

## **Islamic Gardens & Architecture**

Professor D. Fairchild Ruggles (dfr1@uiuc.edu)  
Department of Landscape Architecture  
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

From the 7<sup>th</sup> century to the present, the Islamic world extended at various times from Spain, across northern Africa, the Middle East and Balkans, to Central and South Asia and Indonesia. The built environment is characterized by architecture centered on large open courtyards, often gardened, and a sophisticated system for organizing, irrigating, and cultivating the landscape. The themes for the course, which is both topical and historical, include the greening and settlement of the desert, the formation of an Islamic culture, the agricultural landscape, gardens of myth and memory, architectural and garden typology and symbolism, and architecture and landscape as a theater for political display.

### *Side Notes:*

*This course is based on one semester with two weekly lectures of 1.15 hours each, with one or two films shown when professor is attending conferences off campus.*

*It is designed for undergraduates with no prior knowledge of architecture or landscape history. The course introduces the built environment of both architecture and landscape.*

1. Before Islam: Persian, Roman, and Byzantine precedents. The Arabian Peninsula and the birth of Islam: pilgrimage to Mecca, religion and ritual

#### Reading:

- Hoag, Islamic Architecture, CH 1 “Beginnings of Islamic Architecture.”
- Ruggles, “Introduction,” in Islamic Gardens and Landscape (University of Pennsylvania Press, in press).

2. The first mosques; Jerusalem and the claiming of a place; palaces and display

- Hoag, Islamic Architecture, CH 2 “Umayyad Architecture.”
- Oleg Grabar, “The Umayyad Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem,” Ars Orientalis, 3 (1959).

3. The Formative Period (650-750) and the greening of the desert: desert agricultural estates and palaces in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon

- Ruggles, Ch 2 “Making the Desert Bloom,” in Islamic Gardens and Landscape.

4. Gardens of the imagination. "1001 Nights," the Automata and gilded palm trees; the Qur'an's description of paradise

- Ruggles, Ch 7 “Imaginary Gardens,” in Islamic Gardens and Landscape.
- Site List (in Ruggles): Al-Rusafa, Qasr al-Hayr East, Khirbat al-Mafjar

5. Baghdad and Samarra (750-ca. 900) and the planned city
  - Hoag, CH 3 “Abbasid Architecture” (thru Balkuwara Palace)
  - Site List (in Ruggles): Dar al-Khilafa, Balkuwara Palace
  
6. The Far West (750-1010). Cordoba and the splintering of the Caliphate; Madinat al-Zahra
  - Hoag, CH 5 “Early Islamic Architecture of Spain.”
  - Site List (in Ruggles): Great Mosque of Cordoba, Madinat al-Zahra.
  - Ruggles, “The Mirador in Abbasid and Hispano-Umayyad Garden Typology,” Muqarnas, 7 (1990).
  
7. North Africa: Fatimids and Ayyubids
  - Hoag, CH 8 “Classic Islamic Architecture of Egypt”; CH 9 “Later Classic Islamic Architecture of Egypt,” (thru Madrasa of Sultan Salih, and conclusion).
  - Doris Behrens-Abouseif, “The Facade of the Aqmar Mosque in the Context of Fatimid Ceremonial,” Muqarnas, 9 (1992).
  - Site List (Ruggles): Fustat.
  
8. The Seljuks of Iran and small dynasties of Central Asia; early book illustration and images of gardens and pavilions; hunting parks
  - Hoag, CH 10 “Early Islamic Architecture of Persia: Samanids and Ghaznavids”; CH 11 “Classic Islamic Architecture of Persia: The Seljuks.”
  - Site List (Ruggles): Tomb of Sultan Sanjar, Lashkari Bazar, Hasbahçe (Alanya)
  
9. Syria, Iraq, Anatolia
  - Hoag, CH 13 “Classic Islamic Architecture of Anatolia.”
  
10. Mamluk mosque-mausoleum complexes of Cairo
  - Hoag, CH 9 “Later Classic Islamic Architecture of Egypt” (pp. 80-82).
  
11. Cairo (continued)
  
12. Granada and the palaces of the Alhambra (13th-14th centuries); nostalgia, ornament, and the framed view
  - Hoag, CH 7 “Later Classic Islamic Architecture of North Africa and Spain.”
  - Dickie, James. “The Palaces of the Alhambra” in Jerrilynn Dodds, ed., Al-Andalus (New York, 1992).
  
13. Spain and Morocco
  - Lisa Golombek, “The Draped Universe of Islam,” in Priscilla Soucek, ed., Content and Context of Visual Arts in the Islamic World (1988).
  
14. Timurids of Herat, Kabul, Samarkand, Bukhara; tents as architecture
  - Hoag, CH 14 “Later Classic Islamic Architecture of Persia: Ilkhanids and Timurids.”
  - Site List (Ruggles): Shrine of Abdallah Ansari.

15. Timurids and patronage by women
  - Roya Marefat, “Timurid Women: Patronage and Power,” Asian Art (spring 1993).
16. Early Ottoman mosques and tombs
  - Hoag, CH 16 “Architecture of the Ottoman Empire.”
17. From Constantinople to Istanbul: the appropriation of urban space
  - Gülru Necipoglu, “The Süleymaniye Complex in Istanbul,” Muqarnas, 3 (1985).
  - Site List (Ruggles): Süleymaniye Cemetery.
18. The Topkapi Palace in Istanbul; harem quarters, gardens, kiosks, views
  - Site List (Ruggles): Topkapı Saray.
  - Nurhan Atasoy, Ch 2 “The Features of Ottoman Gardens,” in A Garden for the Sultan (2002).
19. Safavid Iran and Isfahan: a garden city
  - Hoag, CH 17 “Architecture of the Safavid Empire.”
  - Site List (Ruggles): Chahar Bagh Avenue, Chihil Situn, Shah-Gul Garden.
20. Isfahan (continued)
21. Later Safavid and Qajar country estates
  - M. Khansari, M. R. Moghtader, and M. Yavari, The Persian Garden (2004), “The Safavids.”
  - Site List (Ruggles): Bagh-i Fin, Bagh-i Takht, Shah-Gul Garden.
22. The Mughal Empire: The age of Akbar
  - Hoag, CH 18 “Architecture of the Moghul Empire.”
  - James Wescoat, “Picturing an Early Mughal Garden,” Asian Art 2 (1989).
  - Ruggles, “Humayun's Tomb and Garden: Typologies and Visual Order,” in Gardens in the Time of the Great Muslim Empires, ed. Attilio Petruccioli (1997).
  - Site List (Ruggles): Bagh-i Nilufar (Dholpur), Fatehpur-Sikri, Red Fort at Agra, Lahore Fort, Red Fort at Delhi.
23. Mughal tomb and palace gardens
  - Ruggles, Ch 9 “Here and Hereafter,” in Islamic Gardens and Landscape.
  - Site List (Ruggles): Bagh-i Babur (Kabul), Humayun’s Tomb, Tomb of Akbar, Tomb of Itmad al-Daula, and Tombs of Jahangir, Asaf Khan, and Nur Jahan.
24. The landscape of Kashmir
  - Ruggles, Ch 10 “A Garden in Landscape, in Islamic Gardens and Landscape.
  - Site List (Ruggles): Shalamar Bagh (Srinagar), Nishat Bagh, Achabal Bagh, Shalamar Bagh (Lahore).

25. The Taj Mahal and its successors

- Elizabeth Moynihan, “Reflections of Paradise,” in Moynihan, ed., The Moonlight Garden: New Discoveries at the Taj Mahal (2000).
- Site List (Ruggles): Taj Mahal, Mahtab Bagh, Tomb of Safdar Jang.

26. Conclusion and exam review

Required texts:

John Hoag, Islamic Architecture, Phaidon, 2004.

D. Fairchild Ruggles, Islamic Gardens and Landscape, University of Pennsylvania Press, in press (available for my students as a photocopied reader).