Class Schedule: MW 2-3:30, in Room 3-133
Instructor: Nasser Rabbat, nasser@mit.edu, x3-1417
TA: Anneka Lenssen, <annekalenssen@gmail.com>
Units: 3-0-9, HASS-D.
Class Requirements: 4 short papers (6-7 pp., 15% of the final grade each) and a final open-book exam (30% of the final grade), and 10% of the final grade for attendance and participation in discussion.
Course Website: URL: http://web.mit.edu/4.614/www/ also Open Course Ware website
Stellar Website: http://stellar.mit.edu/S/course/4/fa08/4.614/
The Writing and Communication Center (12-132) offers you free professional advice from published writers about oral presentations and about all types of academic, creative, and professional writing. Go to http://web.mit.edu/writing and click on the yellow sunburst. If you cannot find an open appointment slot, do not despair. There are always cancellations on the day of the appointment. Click on the Wait List (the blue strip that says “Is the time that you want already reserved?”). Whenever a cancellation occurs on that day, you will be automatically notified by email. Because several people might receive that same message, go online ASAP to schedule that open spot. If you can’t find an appointment, you may come by the Center and sign up to be a drop-in client and/or you may try the Online Tutor at http://web.mit.edu/writing/Center/onlinetutor.html. The Center’s hours are Monday-Thursday, 9:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.; Friday 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.; and Sundays, 5:00-9:00 p.m. –check the online scheduler for up-to-date hours.

DESCRIPTION

This course introduces the history of Islamic cultures through architecture. Religious, commemorative, and educational structures are surveyed from the beginning of Islam in 7th-century Arabia up to the present. The survey is chronological with emphasis on influential patrons, thinkers, and designers. Major examples of mosques, madrasas, mausolea, etc. are analyzed and their architectural, urban, and stylistic characteristics are examined in conjunction with their historical, political, and intellectual settings.

Students are encouraged to raise questions and generate debates in lectures as well as the discussion sessions. The aim is to explore all possible venues of interpretation to better locate Islamic religious architecture within its regional, pan-Islamic, and universal contexts.

REQUIRED TEXTS:
4.614 Religious Architecture and Islamic Cultures (HASS-D)
Instructor: Nasser Rabbat

RECOMMENDED TEXTS:

SYLLABUS:

PART 1: BEGINNINGS
1: W Sep 3: Images of world religious architecture from Stonehenge to Mecca.
2: M Sep 8: Origins and influences of pre-Islamic traditions
Mecca on the Eve of Islam: The Ka'ba and its pre-Islamic role
   Reading:
3: W Sep 10: The Life and message of the Prophet Muhammad
The Mosque of the Prophet in Madina and other early mosques
   Reading:
   Ibn Batuta, Travels, vol. 1, chapter 3, pp. 163-75; chapter 4, pp. 188-208.
   Allan and Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture, 3-10, 15-17.
4: M Sep 15: The conquests and the mosques of Amsar
Adaptation of ancient motifs as assertive elements of a new faith.
First Paper Assignment.
   Reading:

PART 2: PAX ISLAMICA
5: W Sep 17: First Caliphal Expressions:
The First Islamic monument: the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem:
Competing ideologies, myths, and world views.
Umayyad Mosques (715-50): Islamization of the empire and Arabization of the state.
   Reading:
   Allan and Creswell, 19-88.
Hillenbrand. Chapter 1.

**M September 22: Student Holiday**

**6: W Sep 24:** The Splendors of the Abbasids at Baghdad and Samarra.
An Islamic architectural language: Monumentalizing the hypostyle type.

**Reading:**
- Ettinghausen and Grabar, 28-33
- Allan and Creswell, 359-76.
- Hoag. Chapter 3.

**7: M Sep 29:** Iran and Central Asia: the Eastern frontier.
The survival and revival of pre-Islamic modes of construction and expression.
The introduction of the mausoleum.

**Reading:**
- Allan and Creswell, 264-69, 345-51.
- Ettinghausen and Grabar, 105-15.

**8: W Oct 1:** Monuments of the West: Ifriqiya and Spain.
Imperial versus provincial expressions of power.

**First Paper Due**

**Second Paper Assignment:**

**Reading:**
- Hoag. Chapters 4 & 5.

**9: M Oct 6:** Fatimid Cairo: New traditions and old forms.
Mujamas: decorative purposes and symbolic meanings.

**Reading:**
- Ettinghausen and Grabar, 187-200.
- Hillenbrand. Chapter 3.

**8: W Oct 8: Discussion:** The vocabulary of religious architecture
The interplay of setting and rituals of worship in the definition of religious spaces.

**Short Film:** *Mosque* (20 mins)

**Reading:**
4.614 Religious Architecture and Islamic Cultures (HASS-D)
Instructor: Nasser Rabbat


M Oct 13: Colombus Day Holiday

PART 3: FRAGMENTATION AND STRIVING FOR UNITY:

   **Reading:**
   Ettinghausen and Grabar, 139-45.
   Mohammad al-Asad, "Applications of Geometry," in Frishman and Khan *The mosque*, 55-75
   Hillenbrand. Chapter 4.

   Second Paper Due:
   **Third Paper Assignment:**
   **Reading:**
   Ettinghausen and Grabar, 215-43.
   Hillenbrand. Chapter 5.

   **Reading:**
   Blair and Bloom, 70-84
   Ibn Batuta, *Travels*, vol. 1, chapter 1, pp. 41-60 (Cairo).

   **Reading:**
   Ettinghausen and Grabar, 145-52.
   Blair and Bloom, 5-15.
   Hillenbrand. Chapter 8.
   Hoag. Chapter 14: Ilkhanids and Timurids.

14: W Oct 29: Religious Architecture of India under the Sultanates:
   **Reading:**
   Blair and Bloom, 149-60.

**15: M Nov 3:** Timurid Architecture: A Tradition of Monumentality.

**Reading:**
Blair and Bloom, 37-50 and 199-207.

**16: W Nov 5:** Anatolia: The Islamization of the northern frontiers.
From the Rum Seljuks to the Early Ottomans.

**Reading:**
Ettinghausen and Grabar, 297-303, 313-27.
Blair and Bloom, 132-46.

**PART 4: IMPERIAL MONUMENTALITY:**

**Monday Nov 10:** Veteran Day Holiday

**17: W Nov 12:** Cairo: The Capital of Islam.
Burji Mamluk Religious Architecture

**Third Paper Due**

**Fourth Paper Assignment.**

**Reading:**
Blair and Bloom, 70-93.

**18: M Nov 17:** Imperial Ottoman mosques and *kulliyes*:

**Reading:**
Hoag. Chapter 16: The Architecture of the Ottoman Empire.
Blair and Bloom, 213-30.
Hillenbrand. Chapter 10.

**19: W Nov 19:** Mosques and Mausolea of the Great Mughals of India.

**Reading:**
4.614 Religious Architecture and Islamic Cultures (HASS-D)
Instructor: Nasser Rabbat

Blair and Bloom, 267-86.

20: M Nov 24: Imperial Safavid Mosques and Madrasas of Isfahan.
Short film, *Isfahan*.
Reading:
Hoag. Chapter 17: The Architecture of the Safavid Empire.
Blair and Bloom, 183-92.
Hillenbrand. Chapter 9.

21: W Nov 26: Discussion: Religion and the City
Reading:

Nov 27-28: Thanksgiving Holiday

PART 5: MODERNITIES AND REVIVALS:

22: M Dec 1: Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Mosques in Major Capitals:
Fourth Paper Due.
Reading:
Hourani, "The Age of European Empires," 263-78.

23: W Dec 3: Historicism in Contemporary Religious Architecture:
Reading:

24: M Dec 8: Discussion: Contemporary mosques and their messages
Reading:

25: W Dec 10: (Last Day of Class) The building of mosques in the West
Reading:

Final Exam: to be scheduled.