MUGHAL IMPERIAL ARCHITECTURE (1526-1858 A.D.)
AND ITS LINKS TO CENTRAL ASIA, IRAN AND THE WEST

From the 16th to the 18th centuries India was synonymous with the "Empire of the Great Moghul". The Mughal dynasty, so called, because descendants of Chingiz Khan and Tamerlane (Timur), ruled from 1526 to 1858 over the larger part of South Asia and represented with the Safavids in Iran and the Ottomans in Asia Minor, the Balkans and the Near East, one of the three Muslim superpowers of the modern period. As a new dynasty which felt a strong need to assert its status and as an elitarian minority ruling over a vast territory of peoples of different creeds and cultures the Mughals grounded their claim to universal rule in a multi-cultural perspective. They were highly aware of the potential of architecture as a means of self representation. To express their 'multiple identity' architecturally, they drew from many divers supra regional and regional traditions which they synthesised and 'imperialised' so successfully that they created with the Taj Mahal the universally most widely accepted building.
This course provides a view of key themes of Mughal architecture within a loose chronological framework. Buildings, architectural complexes and also formal gardens are studied through a range of methodologies: architectural surveying, formal analysis and comparison, and an examination in light of their cultural, political and socio-economic context. Themes include patronage (which involves also issue of gender), the question of the architects, landownership of the nobility, urban planning and the relationship between form, function and symbolic meaning. Mughal court culture is addressed as well as the artistic interactions with other Islamic courts and Europe.

COURSE WEBSITE

http://webdocs.registrar.fas.harvard.edu/courses/HistoryofArtandArchitecture.html
Click on course link highlighted in blue

READINGS

All required readings from books (in italics) are on reserve at the Fine Arts Library. Articles are arranged in a binder by the author’s last name. Ask for the binder at Fine Arts Library circulation desk.

REQUIREMENTS

Attendance at lectures and the completion of readings before the class meeting for which they are assigned. There will be a midterm examination (20% of final grade) and a final examination (35% of final grade) based on the readings, lectures, and a
selection of slides from the lectures. Three written assignments, with the due dates listed below, comprise: 1. an analysis of a Mughal building or a work of art (Company drawing of a Mughal monument) in the Sackler Museum, Harvard University Art Museums; and 2. and 3., short papers that respond to specific thematic and/or methodological questions framed through selected readings (each paper should be no more than 5 pp. max. and carries 15% each of the final grade).

LECTURES AND READINGS

September 15 Introduction: "Why are the Mughals so Important for the Study of Islamic Architecture?"

DRAMMATIS PERSONAE

September 17 THE MUGHAL DYNASTY (1526-1858)

READINGS:

September 22 PATRONS AND ARCHITECTS

READINGS
**SOURCES AND RESEARCH**

September 24  SOURCES AND RESEARCH

**READINGS**

**THE MUGHAL GARDEN**

September 29  BABUR AND THE MUGHAL GARDEN

**READINGS:**
W. M. Thackston, *The Baburnama*, pp. 359-60,
J. L. Wescoat, "Picturing and Early Mughal Garden";
Ebba Koch, "The Mughal Waterfront Garden".

October 1  PALACE GARDENS

**READINGS:**
Ebba Koch, "Mughal Palace Gardens".

October 6  MUGHAL APPROACHES TO LANDSCAPE AND NATURE

**READINGS:**
Ebba Koch "My Garden is Hindustan"; Maria Subtelny, *Le Monde est un Jardin*, pp. 103-06. C. B. Asher, "Babur and the Timurid Char Bagh".

**THE MUGHAL CITY**

October 8  AGRA – A RIVERFRONT GARDEN CITY

**READINGS:**

*First paper due in class*
October 13  Holiday

October 15  No class meeting

October 20  DELHI AND THE RITUAL OF IMPERIAL VISITS

Readings:
Ebba Koch, "The Delhi of the Mughals prior to Shahjahanabad".

THE MUGHAL MAUSOLEUM

October 22  HUMAYUN'S TOMB AND THE EIGHT PARADISES

Readings:

October 27  JAHANGIR AND THE "BUILT TOMB CONTROVERSY"

Readings:

October 29  MIDTERM EXAMINATION

November 3  THE TAJ Mahal : ARCHITECTURAL PRINCIPLES

Readings:
MOSQUE AND MADRASA

November 5  MOSQUE AND MADRASA

READINGS:  
Ebba Koch, "The Madrasa of Ghaziu'd-Din Khan at Delhi".

November 10  PRINCESS JAHANARA'S DUAL PATRONAGE: JAMI’MASJID VERSUS SUFI MOSQUE

presented with Afshan Bokhari

READINGS:  

THE MUGHAL PALACE

November 12  THE GREAT AKBARI SYNTHESIS: FATEHPUR SIKRI

READINGS:  
Ebba Koch, "The Intellectual and Artistic Climate at Akbar's Court"; browse E. W Smith, *The Moghul Architecture of Fatehpur- Sikri*.

November 17  PALACES AND CEREMONIES

READINGS:  
*Second paper due in class*
ARCHITECTURE AND ALLEGORY

November 19  MOSQUE AND AUDIENCE HALL
READINGs:
Ebba Koch, "Diwan-i `Amm and Chihil Sutun"; Jean Sauvaget, "The Mosque and the Palace".

November 24  THE SOLOMONIC VAULTS OF JAHANGIR
READINGs:
Ebba Koch, "Jahangir and the Angels"; Priscilla Soucek, "Solomon's Throne/Solomon's Bath".

November 26  THE NEW ORGANIC STYLE AND THE BALUSTER COLUMN
READINGs:
Ebba Koch, "The Baluster Column".

Monday 1 December  Thanksgiving Break

December 3  SHAH JAHAN'S SOLOMONIC THRONE AT DELHI
READINGs:
Ebba Koch, Shah Jahan and Orpheus.

LATER MUGHAL ARCHITECTURE AND ITS RECEPTION

December 8  THE DISCOVERY BY THE WEST: EARLY VIEWS AND PHOTOGRAPHS
READINGs:
December 10

LATER MUGHAL ARCHITECTURE, AND THE RECEPTION TO THE PRESENT DAY

READINGS:
Ebba Koch, *Mughal Architecture*, pp. 125-33;
Thomas Metcalfe, *An Imperial Vision*, pp. 66-77
Patrick Conner, *Oriental Architecture in the West*, chaps. 9, 10, p. 179; Raymond Head, *The Indian Style*, pp. 101-110;

**Third paper due in class**
BIBLIOGRAPHY


— Company Paintings: Indian paintings of the British Period (London and Ahmedabad, 1992)


Bokhari, A. ”The `Light' of the Timuria: Jahan Ara Begum's Patronage, Piety, and Poetry in 17th Century Mughal India”, *Marg* 2008 (forthcoming, typescript available)


Brand, M. and G. D. Lowry eds, *Fatehpur Sikri*, Selected papers from the International Symposium on Fatehpur-Sikri held on October 17-19, at Harvard University, Cambridge MA and Sponsored by the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the Department of Fine Arts at Harvard University ( Bombay1987)


Conner, P. *Oriental Architecture in the West* (London1979)

Fergusson, J. *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, 1876; revised and edited with additions by James Burgess and R. Phene Spiers, 1910; reprinted London and (New Delhi 1972)


Head, R. *The Indian Style* (London 1986)


— "Mughal Palace Gardens from Babur to Shah Jahan (1526–1648)",
— *Mughal Art and Imperial Ideology: Collected Studies* (New Delhi 2001)
  *Muqarnas* 23 (2005): 128–49
— "The Madrasa of Ghaziuddin Khan at Delhi", in *The Delhi College*, edited by M. Pernau (New Delhi 2006), pp. 35-58

Nath, R. "Plan of Akbar’s Tomb at Sikandra (Agra) and a Proposed Dome over it", in *Some Aspects of Mughal Architecture* (New Delhi 1976), pp. 86–91
Koch, Mughal Architecture


— The Taj Mahal and its Incarnation (Jaipur 1985)

Necipoglu, Gülru, “Framing the Gaze in Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Palaces”, in Pre-Modern Islamic Palaces, edited by Gülru Necipoglu, Ars Orientalis, 23 (1993), pp. 303-342


Petruccioli, A. Fatehpur Sikri: La capitale dell'impero Moghul – la meraviglia d'akbar (Milan 2007)


Rizvi, S. A., and V. J. A. Flynn, Fatehpur Sikri (Bombay1975)


— Akbar’s Tomb, Sikandarah near Agra, Described and Illustrated, ASINIS 35, (Allahabad 1909)

