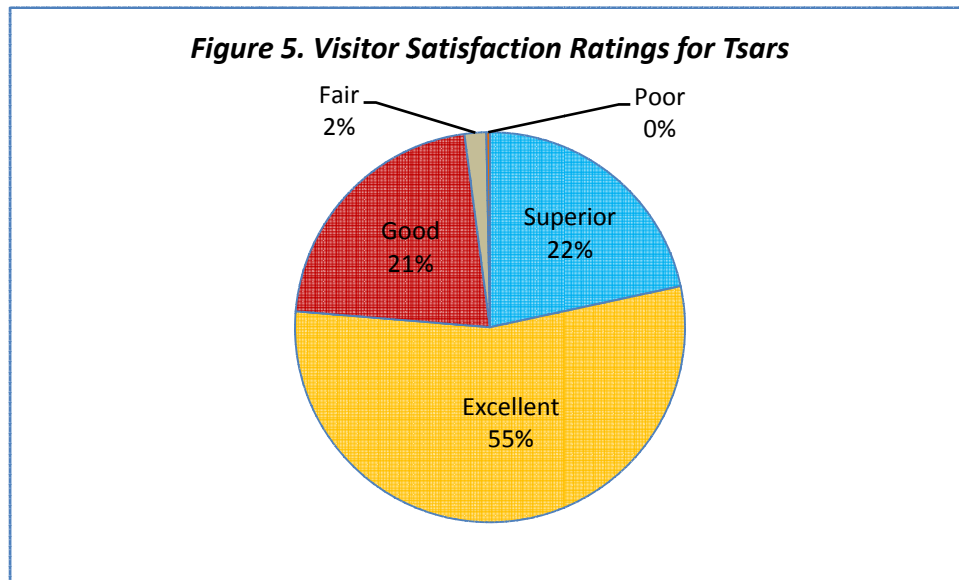
Unsurprisingly, **new visitors** were more likely than **repeat visitors** to say they found out about *Tsars and the East* from *visiting the museum today* (64 percent versus 39 percent). And **repeat visitors** were more likely than **new visitors** to find out about the exhibition from a *newspaper article/ad* (19 percent versus 4 percent) or from a *website* (13 percent versus 4 percent). An equal number of new and repeat visitors found out through *family/friends/colleagues* (16 percent each), and about the same number marked *poster/billboard* (14 percent and 12 percent).

The strong relationship between **repeat** and **older visitors** is reflected in the pattern of modes of finding out about the exhibition for the three age cohorts: **Younger** and **middle age visitors** were more likely than **older visitors** to say they found out about *Tsars and the East* from *visiting the museum today* (62 percent and 60 percent, respectively, versus 41 percent). **Older visitors** were more likely than **younger** and **middle age visitors** to have found out from a *newspaper article/ad* (21 percent versus

2 percent and 6 percent, respectively) or a *website* (14 percent versus 8 percent and 8 percent, respectively).

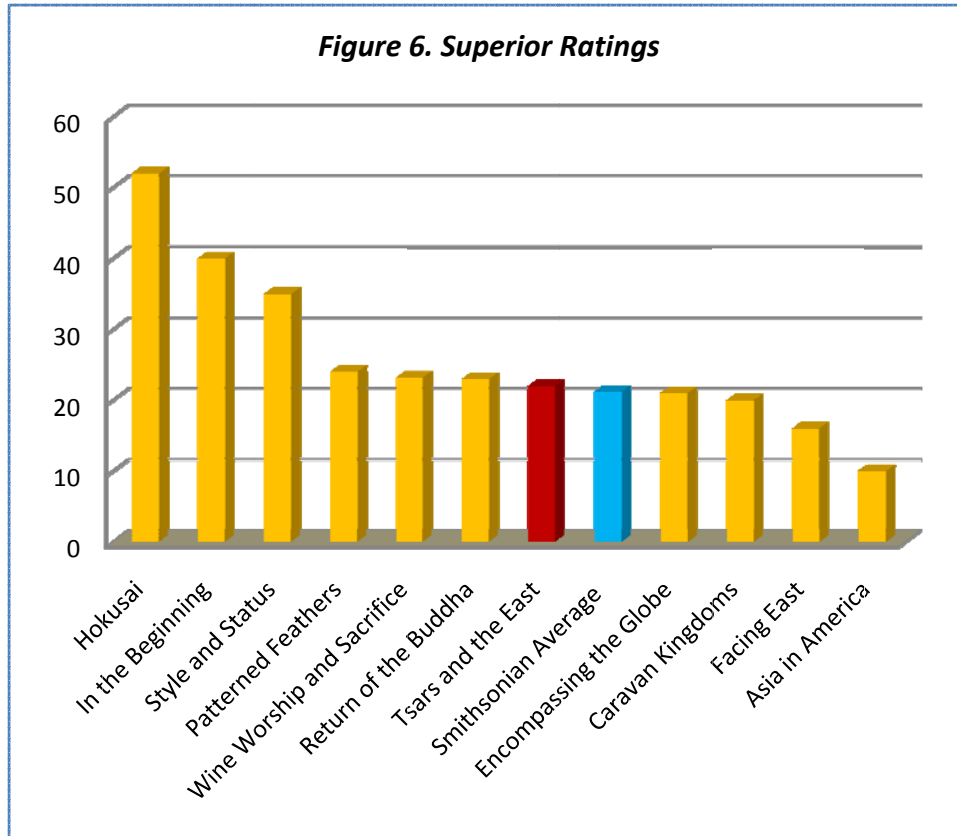
## ***Satisfaction***

Visitor satisfaction ratings for *Tsars and the East* were about average for Sackler exhibitions. On OP&A's five-point satisfaction scale, 22 percent rated it *superior*, 55 percent *excellent*, 22 percent *good*, 2 percent *fair*, and 0 percent *poor*. (See Figure 5.)

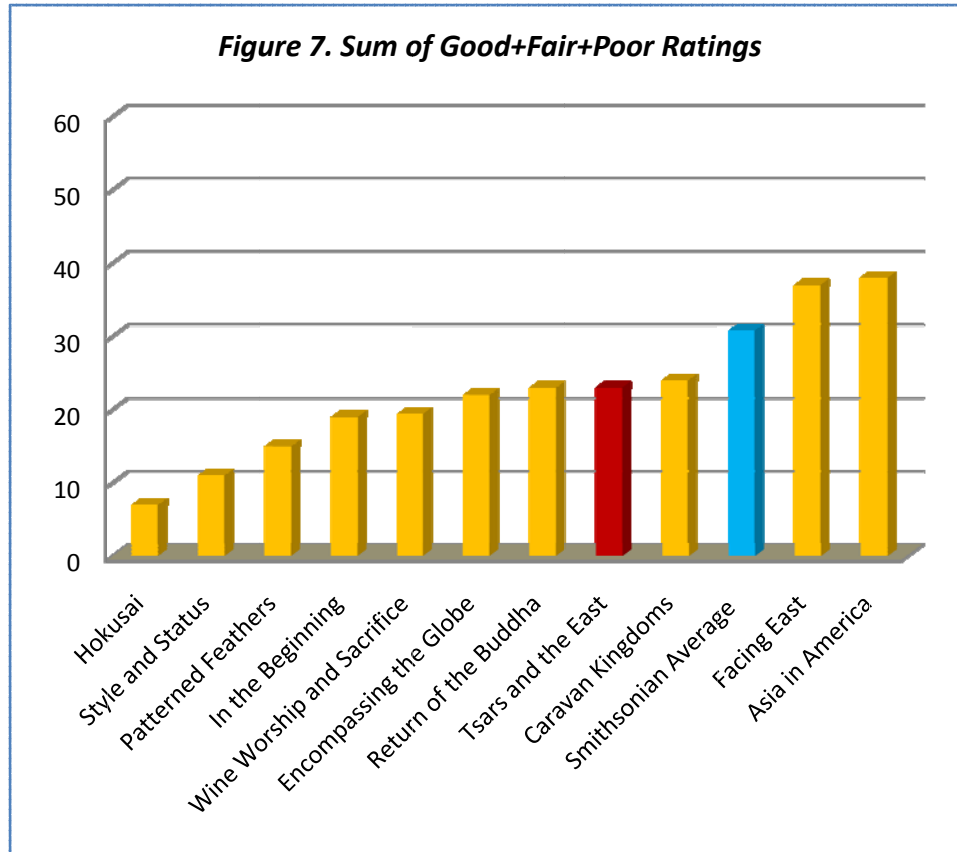


On average, nearly half of visitors to Smithsonian exhibitions, including FSG exhibitions, rate their experience as *excellent*. When making comparisons across exhibitions, it is therefore more telling to look at those who find their exhibition experience so compelling as to rate it *superior*, and those who are so uninspired as to rate it *poor*, *fair*, or *good*.

**Superior ratings:** *Tsars and the East's* 22 percent *superior* rating was higher than *Asia in America* (10 percent) and *Facing East* (16 percent); close to the Smithsonian average (21 percent); comparable to *Caravan Kingdoms* (20 percent), *Encompassing the Globe* (21 percent), *Return of the Buddha* (23 percent), *Wine, Worship, and Sacrifice* (23 percent), and *Patterned Feathers, Piercing Eyes* (24 percent); and lower than *Style and Status* (35 percent), *In the Beginning* (40 percent), and *Hokusai* (52 percent). (See Figure 6.)



**Lower ratings:** Combining all respondents who rated the exhibition *poor*, *fair*, or *good*, 23 percent of visitors rated *Tsars and the East* less than *excellent*. This is lower than the figures for *Asia in America* (38 percent) and *Facing East* (37 percent), as well as the Smithsonian average (31 percent); and comparable to *Caravan Kingdoms* (24 percent), *Return of the Buddha* (23 percent), *Encompassing the Globe* (22 percent), *In the Beginning* (19 percent), and *Wine, Worship, and Sacrifice* (19 percent). *Patterned Feathers*, *Piercing Eyes* (15 percent), *Style and Status* (11 percent), and *Hokusai* (7 percent), had the least number of lower ratings. (See Figure 7.)



**Highly satisfied visitors:** One would logically expect certain categories of visitors to be more satisfied than others, and this is borne out in the data analysis:

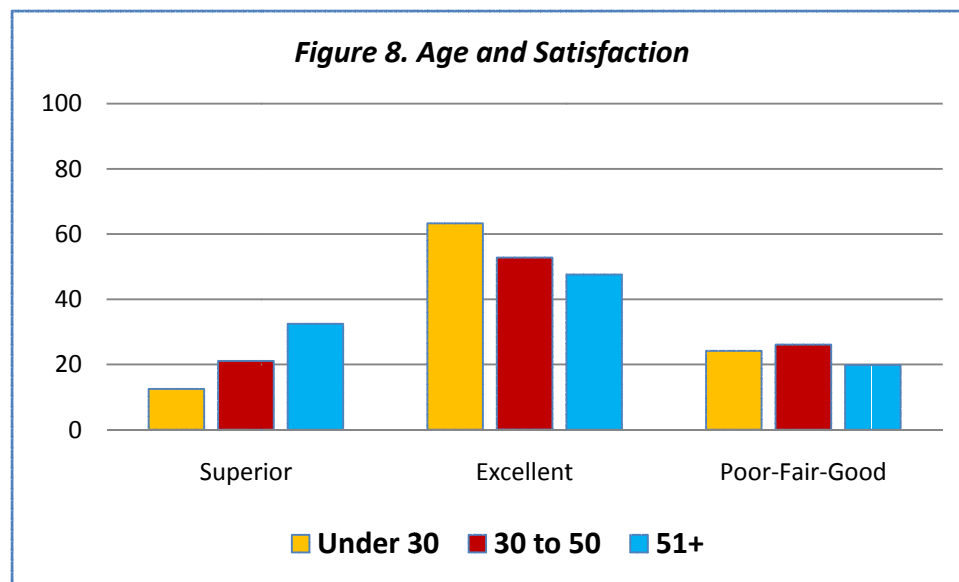
- *Exhibition specific visitors* were more likely to rate the exhibition as *superior* than *general visitors* (34 percent versus 15 percent).
- Visitors who spent more time in the exhibition were more likely to rate it as *superior*: 30 percent of those who spent more than one hour and 26 percent of those who spent from 31 minutes to one hour gave *Tsars* the highest rating compared to 14 percent of those who stayed 30 minutes or less.
- Those who said they read *all/most* of the texts were more likely to rate the exhibition as *superior* than others (36 percent versus 16 percent).
- Visitors who said that seeing *Tsars and the East* increased their interest *very much* with respect to four visit outcomes were more likely to give a superior rating than those who answered *no* or *somewhat*; for example, *visiting the Freer and Sackler Galleries again* (30 percent versus 12 percent).

Other data analysis results were more counter-intuitive. For example,

- **Repeat visitors** were *not* significantly more likely to rate the exhibition as superior compared to **new visitors** (26 percent versus 19 percent).

Somewhat of a surprise was the degree to which age predicted high satisfaction ratings in *Tsars and the East*. As described above, respondents were divided into three age cohorts – **younger visitors** (ages up to 30), **middle age visitors** (ages 30 to 50), and **older visitors** (ages 51 and up).

- **Older visitors** were significantly more likely to rate the exhibition as *superior* than **middle age** or **younger visitors** (33 percent versus 21 percent and 13 percent, respectively).
- This pattern was reversed for excellent ratings, with **younger visitors** more likely to deem their experience as *excellent* (63 percent) compared with **middle age** (53 percent) and **older visitors** (48 percent).
- Ratings of *poor-fair-good* were fairly consistent for **younger** (24 percent), **middle age** (26 percent), and **older visitors** (20 percent). (See Figure 8.)



## ***Experiences***

When asked to select from among a list of seven possible experiences the ones they found especially satisfying in *Tsars and the East*, only one experience was marked by a majority of respondents: *Seeing rare/uncommon/valuable things* (73 percent). The

other experience that we refer to as an **object** or **aesthetic** experience, *being moved by beauty*, was selected by 37 percent of visitors.

**Learning** and **understanding** experiences were marked by just under half of respondents: *gaining information/knowledge* (46 percent) and *enriching my understanding* (46 percent).

Experiences selected by visitors who are interested in things relating to **people** – *finding out what it's like to live in a different time or place* (28 percent) and *getting a sense of the everyday lives of others* (12 percent) – were selected by about a quarter and a tenth of respondents, respectively. Finally, a tenth of visitors chose the **introspective** experience *reflecting on the meaning of what I saw* (11 percent) as especially satisfying.

These figures imply that visitors were most likely to find *Tsars and the East* satisfying primarily as an **object** experience (though more in terms of rarity than aesthetics); somewhat less likely to experience it in terms of **learning**; and least inclined to see it in **people** terms. One would expect a predominance of object/aesthetic experiences in an art museum. (See Figure 9.)



Age appeared to be a significant factor in the choice of only one experience:

- **Older visitors** (56 percent) were more likely than **middle age visitors** (44 percent) or **younger visitors** (38 percent) to find *enriching my understanding* as especially satisfying.

**Repeat visitors** and **exhibition specific visitors** showed a preference for certain **object** and **learning** experiences:

- **Repeat visitors** were more likely than **new visitors** to choose *seeing rare/uncommon/valuable things* (81 percent versus 68 percent); *enriching my understanding* (54 percent versus 41 percent); and *gaining information/knowledge* (53 percent versus 42 percent).
- **Exhibition specific visitors** were more likely than **general visitors** to choose *enriching my understanding* (60 percent versus 38 percent) and *being moved by beauty* (46 percent versus 31 percent).

Interestingly, **new visitors** were more likely than **repeat visitors**, and **general visitors** were more likely than **exhibition specific visitors**, to find the **people** experience, *getting a sense of the everyday lives of others*, as especially satisfying (15 percent versus 8 percent in both cases).

Two of the experiences were significantly correlated with a *superior* rating or desired outcomes:

- Visitors who selected the **object** experience *being moved by beauty* as especially satisfying were significantly more likely than those who did not select that experience to rate the exhibition as *superior* (30 percent versus 15 percent).
- Visitors who chose the **learning** experience *enriching my understanding* as especially satisfying were significantly more likely than others to say that seeing *Tsars and the East* increased their interest *very much* in *seeing examples of cross-cultural links within Asia* (62 percent versus 42 percent), and *seeing more cross-cultural links between Asia and the West* (60 percent versus 43 percent).

**Above average experiences.** On average, visitors marked between two and three experiences. About half of all respondents (48 percent) marked above the average number, i.e., three or more experiences. We will refer to those as **high experience visitors**.

Both **exhibition specific** and **repeat visitors** were more likely to be **high experience** visitors—57 percent and 56 percent, respectively—while **general** and **new visitors** were less likely to fall into this category (43 percent each).

More than half of **middle age** and **older visitors** (51 percent and 55 percent, respectively) were also **high experience** visitors compared to two-fifths of **younger visitors** (40 percent).



**High experience visitors** were *not* significantly more likely than others to rate the exhibition as *superior* (22 percent versus 19 percent); however, these visitors were significantly *less* likely to rate the exhibition as *poor-fair-good* (16 percent versus 31 percent).

### ***Labels and Information***

In response to the question of how many of the texts they had read, a little over one-quarter of survey respondents (26 percent) said they read *all/most* of the texts. One-third said they read *more than half* (33 percent) and about one-third said they read *less than half* (31 percent). Just one-tenth of visitors (10 percent) said they read *few/none* of the texts.

**Readers:** Certain categories of visitors were more likely to answer that they read *all/most* of the texts. A high degree of reading is also associated with higher satisfaction scores.

- **Repeat visitors** were significantly more likely to say they read *all/most* than **new visitors** (42 percent versus 16 percent).
- **Older visitors** – who, as noted above, are more likely to be repeat visitors – were more likely to have read *all/most* of the texts (38 percent) compared with **middle age** (24 percent) and **younger visitors** (17 percent).
- Conversely, **younger visitors** and **middle age visitors** were more likely to say they read *less than half* of the texts (38 percent and 35 percent, respectively) than **older visitors** (20 percent).

Asked about the *level* of information provided in the exhibition, an overwhelming majority of respondents indicated that they found the level of information to be *just right* (89 percent). Only 6 percent thought the information was *too simplified*, and a scant 2 percent judged the information *too detailed*.

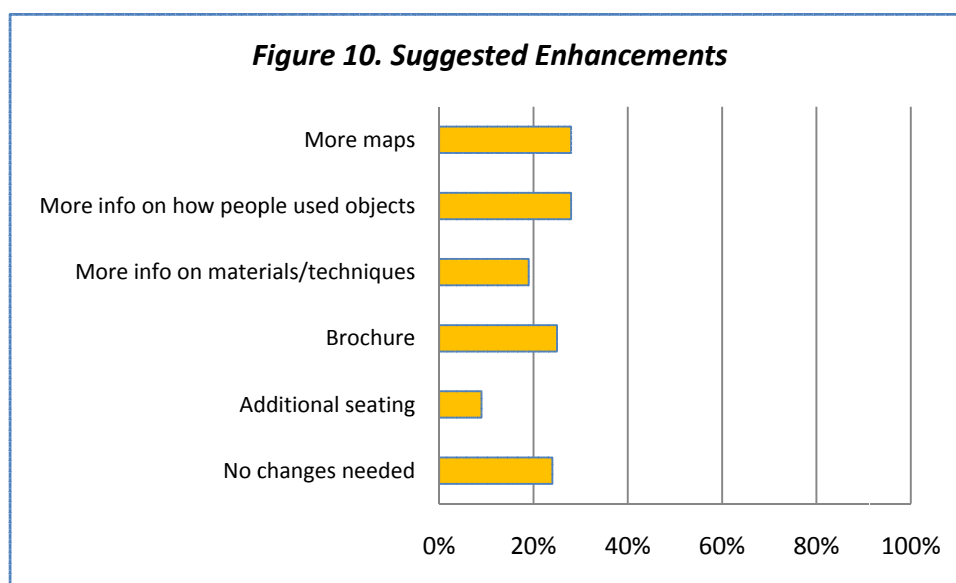
### ***Suggested Enhancements***

When given a list of five possible changes and asked which might have enhanced their visit to *Tsars and the East*, about a quarter (24 percent) indicated that there were *no changes needed*. The five enhancements suggested on the survey questionnaire were marked as follows:

- 28 percent, *more maps*
- 28 percent, *more information about how people used these objects*

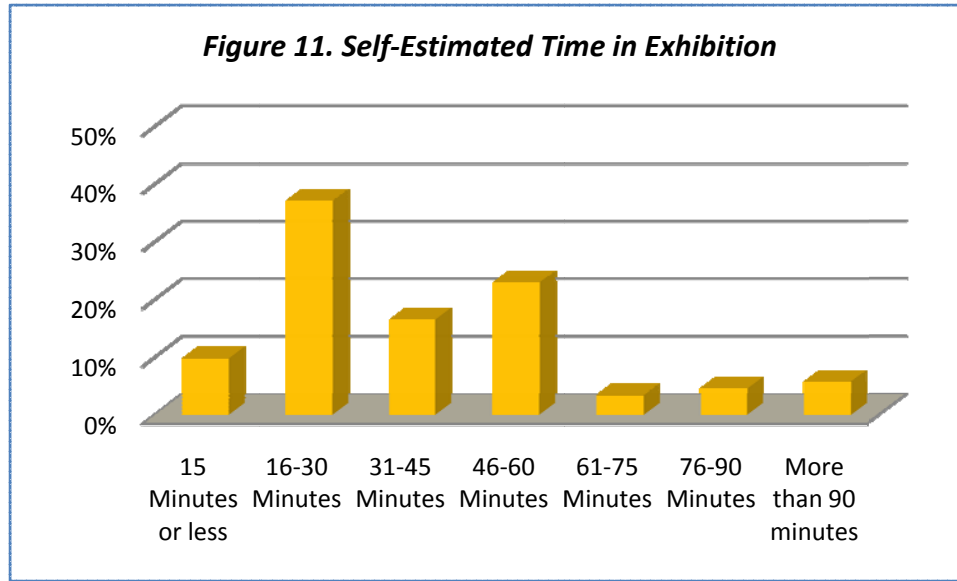
- 25 percent, *brochure*
- 19 percent, *more descriptions of materials/techniques used*
- 9 percent, *additional seating*

A number of respondents also wrote in other desired enhancements, for example, better lighting, more interactive audio sets and video, and more visual depictions of the world such as “picture of the horse in the adornments” and “drawings of the tsars wearing the grand attire.” On average, respondents marked about one enhancement. (See Figure 10.)



### ***Time in Exhibition***

The survey questionnaire asked visitors to estimate the time they spent in *Tsars and the East*. The numbers obtained—an average of 45 minutes and a median of 40 minutes—must be regarded as highly approximate, because they are based on retrospective self estimates. Based on the self-estimates, close to half of visitors (47 percent) stayed in the exhibition for 30 minutes or less; about two-fifths (39 percent) stayed for 31 minutes to one hour; and 14 percent stayed for more than one hour. (See Figure 11.)

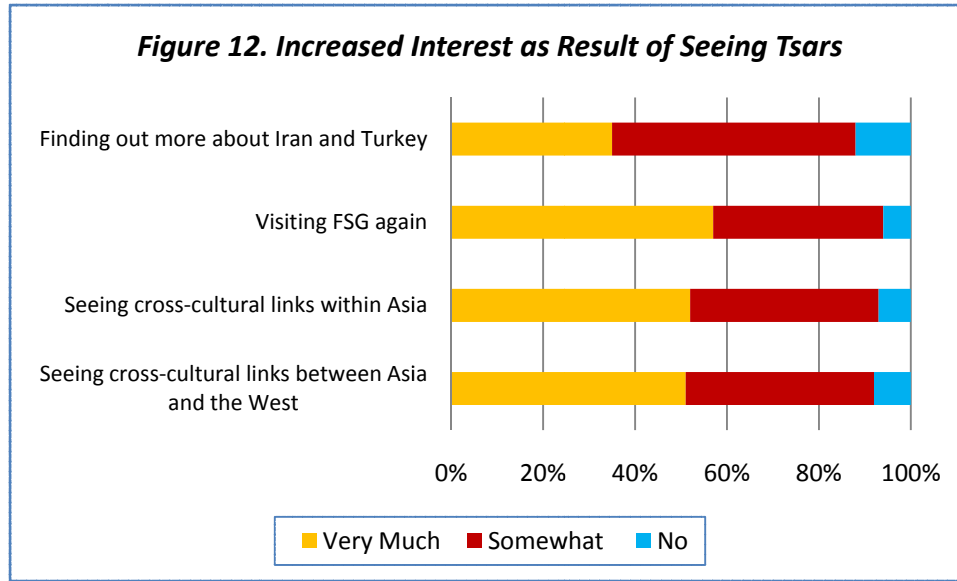


These figures suggest that visitors to *Tsars and the East* on average spent a fair amount of time in the exhibition, albeit not notably longer or shorter in relation to other FSG exhibitions. To provide some rough comparisons, the visitor study of *Style and Status: Imperial Costumes from Ottoman Turkey* suggested that visitors on average spent under half an hour in that exhibition, which was similar in size to *Tsars and the East*. In another exhibition of similar size – *Patterned Feathers, Piercing Eyes: Edo Masters from the Price Collection* – visitors spent an average of 55 minutes and a median of 60 minutes.

## Visit Outcomes

Visitors were asked if seeing *Tsars and the East* increased their interest (*no*, *somewhat*, or *very much*) in four subject areas.

Over half responded that their interest was increased *very much* with respect to three of the outcomes: *visiting the Freer and Sackler Galleries again* (57 percent), *seeing examples of cross-cultural links within Asia* (52 percent), and *seeing more cross-cultural links between Asia and the West* (51 percent). Slightly over one-third (35 percent) said that their interest in *finding out more about these cultures, Iran and Turkey* increased *very much* as a result of seeing *Tsars and the East*. (See Figure 12.)



**Increased interest:** Certain categories of visitors were more likely to answer that seeing *Tsars and the East* increased their interest in the topic areas *very much*. High indication of increased interest is also associated with higher satisfaction scores.

- **Repeat visitors** were more likely than **new visitors** to say that seeing the exhibition increased their interest *very much* in the four outcomes:
  - Finding out more about Iran and Turkey (43 percent versus 29 percent).
  - Visiting FSG again (68 percent versus 50 percent).
  - Seeing more cross-cultural links within Asia (64 percent versus 44 percent).
  - Seeing more cross-cultural links between Asia and the West (62 percent versus 44 percent).
- **Exhibition specific visitors** followed an almost identical pattern compared to **general visitors**.
- Time spent in the exhibition was not a significant factor, and age was only marginally significant, in selecting *very much* increased interest in the four outcomes.

## Conclusions and Discussion

*The Tsars and the East: Gifts from Turkey and Iran in the Moscow Kremlin* was a visually stunning display of some of the richest and rarest treasures in the world. It was a generous act of diplomacy on the part of the Kremlin Museums to allow these precious artifacts to be shown in the United States, and a coup for the Freer and Sackler Galleries to be the exhibition's sole venue. Visitors interviewed by OP&A staff described the exhibition as "lavish," "mind boggling," "elaborate," and "ornamental." A common remark was on the high quality workmanship of the objects. Indeed, a whopping 73 percent of the survey respondents chose "seeing rare/uncommon/valuable things" as an especially satisfying experience in the exhibition – by comparison the next most satisfying experience was selected by 46 percent of visitors.

It was also striking how low the related object experience, "being moved by beauty," was (selected by 37 percent of visitors), suggesting that while visitors recognized that these objects were marvelously crafted, quite out of the ordinary, and the sorts of things one does not normally see, they were perhaps not as aesthetically pleasing.

*Tsars and the East* was most successful with visitors who are experienced museum-goers – those repeat visitors to FSG and ones who came specifically to see *Tsars and the East* who found exactly what they were expecting. These people tended to spend more time in the exhibition, read more, and have a greater number of satisfying experiences. At this particular exhibition, the most satisfied "customers" also happened to be older visitors ages 51 and older – a fact to take notice of if the museum intends to remain vibrant and attract a younger audience.

Some of the high school and college age visitors that the study team spoke with in preliminary interviews alluded to wanting more interactivity and relating exhibition content to contemporary things affecting their lives:

*I liked the touching area of the [Artful Animals exhibit in the National Museum of African Art] – that was interesting. This [Tsars] was good. It would have been fun to have a little more touching; usually you're not supposed to touch.*

*I was making contemporary connections to wedding dresses; I hadn't seen that kind of [garment with] all the pearls and the embroidery and things like that ... and also Lord of the Rings, the suit that Frodo wears.*

*I was kind of fascinated by all of that using jewels and gold for the horses and what the actual weight is. I found myself wanting to just pick it up and touch it... is it tough for the horses to have that on, what is that experience?*

Prior OP&A visitor studies, including the 2007 meta-analysis of eight Sackler Gallery exhibitions, reveal a very close association between the number of experiences that visitors choose on exit and the rating they give the exhibition. This holds true in *Tsars and the East* to the extent that *high experience* visitors (who selected three or more experiences) were *less* likely to rate it *poor-fair-good* than those with fewer satisfying experiences.<sup>4</sup> An implication of the experience data is that increasing the number of experiences that visitors find very satisfying in an exhibition is likely to increase the rating of the exhibition.

As described above, *Tsars and the East* was unquestionably opulent and scored very high as an object experience (in terms of rarity). It also provided wall and panel text with a level of information that 89 percent of visitors deemed “just right,” and learning experiences were chosen by nearly half of respondents. However, the exhibition did not explicitly offer the people and / or introspective experiences that some visitors prefer, as reflected in the low selection of those experiences. Interestingly, new visitors—three-fifths of the audience—rather than the more satisfied repeat visitors, were more likely to select the people experience *getting a sense of the everyday lives of others*, suggesting that this segment of the audience was indeed hoping to find such an experience. Moreover, over one-fourth of respondents (28 percent) said that “more information about how people used these objects” would have enhanced their visit, and some visitors were moved to write on the survey questionnaire their desire for such experiences:

- More background on the people/tsars (Why was Ivan so terrible?)
- Photos/drawings of tsars wearing grand attire
- Picture of a horse in the adornments as a graphic to understand the impact the whole would have
- More paintings or visual depictions of the world

Pre-survey interviews also revealed that visitors wanted more contextual information on the objects and were thinking about how these magnificent artifacts related to the people who lived during that time:

*With all the technology we have I'm fascinated that they can do the workmanship by hand in a time when they had very few resources.*

*More [about] the times, the history of the time it came from, what the culture was at the time, what they were facing; just a general history of why you have these pieces and from what part.*

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<sup>4</sup> Although, as noted in the report, *high experience* visitors were not significantly more likely to rate the exhibition as *superior*.

*I was surprised that such high quality craftsmanship was possible back in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. It's really art in the purer sense; it is just amazing how skillful people were back in that time. There is a disconnect between how people lived in that time and what things they can create; it's such a huge difference.*

*And the armor – I've never figured out how they won battles with all that heavy armor. And the poor horses, weighted down to begin with. My guess is they're trained from the very beginning with weights on them so that they're prepared to carry all that.*

In sum, the quantitative data from this survey study, together with anecdotal information from qualitative interviews, suggest two important questions:

- What can be done to appeal to younger visitors?
- What can be done to provide more varied experiences?

# Appendix A: Survey Instrument

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**Visitor Survey**  
***The Tsars and the East: Gifts from Turkey and Iran in the Moscow Kremlin***  
**Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, 2009**

Is this your first visit to this museum, the Freer and Sackler Galleries? ☐ Yes  
☐ No, I last visited more than 12 months ago  
☐ No, I have visited \_\_\_ previous times in the past 12 months

What led to your decision to visit this museum today? [Mark one or more] ☐ Wandered by  
☐ Museum shop  
☐ Came to see this exhibition, *The Tsars and the East*  
☐ Came to see a different Freer/Sackler exhibition  
☐ Came for special tour/program/performance  
☐ Came to see the Freer and Sackler Galleries in general  
☐ Came on a general Smithsonian visit

How did you find out about this exhibition, *The Tsars and the East*? [Mark one or more] ☐ Visiting the museum today ☐ Newspaper article/ad  
☐ Friends/family/colleagues ☐ Website  
☐ Poster/billboard ☐ Blog  
☐ Facebook, Twitter, etc. ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please rate your experience in this exhibition today. ☐ Poor ☐ Fair ☐ Good ☐ Excellent ☐ Superior

Which of the following experiences did you find especially satisfying in this exhibition, *The Tsars and the East*? [Mark one or more] ☐ Seeing rare/uncommon/valuable things  
☐ Enriching my understanding  
☐ Reflecting on the meaning of what I saw  
☐ Being moved by beauty  
☐ Finding out what it's like to live in a different time or place  
☐ Gaining information/knowledge  
☐ Getting a sense of the everyday lives of others

How many of the texts did you read in this exhibition today? ☐ Few/None ☐ Less than half ☐ More than half ☐ All/Most

Which best describes the level of information in this exhibition? ☐ Too simplified ☐ Just right ☐ Too detailed

Which of the following would have enhanced your visit to this exhibition, *The Tsars and the East*? [Mark one or more] ☐ More maps  
☐ More information about how people used these objects  
☐ More descriptions of materials/techniques used  
☐ Brochure  
☐ Additional seating  
☐ No changes needed

Has seeing this exhibition, *The Tsars and the East*, increased your interest in:

Finding out more about these cultures, Iran and Turkey?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> Very Much
Visiting the Freer and Sackler Galleries again?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> Very Much
Seeing examples of cross-cultural links within Asia?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> Very Much
Seeing more cross-cultural links between Asia and the West?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> Very Much

How much time did you spend in this exhibition today?  hour(s)  minutes

Where do you live? ☐ United States. Specify ZIP code:   
☐ Other Country. Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

What is your age?

What is your sex? ☐ Male ☐ Female

How many people are you visiting with today? ☐ I am alone ☐ I am with:  Adults 18 and over  
 Youth/children under 18

*Thank you for your time!*

Interviewer	Session	Segment	Status	ID
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> C <input type="radio"/> R <input type="radio"/> L <input type="radio"/> I	<input type="text"/>



## Appendix B: Frequencies of Responses to the *Tsars and the East* Survey

Is this your first visit to this museum, the Freer and Sackler Galleries? (N=395)

61 percent	Yes
20 percent	No, I last visited more than 12 months ago
20 percent	No, I have visited ____ previous times in the past 12 months

What led to your decision to visit this museum today? (Mark one or more) (N=394)

36 percent	Came to see this exhibition, <i>The Tsars and the East</i>
24 percent	Came on a general Smithsonian visit
22 percent	Came to see the Freer and Sackler Galleries in general
19 percent	Wandered by
9 percent	Came to see a different Freer/Sackler exhibition
3 percent	Came for special tour/program/performance
1 percent	Museum shop

How did you find out about *this exhibition, The Tsars and the East*? (Mark one or more) (N=390)

54 percent	Visiting the museum today
16 percent	Friends/family/colleagues
13 percent	Poster/billboard
10 percent	Newspaper article/ad
8 percent	Website
6 percent	Other
0 percent	Blog
0 percent	Facebook, Twitter, etc.

Please rate your experience *in this exhibition today*. (N=380)

22 percent	Superior
55 percent	Excellent
22 percent	Good
2 percent	Fair
0 percent	Poor

Which of the following experiences did you find especially satisfying *in this exhibition The Tsars and the East*? (Mark one or more) (N=377)

73 percent	Seeing rare/uncommon/valuable things
46 percent	Gaining information/knowledge
46 percent	Enriching my understanding
37 percent	Being moved by beauty
36 percent	Imagining other times/places
28 percent	Finding out what it's like to live in a different time or place
12 percent	Getting a sense of the everyday lives of others
11 percent	Reflecting on the meaning of what I saw

How many of the texts did you read *in this exhibition* today? (N=393)

26 percent	All/Most
33 percent	More than half
31 percent	Less than half
10 percent	Few/None

Which best describes the level of information *in this exhibition*? (N=378)

89 percent	Just right
6 percent	Too simplified
5 percent	Too detailed

Which of the following would have enhanced your visit to *this exhibition, the Tsars and the East*? (Mark one or more) (N=380)

28 percent	More information about how people used these objects
28 percent	More maps
25 percent	Brochure
24 percent	No changes needed
19 percent	More descriptions of materials/techniques used
9 percent	Additional seating

Has seeing *this exhibition, The Tsars and the East*, increased your interest in:

	<i>No</i>	<i>Somewhat</i>	<i>Very Much</i>
Finding out more about these cultures, Iran and Turkey? (N=383)	12 percent	53 percent	35 percent
Visiting the Freer and Sackler Galleries again? (N=386)	6 percent	37 percent	57 percent
Seeing examples of cross-cultural links within Asia? (N=382)	7 percent	41 percent	52 percent
Seeing more cross-cultural links between Asia and the West? (N=300)	8 percent	41 percent	51 percent

How much time did you spend *in this exhibition* today? (N=388)

Mean: 45 minutes

Median: 40 minutes

Where do you live? (N=423)

85 percent United States

15 percent Other country

What is your age? (N= 429)

Mean: 41 years

Median: 45 years

What is your sex? (N=443)

44 percent Male

56 percent Female

How many people are you visiting with today? (N=394)

22 percent I am alone

77 percent I am with others

53 percent with one or more other adults

24 percent with one or more youth/children under 18

