ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE
INTRODUCTION

- Islamic architecture can be defined as a building tradition of Muslim populations of the Middle East and any countries where Islam has been dominant from the 7th century onwards.
- Islamic architecture encompasses a wide range of both secular and religious styles from the foundation of Islam to the present day.
- The principal Islamic architectural types are:
  - the Mosque
  - the Tomb
  - the Palace and
  - the Fort
| **DATE FOUNDED** | A.D. 622 |
| **PLACE FOUNDED** | MECCA, SAUDI ARABIA |
| **FOUNDER** | MOHAMMED (BORN C.570), A TRADE MERCHANT FROM ARABIA |
| **ADHERENTS** | 1.3 BILLION |
| **SIZE RANK** | SECOND LARGEST IN THE WORLD |
| **MAIN LOCATION** | MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA |
| **SACRED TEXT** | QUR'AN (KORAN) |
SPREAD OF ISLAM

- In Mecca
- In 632 A.D.

Islam is founded by Mohammed

Mohammed died and Islam spreaded

- To Palestine, Egypt, Persia
- Sunnis and Shi’s developed

Islam expanded to Africa and Europe

- To North and West Africa
- To Corodoba and Granada in Spain and also to Sicily
ELEMENTS

Islamic architecture may be identified with the following design elements, which were inherited from the first mosque built byr hall (originally a feature of the Masjid al-Nabawi):

- Minarets or towers
- A four-iwan plan
- Mihrab
- Arches
- Courtyards(sahn)
- Prayer area hall
- Domes and cupolas
ELEMENTS

- Central fountains used for ablutions (once used as a wudu area for Muslims).
- The use of Islamic geometric patterns and foliage based arabesques.
- The use of decorative Islamic calligraphy instead of pictures which were haram (forbidden) in mosque architecture. Note that in secular architecture, human and animal representation was indeed present.

Note: In hot Islamic climates, the water from courtyard pools and fountains cools as it decorates. Water can not only reflect architecture and multiply the decorative themes, it can also serve as a means of emphasizing the visual axes.
MINARETS

- Minarets or towers these were originally used as torch-lit watchtowers, as seen in the Great Mosque of Damascus; hence the derivation of the word from the Arabic *nur*, meaning "light".

- Different types of minarets are as follows:
  1. Iraq
  2. Morocco
  3. Turkey
  4. India
  5. Egypt
  6. Asia
Four Iwan Plan

- The 11th century shows the emergence of new form: the four-iwan mosque.
- An iwan is a vaulted space that opens on one side to a courtyard.
- The iwan developed in pre-Islamic Iran where it was used in monumental and imperial architecture.
- Strongly associated with Persian architecture, the iwan continued to be used in monumental architecture in the Islamic era.
Mihrab

Mihrab or prayer niche on an inside wall indicating the direction to Mecca.

The drawings alongside gives us an idea about the plan, elevation and sections of a typical Mihrab in Islamic Architecture.
**Arches**

- Arches are the structure that spans a space while supporting weight.
- The most important form of opening was the pointed arch which were principally two and four centered.

Diagram showing an example of a two-centred arch.

Diagram showing a four-centred arch.
Courtyards (sahn)

- Is a fundamental feature and can be seen as different variations.
- According to their function the courtyards were cloistered and arcaded and the sides were punctuated with gateways, prayer chambers or arched porches (iwans).
Prayer area halls

Prayer area hall: main area to perform congregational pray
Domes were widely used throughout the Islamic world; Persia, Mughal and Egypt domes tended to be pointed in contrast to the hemi-spherical Turkish version.
Materials

• The countries into which Islam first expanded were already rich in building tradition and the important techniques of exploitation of natural resources for building works and trade in building materials had long been established.

• Brick making and walling was almost universal in the alluvial plains; MARBLE was generically available as an article of trade.

• Building to the stone occur in variety.

• There was a long tradition of CERAMIC production, use of GYPSUM PLASTER, GLASS manufacture and the various forms of METALWORKS for building.
Islamic tradition attributes the beginning of Mecca to Ishmael's descendants.
Medina

• The great mosque of prophet Muhammad.
• It is rebuilt in stone with a colonnade on the kiblawall.
• It consists of prophet’s tomb.
Kaaba

- Built in 16th century, it consists of an arcade slightly oblong in plan.
Materials Used For Construction

- bricked structure with granite cladding,
- white marble base,
- meteorite black stone
ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE IN PALESTINE, EGYPT AND PERSIA (IRAN)
PALESTINE

• Palestine was conquered by the Islamic Empire, beginning in 634 CE.
• The Dome of the Rock, completed in 691, was the world's first great work of Islamic architecture.
Cross section through dome of the rock, Jerusalem
Umayyad Palaces

Umayyad palaces represent early Islamic architecture. They are spread throughout the greater Levantine countryside in what today extends into Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine. They were primarily rural settlements that often incorporated a bathhouse, residential areas, a mosque, an irrigation system that could sustain agricultural activities and sometimes other facilities such as a khan. It is speculated that they were not used as permanent shelters, perhaps functioning as stations on a caravan route, or as administrative outposts.
EGYPT

The fatimid conquerors from tunisia laid this city described as the “gate of islam”.

Cairo is also known as the city of thousand minarets.

The mosque of al-azhar is the first marvelous building of the fatimid dynasty of egypt. An exquisite madrasa is attached to it, which is one of the world’s oldest universities.
ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE IN PERSIA

Mosque at kufa

• **Masjid-al-Azam** located in Kūfa, Iraq, is one of the earliest mosques in the world. The mosque, built in the 7th century, contains the remains of Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl - first cousin of Husayn ibn ‘Alī, his companion Hānī ibn ‘Urwa, and the revolutionary Mukhtār al-Thaqafi.

• The mosque contains nine sanctuaries and four traditional locations. It has four minarets and is served by five gates.
Cordoba: the great mosque at Cordoba

- In planning the mosque, the architects incorporated a number of Roman columns with choice capitals.
- Some of the columns were already in the Gothic structure; others were sent from various regions of Iberia as presents from the governors of provinces. Ivory, jasper, porphyry, gold, silver, copper, and brass were used in the decorations. Marvelous mosaics and azulejos were designed.
ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE IN TURKEY

Mosque of Rustem Pasha, Istanbul

The Rüstem Pasha Mosque was designed by Ottoman imperial architect Mimar Sinan for the grand vizier Rüstem Pasha.

Rüstem Pasha died in July 1561 and the mosque was built after his death from around 1561 until 1563. The mosque complex hosts now a religious school.
Grand Mosque, Bursa

Ordered by Sultan Bayezid I, the mosque was designed and built by architect Ali Neccar in 1396–1399. It is a large rectangular building, with twenty domes arranged in four rows of five that are supported by twelve columns.

The mosque has two minarets.
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