

The Architecture of Power: Palaces and Palatial Spaces in Islam

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Course Description

This seminar explores the architectural spaces, motifs and practices that are associated with rulers, or the expression of power in Islam. We will begin with the desert palaces of the Umayyads, and include the great palaces of Andalusia, and then discuss the courts of Baghdad and Samarra, the tent palaces of the Timurids, the royal palace city of the Fatimids and the built wonders of the Safavids, Ottomans and Mughals.

Reading

- Grabar 1973 First chapters
- Elias 2000 The Genetics of Modern Assyrians and Their Relationship to Other People of the Middle East
- Foucault 1984 Space, Knowledge and Power
- Preziosi 1991 Introduction: Power, Structure, and Architectural Function

Pre-Islam and The First Islamic Dynasty, the Umayyads [661-750]

Reading

- Winter 1993 "Seat of Kingship"/"A Wonder to Behold" The Palace as Construct in the Ancient Near East
- Grabar 1973 "Islamic Secular Art: Palace and City"
- Grabar 1993 "Umayyad Palaces Reconsidered"

Other Sources

- Ettinghausen and Grabar 1987 from Chapter 2: The Umayyads and their Art, especially the part on Secular Buildings.
- Hamilton 1959 Khirbat al Mafjar; an Arabian mansion in the Jordan Valley. With a contribution by Oleg Grabar
- Bloom 1993 The Qubbat al-Khadra and the Iconography of Height in Early Islamic Architecture
- La dolce vita in early Islamic Syria: the evidence of later Umayyad palaces / by Robert Hillenbrand. Art history 1982 Mar., v.5, n.1, p.[1]-35.
- "City in the desert : Qasr al-Hayr East : " an account of the excavations carried out at Qasr al-Hayr East on behalf of the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology at the University of Michigan, Cambridge, Mass. : Distributed for the Center for Middle Eastern Studies of Harvard University by Harvard University Press, c1978. Series title: Harvard Middle Eastern monographs 23-24

- Qusayr' Amra, residencia y banos omeyas en el desierto de Jordania / por Martin Almagro ... [et al.]. Madrid : Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, Direccion General de Relaciones Culturales, 1975.
- Reconstructing an Islamic palace in Syria / by Kassem Toueir. *Archaeology* 1982 July-Aug., v.35, no.4, p.30-37. photos., maps, biblio.
- Solomon's throne, Solomon's bath: model or metaphor / Priscilla P. Soucek *Ars orientalis* 1993, v.23, p.[109]-134. On Solomonic imagery in the baths of the Ummayyad palace at Khirbat al Mafjar.

The Early Abbasids: Baghdad and Samarra [750-1250, but mainly 750-850]

Reading

- Bacharach 1991 pp111-122 or 24
- Soucek 1997 *Byzantium and the Islamic East*
- Northedge 1993

Other Sources

- Hunt, Lucy-Anne. : *Comnenian aristocratic palace decorations: descriptions and Islamic connections.* : Oxford, B.A.R., 1984. 15 illustrations; plans, elevations. IN: Angold, Michael., ed, *Byzantine aristocracy, IX to XIII centuries 138-156.* SERIES: BAR international series, 221.: Examines literary descriptions of 12th-13th c. Byzantine palaces and analyzes Islamic influence on their mosaics, paintings and other decoration.
- Lassner 1970 *The topography of Baghdad in the early Middle Ages; text and studies*
- *The Qubbat Al-Khadra and the iconography of height in early Islamic architecture / Jonathan M. Bloom.* *Ars orientalis* 1993, v.23, p.[135]-141.
- 'Amid, Tahir Muzaffar. *The 'Abbasid architecture of Samarra in the reign of both al-Mu'tasim and al-Muawakkil.* Baghdad, al-Ma'aref Press, 1973.
- Iraq. Mudiriyat al-Athar al-Qadimah al-'Ammah. *Remains of the Abbasid Palace in the Baghdad Citadel.* Baghdad, Printed at Govt. Press, 1935.
- For the way that Baghdad has been imaged and imagined in literature, see *The 1001 Nights*, texts, translations, introductions, and illustrations.

The Madinat al Zahra of the Spanish Umayyads (912-961) and Fatimid Cairo (909-1171)

Reading

- Ruggles 1993 *Arabic Poetry and Architectural Memory in al-Andalus*
- Sanders 1989 and excerpts from (Sanders 1989)
- Thackston 1986 (1045) travels to Cairo of Nasr-i Khosrow

Other Sources

- (Bierman 1998) *Writing signs : the Fatimid public text /*
- (Sanders 1994) *Ritual, politics, and the city in Fatimid Cairo*
- Johns, Jeremy.: *The Norman kings of Sicily and the Fatimid Caliphate.* 8 ill., 3 plans. IN: *Proceedings of the XV Battle Conference and of the XI Colloquio medievale of the Officina di*

studi medievali, 1992. -- Woodbridge, Boydell, 1993, p. 133-159. Johns distinguishes between those components of the Arabic facet of the Norman monarchy which were inherited from the Muslim rulers of Sicily, and those which were imported from the contemporary Muslim world after ca.1130. This is demonstrated by considering the architecture and decoration of the Norman palaces in and around Palermo, ceremonial and regalia, the structure and practices of the Norman fiscal administration, and the Arabic titles of the Norman kings. Submits that the Fatimid court of Egypt was the source for these imports, and that the Norman kings took as their model the external symbols of royal power of the caliphate while remaining ignorant of their intrinsic significance.

Citadels and Seljuqs

Reading

- Bacharach 1991 124 to the end
- Tabbaa 1993 Circles of Power: Palace, Citadel, and City in Ayyubid Aleppo
- Redford 1993 Thirteenth-Century Rum Seljuq Palaces and Palace Imagery
- Redford 2000 It considers not only some gardens that Redford found and documented around Alanya, but also tries to situate Seljuk garden and hunting culture in a larger Islamic and Mediterranean context.
- Koprulu 2000 (1916) This yet unpublished article includes descriptions of court ceremonial practices and the throne room, among other things, based on Ibn Bibi/Yazicioglu

Other Sources

- Mason, Roger. The Medici-Lazara map of Alanya.: *Anatolian studies* 1989, v. 39, p. 85-105, ISSN 0066-1546. Roger publishes a previously unknown early 17th c. map of Alanya (archive of the conti de Lazara, Padua), connected with the attacks made on Anatolia by the Order of S. Stephen, 1585- 1639. Concludes that the map is an accurate fine-copy or presentation copy, ca.1606-13, from the so-called cartografia stefaniana based on a carefully observed military sketch map, and that it allows reliable conclusions to be drawn concerning the early 17th c. fortifications of Alanya.

The Mamluks and the Citadel in Cairo 1310-25 and 1333-41

Reading

- Rabbat 1995
- Chapter 1, "Whence the Citadel," pp 1-17 introduction to the Citadel, some overlap with earlier readings
- Chapter 6, pp182-228 "The Citadel in al-Nasir Muhammad's Reign: First Construction Period (1310-1325]"
- Chapter 7, pp 229-295, "The Citadel in al-Nasir Muhammad's Reign: Second Construction Period (1333-1341]"

Other Sources

- Rabbat, 1993 Mamluk Throne Halls: Qubba or Iwan?

The Alhambra at its peak, 1354

Reading

- Dodds, 1979 The paintings in the Sala de justicia of the Alhambra: iconography and iconology
- Macdougall and Ettinghausen 1976 which has a chapter by James Dickie, "The Islamic garden in Spain." pp 89-105
- SUMMARY: Proposes a reconstruction of the Hispano-Arab garden on the basis of evidence from contemporary texts collated with data yielded by excavation. Texts cited embrace a period spanning the 10th to the 14th cs. Although the design remained essentially unaltered (as to plan, soil levels, irrigation system) some evidence of development is present. Surviving botanical lists disclose the contents of the gardens. Symbolism governs certain aspects of garden design as well as the choice of plants; and both together deepen our understanding of the Islamic aesthetic. Discussion covers the Alcazaba of Malaga, various gardens at the Alhambra and Generalife in Granada, and excavations in the Alcazar of Seville
- Ruggles, 2000

Other Sources

- Grabar 1992 The Alhambra
- Bargebuhr 1968 The Alhambra: a cycle of studies on the eleventh century in Moorish Spain
- Alhambra revisited / Maria Cristina Tonelli Michail, Guido Almansi, Jorge Luis Borges. FMR 1985 Mar., no.9, p.93-124. photos.
- Poetry in water: the magnificent Granada gardens of the Generalife and the Alhambra / Robin Lane Fox. House & Garden 1987 Jan., v.159, no.1, p.104-114,162. photos.
- Methods of constructing geometric ornamental systems in the cupola of the Alhambra / Sergei Chmelnizkij. Muqarnas 1990, v.6, p.[43]-49.
- The palace of the lions, Alhambra, and the role of water in its conception / Nasser Rabbat. Environmental design: journal of the Islamic Environmental Design Research Centre 1985, no.2, p.64-73. ill., refs.

The Ilkhanid Mongols 1258-1336 and the Timurids in Iran [1370-1501], and their Asian Roots

Reading

- Steinhardt 1990. "From Bianliang to Dadu"
- Conti 1977 The Forbidden City, People's Republic of China
- Blair 1993 The Ilkhanid Palace
- O'Kane 1993 From Tents to Pavilions: Royal Mobility and Persian Palace Design
- Golombek and Wilber 1988 Timurid Society
- Golombek 1995 The gardens of Timur: new perspectives

Other Sources

- Grabar and Blair: 1980, Epic Images for some discussion of life at court in the context of an illustrated Ilkhanid manuscript

The Ottomans and Topkapi Palace, 1457 through the Classical Period (16th c) and Beyond

Reading

- Necipoglu, 1991
- Chapter One, pp 3-30, "Construction of the New Palace and Codification of its Ceremonial"
- Chapter Three, pp 53-75, "The Second Court: State Ceremonial and Service Buildings"
- Chapter Four, pp 76-90 "The Second Court: Administrative Buildings"
- Zilfi 1993 A medrese for the palace: Ottoman dynastic legitimation in the eighteenth century

The Safavids and the Iranian Court 1570-1722

Reading

- Conti 1977 "Persepolis, Iran"
- Blake 1999 "Land, People, Empire," pp 3-11 and "Imperial Palace and Imperial Garden Retreats." pp 55-84
- Kleiss 1993 "Safavid Palaces"
- Babaie 1994 Shah'Abbas II, the conquest of Qandahar, the Chihil Sutun, and its wall paintings

Other Sources

- Wilber, Donald Newton. Persian gardens & garden pavilions. Rutland, Vt., C. E. Tuttle Co. [1962]

India, The Moguls and their Gardens 1526-1857

Reading

- Crane 1987 The patronage of Zahir al-Din Babur and the origins of Mughal architecture
- Moynahan 1988 The Lotus Garden Palace of Zahir al-Din Muhammad Babur
- James L. Wescoat 1990 Gardens of invention and exile: the precarious context of Mughal garden design during the reign of Humayun (1530-1556)
- Koch 1997 Mughal palace gardens from Babur to Shah Jahan (1526-1648)
- Koch 1994 Diwan-i Amm and Chihil Sutun: the audience halls of Shah Jahan
- Andrews 1987 The generous heart or the mass of clouds: the court tents of Shah Jahan

Other Sources

- Fatehpur Sikri: origins and growth of a Mughal city / Satish Davar. Architectural Association (Great Britain) AAQ. Architectural Association quarterly 1978 v.10 n.3 p.[44]-59. illus., plans.
- A Little-known Mughal garden in India: Aam Khas Bagh, Sirhind / Subhash Parihar. Oriental art 1985-1986 Winter, new ser., v.31, no.4, p.421-432. photos., plans, refs.
- Sub-imperial palaces: power and authority in Mughal India / Catherine B. Asher. *Ars orientalis* 1993, v.23, p.[281]-302. ill., photos., plans.
- The Mughal garden: gateway to paradise / James Dickie. *Muqarnas* 1985, v.3, p.[130]-137. photos., ill., refs.
- Michell, George. The royal palaces of India, London : Thames and Hudson, c1994.

- The grammar of paradise: on the generation of Mughul gardens / by G. Stiny and W. J. Mitchell. Environment and planning B 1980, v.7, n.2, p.209-226. diagsr., refs.
- Michell, George. Architecture and art of the Deccan sultanates New York : Cambridge University Press, 1999. Series title: New Cambridge history of India I, 7.
- Michell, George. Firuzabad : palace city of the Deccan / London ; New York : Published by Oxford University Press for the Board of the Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Oxford, c1992. Series: Oxford studies in Islamic art ; 8

Palatial Houses

Reading

- Necipoglu 1991 Chapter Eleven "Conclusions: The Topkapi and Other Palatine Traditions" pp 242-25

Other Sources

- Hellier, Chris. Splendors of Istanbul : houses and palaces along the Bosphorus New York : Abbeville Press, c1993.
- Revault, Jacques. Palais et maisons du Caire du XIVe au XVIIIe siecle [Le Caire : Institut francais d'archeologie orientale du Caire], 1975 Memoires publies par les membres de l'Institut francais d'archeologie orientale du Caire ;
- Quigley, Kathleen. Bedouin dreams and Arabian nights: creating the illusion of a tribal tent for a desert palace in Riyadh. Architectural Digest v55, n1 (Jan, 1998):122 (4 pages). Interior designer Charles Larry Horne created a tent for a leading economist in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The structure, which was located under his client's palace, adopted the concept of a traditional bedouin tent set up in an oasis.
- Friend, David. The house of Fahd: the first glimpse inside the private world of the Saudi king. (includes related article on Al-Yamamah Palace) Life v11, n4 (April, 1988):90 (7 pages)
- Necipoglu 1993 Framing the gaze in Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal palaces. (Topkapi Palace, Istanbul; Safavid Palace, Isfahan; The Red Fort, Delhi

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- Babaie, S. (1994). "Shah'Abbas II, the conquest of Qandahar, the Chihil Sutun, and its wall paintings." Muqarnas 11: [125]-142.
- Bacharach, J. (1991). Administrative Complexes, Palaces, and Citadels, Changes in the Loci of Medieval Muslim Rule. The Ottoman city and its parts : urban structure and social order. R. A. A.-E. -. H. Irene A. Bierman, Donald Preziosi. New Rochelle, N.Y, A.D. Caratzas,; 111-28.
- Bargebuhr, F. P., 1904- (1968). The Alhambra: a cycle of studies on the eleventh century in Moorish Spain. Berlin.
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- Blake, S. P. (1999). *Half the world : the social architecture of Safavid Isfahan, 1590-1722*. Costa Mesa, Calif., Mazda Pub.
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- Ettinghausen, R. and O. Grabar (1987). *The Art and Architecture of Islam, 650-1250*. New Haven, Yale U Press.
- Foucault, M. (1984). *Space, Knowledge and Power. The Foucault Reader*. P. Rabinow. Harmondsworth, Penguin.
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- Koch, E. (1997). "Mughal palace gardens from Babur to Shah Jahan (1526-1648)." *Muqarnas* 14: [143]-165.
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- Moynahan, E. B. (1988). "The Lotus Garden Palace of Zahir al-Din Muhammad Babur ISBN 90 04 08647 1." *Muqarnas* 5: 135-152.
- Necipoglu, G. (1991). *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power, The Topkapi Palace in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* ISBN 0-262-14050-0. Cambridge, MA, MIT Press.
- Necipoglu, G. (1993). "Framing the gaze in Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal palaces. (Topkapi Palace, Istanbul; Safavid Palace, Isfahan; The Red Fort, Delhi)." *Ars Orientalis* 23 ('93): 303-42.
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- O'Kane, B. (1993). "From Tents to Pavilions: Royal Mobility and Persian Palace Design." *Ars Orientalis* 23 ('93): 249-268.
- Preziosi, D. (1991). *Introduction: Power, Structure, and Architectural Function. The Ottoman City and Its Parts : Urban Structure and Social Order, (Subsidia Balcanica, Islamica Et Turcica, 3). I. A. Bierman, R. A. Abou-El-Haj and D. Preziosi. New York, Aristide D. Caratzas.*
- Rabbat, N. (1993). "Mamluk Throne Halls: Qubba or Iwan?" *Ars Orientalis* 23 ('93): 201-218.
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- Ruggles, D. F. (1993). "Arabic Poetry and Architectural Memory in al-Andalus." *Ars Orientalis* 23 ('93): 171-80.
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- Steinhardt, N. S. (1990.). *Chinese imperial city planning.* Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press.
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- Zilfi, M. C. (1993). "A medrese for the palace: Ottoman dynastic legitimation in the eighteenth century." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 113 (n2 (April-June, 1993):184). This seminar explores the architectural spaces, motifs and practices that are associated with rulers, or the expression of power in Islam. We will begin with the desert palaces of the Umayyads, and include the great palaces of Andalusia. and then discuss the courts of Baghdad and Samarra, the tent palaces of the Timurids, the royal palace city of the Fatimids and the built wonders of the Safavids, Ottomans and Mughals. Students will be encouraged to investigate the ways in which systems of royal identity are made visual, or visualized in text, and how these operate within and relate to specific cultural settings as well as to contemporary ideas of an Islamic system of power.