Islamic Palaces & Court Culture (8th-17th centuries)

Professor Glaire Anderson
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
glaire@email.unc.edu

Course Description
This course introduces Islamic palaces, gardens, and court cultures. Through lectures and discussion we will examine medieval Islamic notions of palace and garden, relating the material evidence and art historical interpretation to the picture of the various Islamic court cultures gleaned from readings in social and political history. As we examine the material evidence for palaces and gardens we will also take note of shifts in scholars’ assumptions and interpretations of this material as revealed in the historiography.

Course Readings
Other assigned readings and resources for the term paper are available online as .pdf files on ArchNet or on the Reserve Shelf in Baker/Berry
Online Resources: The course syllabus and handouts will be available on Blackboard. Images of buildings, a dictionary of terms specific to Islamic art, and collections of books and articles about Islamic art and architecture are also available online through the ArchNet website (http://www.archnet.org).

Schedule
Introduction
Caliphal Palaces
Rise of the Citadel in the Mediterranean
Palace and Court in the Wake of the Mongol Conquests
Palaces of the Gunpowder Empires

Pre-Islamic influences and the Rise of Islam

Situating the topic: Palace & Garden
The Umayyad Palaces of Syria

- Lapidus, Ira, 67-71 (Umayyad court culture)

Khirbat al-Mafjar


The Palace as City I: Abbasid Palaces (Abbasid Baghdad)

- Lapidus, “the Abbasid empire” 56-66.

The Palace as City I: Abbasid Palaces (Abbasid Samarra)


Samarra


The Palace as City II: the Cordoban Umayyads Introduction to Islamic Spain

Wed. April 28: Madinat al-Zahra’

**Palaces and Gardens of al-Andalus**


**The Rise of the Citadel Around the Mediterranean**

- Lapidus, “The post-Abbasid Middle Eastern state system” 112-32
- Wed. May 5: Rise of the Turkic dynasties: Guest Lecture on Ghaznavids and Eastern Seljuks
- Scott-Meisami, Julie, “Palaces and paradises: Palace Description in Medieval Persian Poetry,” In Islamic Art and Literature, Grabar and Robinson, eds. 21-54.
- Fri. May 7: The Seljuks of Anatolia

**The Mobile Court: Palaces in the Wake of the Mongol Conquest**


**Timurid Gardens**

Palaces of the Gunpowder Empires: Mughal India, Safavid Iran, Ottoman Turkey

- Lapidus, “Safavid Iran,” 234-241
- Lapidus, “The Turkish migrations and the Ottoman Empire,” 248-63.
- Necipoglu, Gulru, “Framing the Gaze in Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Palaces.” In Ars Orientalis, Vol. 23 (1993), 303-42.