Orientalism At Shangri La

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Introduction

Doris Duke’s estate, Shangri la is the relatively unknown former residence of one of the world’s wealthiest women. When she died in 1993, her will established that the home would become a museum for the study of Middle Eastern art and culture. Over the years, Duke had filled the property with art and artifacts from the Middle East and Islamic world, and now those art and artifacts are shared with the world.

Doris Duke grew up in a time when the US was permeated with Orientalism. The Orient (as it was called), including both Asia and the Middle East was portrayed as backward, primitive, degenerate, dangerous and exotic, sensual, feminine, essentially the polar opposite of the clean, modern, masculine West, and US in particular. From the beginning of the Spanish American War, less than 15 years before her birth, to the end of the First World War when she was a child, to the Second World War, when she was a young divorcee the US steadily
expanded its reach in the world. Through direct involvement, and favorable relations with other nations directly involved in the region, such as Britain, the US gained a position of power in relation to the Middle East. Doris Duke benefited from that power in her collecting, and in her construction of Shangri La.

Duke occupied a unique position in American society, especially during her marriage to politically prominent James Cromwell. Her financial resources combined with his political connections and ambitions ensured them the ability to receive concessions from the territorial (colonial) government of Hawai‘i and allowed her to collect from places that were outside the realm of the average collector of the time.

Not only this but also her construction of Shangri La as a home of escape, especially in the construction and use of the Playhouse was in keeping with popular Orientalism of the time and the association of the East with fantasy and escape from the everyday. Finally, her collecting activities, mainly in her acquisition of objects through dealers in art and antiquities, but also in her abilities to travel to Eastern countries benefited from an Orientalist interpretation of the world’s cultural patrimony, and the colonial activities that were justified by Orientalist thinking. It was Orientalism, for the most part, that allowed for the construction and decoration of the estate, and Orientalism that now allows for its place as a site for the dissemination of information about the Islamic world. This background is important to the way in which
Shangri La is interpreted today, and is critical when considering what message visitors might take away from the museum that the estate is today.

Shangri La was the Hawai`i estate of Doris Duke, and is still home to her extensive collection of Islamic art. It was built as both a retreat for Duke from her everyday life, and as a showcase for her art collection. Duke was the only child of tobacco tycoon James Buchanan Duke, and sole heir to his fortune. Upon her father’s death in 1925, she inherited the bulk of his estate.

She married socially and politically prominent, if financially insolvent James Cromwell in 1935, and the two departed on an around the world honeymoon scheduled for ten months. The pair traveled extensively in the East and Duke became enamored with Islamic Art and Culture. The couple’s visit to the Taj Mahal inspired the commission of a Mughal bedroom and bathroom suite made of marble inlaid with precious stone from a British architectural firm in India. This suite was planned to be installed in the newlywed Cromwells’ home in Florida -- until the pair arrived in Hawai`i.

The visit, scheduled for only a few weeks was extended to a few months, during which time Duke made a number of local friends. Upon their return to the East Coast, the new Mr. and Mrs. Cromwell used the network of their new friends in Hawai`i to arrange to purchase a property south of Diamond Head on O`ahu in an area called Ka`alawai, where
Duke had enjoyed much of her stay in the islands. Rather than install the bedroom and bath suite in an existing home in Florida, a new home would be built around the suite on Mrs. Cromwell’s new property in Hawai`i.

The design of the house was to be in keeping with both the climate of Hawai`i and in a style which would complement her bedroom and
bathroom suite. Her architect was Marion Sims Wyeth, a designer for many wealthy clients in Florida. Duke also consulted with renowned expert on Persian art and architecture Arthur Upham Pope on the design and significance of her undertaking in building this Islamic style home. The resulting building has been described many ways, including by Duke as “Hispano-Moorish” as well as by architectural historians as Modern.

Doris Duke’s consultation of A.U. Pope was telling of her interest in learning more about Islamic art, architecture and culture, and it raises the question of whether she had an interest in or much knowledge of the subject before her honeymoon voyage. Whatever her early exposure to Islamic culture and arts, Doris Duke pursued her collection of Islamic artifacts passionately, and Shangri La is the expression of her interest in the subject. She continued to collect and modify the estate until her death in 1993. Few rooms in the house escaped renovation over the years, as Duke came across elements and entire rooms that she felt would be important additions to her collection. Interestingly, much of her collecting was done so quietly and with such secrecy that most experts on collectors of Islamic art were unaware of her extensive collection until after her death. Therefore, there has been little opportunity to study the estate, and situate it amongst other collections and creative efforts that have been influenced by the Islamic world. Doris Duke’s will stipulated that Shangri La be opened for the public and scholars alike to visit and further their understanding of Islamic art and
Shangri La was opened to the public in 2002, after a nearly decade long process to accomplish three things. These were: setting up the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art to oversee the operations of the estate; bringing the estate to a condition allowing for non-residential use; and forming a partnership with the Honolulu Academy of Arts.

Shangri La is now an important site for the public to gain exposure to Islamic art and architecture as well as for scholars in the field to further their studies. If Doris Duke’s vision is the model from which many people are going to learn about the Islamic world, it is important to investigate what message they will receive by seeing Islamic art and culture through Doris Duke’s filter. Will they get an accurate picture of the variety of Islamic cultures, or will they see an Orientalist construction of a single monolithic Islam? Doris Duke’s Shangri La has not been studied enough to determine its relationship with Orientalism. Sharon Littlefield, former curator at Shangri La has suggested that it might fit more neatly into a definition of Occidentalism, as Doris Duke collected a substantial number of pieces produced in the West for purchase by consumers in the East. Not enough study has been done to determine its place in Orientalism, Occidentalism, or perhaps neither at all. Shangri La was an expression of Doris Duke’s interest in and affinity for the Islamic world, but it may also be considered a manifestation of American Orientalism typical of the time in which she was raised.
These inquiries are significant for two reasons. First, there has been minimal examination of Islamic influenced architecture in the United States. In researching library holdings and journals, the focus of Orientalism studies relating to Islamic inspired creative work has been in art rather than architecture, or on Orientalism implicit in architects of colonial powers designing for colonized cities.1 Neither of these avenues explores the historic influence of Islamic forms on American architecture, and the question of how Orientalism may be present in this appropriation of the Oriental Other’s cultural forms. Is Orientalism at the root of these exotic forms of architecture, or might they simply be the cross-cultural respect of one artist for another? Determining the extent to which American architecture was influenced and inspired by Islamic forms will add to the body of knowledge relating to the popular forms of architecture in U.S. history. Looking at this popular form of architecture in the context of Orientalism will be a perspective not previously explored.

As one of the largest collections of Islamic Art in the country, and a structure built with Islamic forms in mind, Shangri La is an ideal location to explore the presence of Orientalism in American Architecture. Doris Duke chose architect Marion Sims Wyeth, whose work was not

generally in exotic styles, and contributed to Shangri La’s design herself, so the estate presents a unique situation. Shangri La’s architecture cannot be separated from the collections it holds. The structure itself was designed and often modified to hold both Islamic art and architectural elements, so a comparison of Doris Duke’s collection as compared to other collectors of Islamic Art is in order.

I explore a number of areas in my examination of Shangri La’s place in the discourse of Orientalism in Islamic inspired American Architecture. First, I look at the definition and history of Orientalism in America, as well as how this label might be applied to architecture in America. There is little scholarship in the area of architectural Orientalism relating to Islamic Architecture, although Zeynep Celik has contributed a number of articles and books to the topic. By also looking at buildings erected in a typical “Exotic” style, I believe a pattern into which Shangri La can fit is identified. I examine the purpose of these buildings in addition to their structure and decorative elements to ascertain Shangri La’s place among them. I also examine historical influences that may have impacted Doris Duke’s aesthetic: collections of others whose homes she may have visited, exhibits by such experts in the field as Arthur Upham Pope, and popular culture such as films and advertising.

In looking at Shangri La itself, I focus on several things: Doris Duke’s honeymoon trip and the marble bedroom and bath suite
commissioned during that trip that was the genesis for the house; the proposed and final designs and layout of the house; the collection housed within the house itself; and finally how Doris Duke’s relationships with her collection and house may have been the manifestation of her attempt to both control her personal life and present herself in a particular way. In addition to these aspects of the history of Orientalism and Shangri La’s creation, I look at the implications of the estate’s location in Hawai`i and Duke’s place within the colonial power structure in place in the islands.

Unfortunately, Doris Duke left little in the way of personal writings that might give insight into her opinions about the Islamic cultures and people she encountered, and collected so many artifacts of. Instead of delving into her personal writings, such as letters and diaries, since there are so few, I will look at the numerous biographies published on Duke, as well as insights into her life gleaned by Don Hibbard and Sharon Littlefield in their research into the history of Shangri La. Don Hibbard meticulously researched the history of the house by examining all of the files stored both at Shangri La as well as those stored at Duke Farms in New Jersey. These files contained financial records, plans, photos, clippings, and letters from people including James Cromwell, Duke’s property managers at Shangri La, as well as Arthur Upham Pope. Hibbard also searched the Hawai`i State Archives and Bishop Museum Archives, finding newspaper and magazine articles written over the
years, containing quotes from Doris Duke and James Cromwell about the home she had created.

Sharon Littlefield, in researching her book *Doris Duke’s Shangri La*, not only drew from Don Hibbard’s previous research, but also was able to speak with employees at Shangri La who had been there during Duke’s lifetime. Thus, she gleaned valuable insight into Duke’s attitudes towards and activities at the house. Littlefield describes the background of the house, and the collections within it, mainly for an audience of visitors who are not entirely familiar with either Islamic Art or Doris Duke, but raises some key questions nonetheless. As previously mentioned, she wonders if Shangri La should be considered an example of Orientalism or Occidentalism. Beyond this, she questions whether a collection put together by a wealthy American woman can effectively be used to foster the study of Islamic art. Lastly, Littlefield brings up the dearth of scholarship on American Orientalism after 1930, calling for further study of the house and its collection as important to this area of inquiry.

There are any number of books and studies on Orientalism in general, and American Orientalism specifically. However, there have been only minimal studies of the influence of Islamic Architecture on American Architecture, and even fewer studies on the presence of Orientalism in Islamic influenced American Architecture. Some key discussions of Orientalism that inform this study are Edward Said’s
semenal work *Orientalism* that first identified the concept, and sets up
the framework from which to examine the presence or absence of
Orientalism in Doris Duke’s Shangri La. Mari Yoshihara’s *Embracing the
East* examines white American women’s role in American Orientalism,
laying the groundwork for understanding Doris Duke’s relationship with
the East, and her re-creation of it in Shangri La. Editor Holly Edwards’
compilation of essays on American Orientalism *Noble Dreams, Wicked
Pleasures* addresses Orientalism in American art, particularly art
influenced and informed by Islamic art. One essay addresses
architecture directly, while the book in its entirety is valuable to draw not
only a picture of the type of Orientalism prevalent in the era up to Duke’s
construction of Shangri La, but comparisons and contrasts to the types
of artwork represented in the book as opposed to that collected by Duke.

In addition to these books, some other works will are useful in
either their look at Orientalism in Architecture, or their assessment of
Shangri La itself. Zeynip Celik has written a number of essays mainly
critiquing Western builders in the colonized East, and their efforts to
impose their vision on the colonized city.

In an unpublished manuscript produced for the Doris Duke
Foundation for Islamic Art, Don Hibbard gives a thorough history of the
building itself, and makes a brief attempt to situate it amongst other
Islamic inspired buildings in the United States. However, in the limited

2 This includes the sole essay on architecture in Holly Edwards *Noble Dreams, Wicked Pleasures*
space and scope of his research, the discussion of Islamic Architecture in
the U.S. is limited to the acknowledgement that there is little work in the
area, and a brief list of buildings that might qualify under that
classification, omitting any mention of Orientalism inherent in the
popularity or individual character of these buildings.

Drawing from Hibbard’s manuscript are two other works: Kazi
Ashraf’s review of the manuscript, and Sharon Littlefield’s book Doris
Duke’s Shangri La. Ashraf’s review raises the question, counter to
Hibbard’s assessment, of whether Shangri La can be considered an
Islamic inspired building at all, or if it should more correctly be
considered in the “Modern” Style. How influenced by the “Orient” were
the designers he references, such as Frank Lloyd Wright? Not only this,
but Ashraf raises the issue that in attempting to understand the house,
it might be best to try to understand Doris Duke, as the house was
mainly her creation over her adult lifetime rather than that of an
architect over a much shorter time. Another question Ashraf’s critique
provokes is if classifying an “Islamic” style of architecture (not to mention
art) is a form of Orientalism itself.3 Sharon Littlefield’s book, Doris
Duke’s Shangri La, draws on the information gathered by Don Hibbard in
his manuscript. It presents the house, its history and collections in a
basic, straightforward manner, giving the pertinent information, such as
how the house came to be built and where the collections came from.

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3 That is, an attempt to lump all art and architecture from any area where Islam is
dominant into one massive class for Western consumption.
Littlefield also raises a few important questions, but does not answer them. Her questions relate to the situation of Shangri La and its collections as a site for scholarship. The questions wonder what message future scholars will take away from the estate about Islamic culture. Will they see only a single overarching culture, due to the lack of differentiation among Doris Duke’s collections, or will they come away with a sense of the richness and diversity of Islamic culture? Essentially, is Shangri La perpetuating Orientalism in Doris Duke’s assumption that it should be a site of study?

Part of the mission of Shangri La as a museum is to expose the public, who may not have had any exposure to it previously, to Islamic art and culture for the first time. Therefore, rather than considering the message of the estate to scholars of Islamic art and culture, this paper will focus on the possible messages taken away by the public at large who have had little previous exposure to the art and culture of Islam.⁴ Considering that the majority of tours are given only in English, and first time visitors may only be familiar with Shangri La as the home of an extremely wealthy woman, narrowing the origins of the average tour

⁴ To say that a visitor has had no previous exposure to Islamic art and culture in the present era would mean the assumption that this person likely has no television, no exposure to newspapers or magazines, and certainly not to the Internet. This assumption would require a rejection of the undeniably media saturated world that much of the globe finds itself in today. Nearly every visitor that enters the gates of Shangri La has some familiarity with an idea of Islam and its culture. But Shangri La’s purpose as a museum is to promote the further study of Islamic art and culture, whether that be at the level of initial firsthand exposure to it, graduate level study, or visiting artists from the Islamic world gaining exposure to artifacts no longer accessible in their own country.
attendee to a visitor from the U.S. mainland or Hawaii is helpful. Certainly some do come from other countries, but these are limited both by their facility with the language as well as their interest in the home of a woman they may have heard little about. Visitors from the United States, however have almost certainly at some time heard the phrase “the richest little girl in the world,” or been exposed to stories in the media of Doris Duke’s eccentricities. Visitors who have a background in Islamic art, the Middle East, or are simply from another country will certainly have a different perspective, but for the purposes of this paper, the average visitor to Shangri La is considered to be from the U. S. mainland or Hawai`i, and have little exposure to the Islamic world beyond the American media.
Orientalism

Since before the time Shangri La opened as a museum, there has been a growing amount to attention paid by that media to events in Islamic countries. From as far back as the founding of the United States, there has been an affinity for exotic items, beginning with trade goods from China, and later Japan, and even later, the Middle East, and continuing until the present day.

The practice of Orientalism has not been eradicated by the appearance of Edward Said’s publication of Orientalism in 1979. M.A.C. Cosmetics’ promotional campaign for December 2005 was called “Ornamentalism” with a distinctly Japanese feeling to the artwork. The model used was fair skinned with black hair and full bangs, made up with dark purple hued eye-makeup and heavy black eyeliner, reminiscent of kabuki makeup. The surrounding space was taken up with stenciled Japanese block print-style trees, also in purple. Seen in their stores’ windows, this image was accompanied by a folding screen in a similar stencil pattern and color. The evocation of the exotic and of a non-specific Asia was unmistakable. To sell a new palette of colors for the winter season, theensual allure of the Orient was highlighted, along
with the tongue in cheek reference to Orientalism, through the appellation of the campaign as “Ornamentalism.”

Although Edward Said pointed out the existence of Orientalism over 25 years ago, and scholars have been debating the ramifications ever since, that recognition has not made up for several hundred years of Western cultural practice, much less prevented the continuing misrepresentation and appropriation of the cultures of “the East.”

Is Orientalism the overarching theme at Doris Duke’s Shangri La? Now with growing American involvement in the Middle East, including (although not limited to) the ongoing occupation of Iraq that some would argue is a new form of colonialism. Following the events of September 11, 2001, the subsequent invasions of two Islamic countries, and continuing conflict in the region involving U.S. allies, the message given to the public by the estate is particularly important.

In order to ascertain the place of Doris Duke’s Shangri La within the discourse of Orientalism, it is necessary to first examine Orientalism itself. What are the hallmarks of Orientalism, and which of those hallmarks might apply to the topic at hand? Since Edward Said redefined the term in his 1978 book *Orientalism* to refer to a system of thought mainly on the part of academics and scholars, it has expanded to include many more areas. The original appellation of Orientalist or Orientalism had been applied to artists depicting scenes from the Middle

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5 Ornamentalism is a style of its own in the art/decorating world, but is not used in that context in the M.A.C. advertisement.
East and Asia. According to Said, Orientalism is an attitude of superiority on the part of Western (mainly European) scholars toward the people of the Middle East.

One definition of Orientalism states that it is:

A term defined most recently by cultural theorist Edward Said that refers to the ways that Western cultures conceive of Eastern and Middle-Eastern cultures as other and attribute to them qualities of exoticism and barbarism. Orientalism is thus used to set up a binary opposition between the West (the Occident) and the East (the Orient) in which negative qualities are attributed to the latter. For Said, Orientalism is a practice that can be found in cultural representations, education, social science, and political policy. For instance, the stereotype of Arab people as fanatic terrorists is an example of Orientalism.6

Scholars and academics from the West assume greater knowledge of the cultures of the Middle East than the cultures’ own scholars. This has wide-reaching effects on world politics, economics and culture. First, Orientalism’s uneven “knowledge,” allows for the establishment of a binary between “East” and “West;” next, it allows the West the authority to colonize and physically rule the East and finally allows for the establishment of Western hegemony over this newly recognized and colonized “East.” How did Western scholars come to feel that they had this greater knowledge of the East than did its own scholars? It can be traced back farther than just the years of European colonialism post World War I.

Orientalism’s long history had its roots, according to Edward Said, as far back as the establishment of the religion of Islam in the early seventh century. Initially, it began with the West’s worry and fear of the competing and rapidly growing religion. This led to a need to know the enemy, such as the Crusades as a means for Christian kingdoms to prevent the spread of Islam closer to their own lands. The rise of Byzantium fostered a greater sense of security, with a Christian empire buffering the lands between Europe and the expansion of Islam in the Middle East. Once the Islamic Ottoman Turks wrested power from the Byzantine Empire and expanded their territory to dominate the majority of the Middle East, as well as parts of Eastern Europe, the nations of Western Europe began to see Islam as a threat again. The Islamic Ottoman Empire was a major military power, abutting Western Europe, creating anxiety about the possibility of Islam being imposed there as well. In addition to the proximity of the Ottoman Empire, Muslims controlled southern Spain for nearly 700 years, showing the rest of Europe just how possible it was for Islam to dominate their regions as well. Not only was there a constant tension due to the proximity of the two religions, but the Ottoman Empire had significant commerce with Western Europe as well. In reaction to this perceived threat, Westerners, especially scholars, began to represent Muslims and Easterners in particular ways. This later time frame, then gave rise to the form of Orientalism described by Said, one of stereotypical representation;
sexualization paired with feminization of the peoples and cultures of the Middle East.

Orientalism as defined by Said is a system of thought and practice on the part of Westerners, primarily intellectuals and scholars. It places not only the people of countries considered to be “the East” but the countries themselves in a position of submission and inferiority to the greater power and perceived superiority of the people and countries of “the West.” He argues that the idea of West has been constructed in opposition to the East. According to Said, the West has been constructed as the white male norm in comparison with the Eastern brown female. As such, the men of Eastern countries have been portrayed as effeminate and ineffective while the women of the same countries have been hyper-sexualized. The rulers of these countries are viewed as despotic and irrational, in contrast with fair and rational rule in the West. As if by exaggerating the differences or perceived differences between the two areas and peoples, the West could legitimate its desire to expand its power eastward. Examples of Orientalism in reference to the countries now known as the Middle East can be found in Western scholarship, artwork and culture from as far back as the time just following the Crusades. Later scholarship emphasized the knowledge of the Western scholar about the ways and cultures of the East over the knowledge of the East’s own people. Most of the time, this scholarship purported to explain to the Western reader the workings of Islam and its
followers, or perhaps Islamic and Eastern artwork and architecture. As if by learning the culture so well, the scholar then gained a kind of ownership over those areas he had knowledge of. Western artwork produced images of exotic looking settings with erotically posed harem women, or Eastern men posed in traditionally feminine ways. Western culture appropriated Eastern forms as their own in home décor and furnishings.

Prompting much of this appropriation of culture was the propensity for Westerners abroad in the East to dig for or purchase antiquities from the countries they were visiting. Their ability to visit at all was connected to the rise of colonialism. Once countries began establishing colonies outside their own borders, citizens of those countries had greater access to those foreign lands. Those able to visit were most often those with financial means and ties to power. They were the original exporters of Eastern cultural forms to the West. Orientalism and other similar attitudes in non-Oriental areas were the mechanism that allowed for both the justification of colonization in many places, and the impetus to collect through fostering a fascination with all things Eastern.

At first, collectible artifacts became popular with the upper classes in Europe, such as goods from China in the eighteenth century, followed in the United States by a vogue for things Middle Eastern beginning in the mid-nineteenth century. Following this popularity with the elite,
collectibles from exotic Oriental countries, as well as copies produced in the West, were a growing trend with the middle class, and those aspiring to be middle class. Objects from the Orient, or produced in the style of the Orient became available at specialty stores and in department stores. The trickle down effect of elite obsessions to the middle class, through levels and layers of exposure from the upper class to those of the middle class privileged enough to associate with the upper class. Then the obsessions were passed on to lower classes through such mechanisms as the “exhibitionary complex” of the museum\(^7\) and department store, and the interpellation of advertisement, and finally through the perhaps even more compelling interpellation of the novel and the movie fully brought all levels of American society into the Orientalist mindset.

Orientalism’s effectiveness lay in the adaptability of its message. While an upper class Westerner might love art objects from the East, they might still feel it appropriate for their nation to take colonial power of that country, as its citizens needed to be civilized, and brought into line with the enlightened West. Also, a working class Westerner might believe that due to their baser nature, Easterners should not be allowed to immigrate to the West, but at the same time, might dream of one day living in the opulent and powerful manner of a sheik seen in the movies.

\(^7\) The museum had become public in the Victorian era, partly in an attempt to civilize the lower classes, and enfold them into the dominant mind-set of western culture. See Tony Bennett.
It had similar ties to other race based systems of thinking, such as the attitude toward blacks in America. While the term, Orientalism may not have been used in all situations, because of the ethnic background of the inhabitants, but the same concepts were present whether the country colonized and the people distortedly represented were in the Middle East, East Asia, Africa, Polynesia, or Ireland. Stereotypes of the inferior native inhabitants were commonplace in the media of the nation in power, as in the representation of apelike Irish in British newspapers,\(^8\) or the representation of apelike Hawaiians in United States newspapers around the time of its annexation.\(^9\) All are ways of making a people seem at once menacing and incapable of regulating or governing themselves. Representations have changed over the years as media consumers have become more savvy and less susceptible to extremely overt messages, but the messages do not seem to have changed that much, considering the M.A.C. advertisement discussed above, and other stereotypes that Westerners still hold true about people of other cultures.

Complicating the history of Orientalism is the fact that for a significant period, the countries to the east of Europe were further advanced in many areas than their Western neighbors. “[I]n math, science, agriculture, architecture, engineering, shipbuilding, geography,

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\(^8\) This was prevalent during the periods of unrest prior to the latter 20th century.

\(^9\) Some in the U.S. worried that accepting Hawai‘i into the United States as a territory would promote race mixing, and also provide a gateway for Eastern immigrants into the country.
Eastern countries were well ahead of their Western neighbors. Irish monks have often been credited with maintaining the thread of literacy and scholarship in Europe during the Middle Ages, but scholarship and technology in the East was a resource that Europe could draw from as well. Through avenues of trade and the movement of such people as merchants and clerics, Eastern ideas such as algebra, pointed arches and even the number system that has come to be used around the globe, came to the West. Colloquial stories about Marco Polo’s travels tell of his bringing noodles to Italy from China, giving rise to a cuisine strongly based in pasta. Remembering this transfer of ideas, technologies, and even food means that the history of the West’s fascination with the East may also come from a history of interest in things of a more advanced nature than had been available locally. Europe eventually learned a great deal from their Eastern neighbors, but continued to take interest in things from the East even after the balance of knowledge and power shifted from East to West. The recognition that another country, region or person has better ideas and technology than does oneself is not Orientalism, and one area in which Said may be off the mark is in his assumption that Westerners, specifically Europeans have no cultural memory. Stories are passed along over generations, and so one person’s trips into far away, both physically and in terms of

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imagination as well, Eastern countries might have been related to children, grandchildren and so on. This single person’s trip then, in the end might have eventually affected dozens or hundreds of people eventually. The Western fascination with the East came not only out of negative relations, but out of positive interactions as well. Europe’s association of luxury and riches with the East is manifested in its artwork, often prominently displaying Oriental rugs or other such objects to connote the wealth of the subject. To own Oriental objects was a signifier of wealth, and status, and those connotations and significances are at play in the fascination with the East that became prevalent during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in the United States.

War and the fear of Islam’s growing power may have sowed the kernels that would later become Orientalism, but economic interactions and exposure to the technologies and abilities found in Eastern countries certainly prompted a certain degree of fascination as well. In her self-proclaimed love of Islamic art and culture, and collecting of objects and architectural elements from Islamic regions, Doris Duke may have been unconsciously drawing on either tradition or, more likely, both.
Doris Duke’s Relationship to Orientalism

Orientalism had perhaps reached its apex in the time-period just prior to Doris Duke’s initial forays into collecting. The years from her birth in 1912 until her marriage in 1935 evidenced the most pervasive Orientalism thus far in America. The depiction of the “Orient” in general, and Middle Eastern/Islamic subjects in specific was inescapable for nearly anyone exposed to any kind of popular culture in the U.S.

According to Gaylyn Studlar,

Even the most cursory glance at Hollywood film suggests a wide range of narrative formulas for Orientalism, from biblical films to historical bio-pics with Mid or Far Eastern settings, from foreign legion films to Arabian nights adventures. ... One of the periods of greatest popularity of Hollywood Orientalism was, not surprisingly, simultaneous with a broadly registered influence of Orientalism in American culture at large. 11

This widespread “Orientalism in American culture” was perhaps most felt in the effects of the film industry. As Studlar points out, the range of topics based in Orientalism was vast. Every level of society in America was a part of the film-going public, whether they went to the movie-palace theaters found across the U.S., or the movies came to their own home theaters, as was common among the wealthy.

The appearance of movies set in the Middle East, promoting a typically Orientalist vision extended the affinity for Eastern culture and aesthetics from the province of the wealthy and middle-class to those of

11Gaylyn Studlar “‘Out-Salomeing Salome’: Dance, the New Woman and Fan Magazine Orientalism” Michigan Quarterly Review. 34 no. 4 (1995), 486
much more limited means. Studlar explores this phenomenon in depth, in looking at the popularity of Rudolph Valentino. Orientalism at this point in the American culture of the 1910s and 1920s seemed much more skewed to the female half of the populace. While academic and political Orientalism was primarily men’s territory, the collection of decorative objects -- both original and department store copies -- had become the province of women.

In *Embracing the East*, Mari Yoshihara explores the development of this trend that absorbed women into America’s Orientalism, arguing that through their participation in Orientalism, women took part in the exercise of Western power over the East. Yoshihara’s book considers the participation of white middle and upper-class women in Orientalism prior to the end of the nineteenth, and through the early part of the twentieth century. She sets the stage for the period in which Doris Duke grew up and was exposed to an even more pervasive Orientalism that included women of all income levels, but which appealed particularly to women who might be identified as a “New Woman.” White, middle class women had been brought up to be wives and mothers, and to stay at home and care for children, as part of the division of public and domestic spheres, that grew in acceptance during the nineteenth century. At the end of the nineteenth century, women began to question this role and demand a greater degree of autonomy, as evidenced by the suffrage movement. The idea that they might be able to live in a different way
could begin to be imagined by picturing themselves in an Eastern context.

As noted by Yoshihara, the East intrigued the New Woman, and this intrigue manifested itself in a number of ways. These expressions ranged from a consumer involvement, using Eastern and Eastern style collectibles to decorate their homes; to higher levels of involvement such as painting images in Eastern styles, or of Eastern subjects, traveling to the East to find adventure, or learn new skills, and even to inhabit the role of Eastern woman on stage. For the new woman this embrace of the East represented a kind of freedom from what would normally be expected of an American woman. This also meant that by seeing themselves as agents with power in their interactions with the East, that American women were at the same time buying into and participating in the dominant American power scheme...\(^\text{12}\)

As described by her biographers, and in rare personal statements, Doris Duke fit the mold of the New Woman. The popularity of Orientalist themes with women in the era of Duke’s youth is particularly important when considering her decision to construct Shangri La and eventually to open it as a museum to the public. As a woman who was trained to be independent by her father before his death and in control of a large portion of his estate after his death when she was only twelve, Duke

likely identified with the independent new woman of the latter part of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century.

Duke’s independence is unquestionable, appearing publicly first when she took legal action to gain full control of Duke Farms in New Jersey from her mother. Almost all stories told about Duke in some way relate to her unconventionality, whether they are about her belief in reincarnation at a time when that was far out of the mainstream in American society, or her penchant for driving to and from her properties in an old truck rather than the expected limousine. Other unexpected interests ranged from jazz and gospel music to tap dance lessons with the famous partner to Shirley Temple, “Bojangles” Bill Robinson. Biographers disagree on her exact relationships with them, but they do trace a tendency for Duke to become involved with people who were for one reason or another also outside of the mainstream. With one notable exception, her choice of significant others leaned heavily toward men who were considered dangerous, or not of her class, and often not of her race.¹³ At the time, this was unusual, and actively discouraged. Her persistence in flouting convention places her squarely in the realm of New Woman.

¹³ Examples of this are her second husband, Porfirio Rubirosa, a South American playboy who is alternately described as a government operative for the Dominican Republic and a playboy who married wealthy women for their money; and her companion of a number of years, Joey Castro, a jazz musician. For further biographical information on Duke, see Ted Schwarz and Tom Ryback’s Trust No One, and Stephanie Mansfield’s The Richest Girl in the World.
If the trickle-down effect of the pastimes of the elite to the middle-class was then followed by a trickle-down to the lower classes, it came through two avenues, the growing consumer culture of the U.S., and exposure to pervasive popular culture embodied mainly by film. This took the ideology, if not the daily reality, of the New Woman from a strictly upper and middle-class phenomenon to one that could be shared by women across classes.

This New Woman became the main consumer of early twentieth century Orientalism. As pointed out by Melani McAlister, the United States’ industrial expansion meant the possibility of an overabundance of goods to sell, with no one to buy. Therefore, a means of compelling the public to consume arose through advertising primarily connecting the sensualized and exoticized Orient with consumer activities such as shopping in newly developed department stores. These stores were built on the same model as the “exhibitionary complex”\textsuperscript{14} of museum, and expected to entertain and to educate their shoppers, as well as turn a profit. The museum took the visitor on a sort of adventure but did not allow the average visitor either to touch the artifacts or to take them home. The department store on the other hand not only took the shopper on an exotic adventure, but they could buy the mementos of that adventure to fill their own home. Women who had the means could

either buy original items imported from the countries of the exotic East. Those on a tighter budget could buy the knockoffs produced for this newly created consumer market. Finally, those of the least means of all could simply window shop or visit the department store without making any purchases simply for the sense of escape from daily life it provided.

In addition to the shopping experience, art forms accessible to primarily the upper classes presented their visions of the Orient through such mediums as dance. The Ballets Russes first came to the United States in 1916, with their productions of *Scheherazade*, *Cleopatre*, and *Salome*. Those performances had been staged in the U.S. previously beginning in 1911 by American dance companies, based on the Ballets Russes’ performances elsewhere. Popular couture designer Paul Poiret made the designs for these shows’ costumes. At the end of World War I, the novel *The Sheik* was published and became a sensation both in Britain and the United States. At the same time, Lowell Thomas was touring both countries with his lecture and slide show entitled “With Allenby in Palestine and Lawrence in Arabia,” chronicling his time with a British army unit during World War I, with at least four million people

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15 Poiret was also mentor to Erte (Romain de Tirtoff) the darling of 1920s couture fashion. Both men explored the use of motifs from Asia and the Middle East in their design, Erte in his artwork that was featured on the covers of Harper’s Bazaar in the 1920s, regained its popularity in the 1980s and remains popular with collectors to the present time. These two designers might be seen as working in parallel with modern architects of the same era. In an attempt to break away from traditional western clothing styles and modernize fashion, Poiret and Erte looked east of Europe for their inspiration. The same is true of architects such as Louis Sullivan and his protégé, Frank Lloyd Wright.
eventually seeing that show\textsuperscript{16}. Both of these popular entertainments fueled the popularity of films with Oriental themes.

In 1921, the film version of \textit{The Sheik} came out of Hollywood starring Rudolph Valentino. During the 1920s, Valentino and his roles in \textit{The Sheik} and \textit{The Son of the Sheik} fascinated women in the United States. While a large number of films had been produced as far back as the genesis of filmmaking with Oriental themes, one of the most popular was Valentino’s \textit{Sheik}. Studlar’s examination of the cult of dance during the first three decades of the twentieth century notes that Valentino was not only considered a non-white foreigner,\textsuperscript{17} but also had been a dancer as well. She attributes some of his popularity to this factor, comparing him to a degree with the popularity of dancer Vaslav Nijinsky of the Ballets Russes. Lawrence in Arabia was also a popular character, though his was a more masculine appeal. It would seem that Valentino’s sheik was a balance of the two, the litheness of the dancer and the masterful manliness of the military man. The fact that women across the country swooned over Valentino despite his social unacceptability points to a widespread identification with the New Woman on the part of all classes of American women. Valentino himself, as well as his sheik character, was just the kind of decadent, dangerous foreign man that an American woman should not want to become involved with, and to desire

\textsuperscript{16} Melani McAlister, \textit{Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, & U.S. Interests in the Middle East Since 1945} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005)

\textsuperscript{17} Valentino was an Italian immigrant to the U.S. an ethnic distinction that meant he was not considered white, according to the thinking of the time.
him nonetheless was to defy convention. This was the hallmark of a New Woman, and using Valentino as a yardstick, the New Woman was the majority of American Women by the 1920s.

Not only was Doris Duke an independent wealthy woman, she was a woman who had grown up in America during the years of successive crazes for all thing Oriental, and at a time when that craze had been taken from the province of the wealthy to all classes of society. Orientalism at the time Doris Duke was growing up had expanded through popular culture to encompass and include not only upper and middle class Americans, but all Americans, especially among American women. There was, then, no way that Doris Duke might have escaped exposure to the Orientalist attitudes that culminated in the first decades of the twentieth century.

Duke was the only child of James Buchanan Duke and his wife Nanaline. J. B. Duke was a Tobacco tycoon who diversified his wealth into electric power as well. Upon his death, he left to his 12 year-old-daughter the majority of the fortune he had amassed, valued at approximately $300 million (1925 dollars). Duke inherited her money incrementally through trusts established to regulate the dispersal of her inheritance. She received the bulk of her holdings at ages twenty-one and twenty-five.
Biographies of Doris Duke point to a sheltered child, with few friends, a distant mother, and an overprotective but doting father.\(^{18}\) She did however, have a nanny who spent a great deal of time with young Duke, and with this nanny, she might have had a fair amount of access to popular culture of the time. Not only this, but a fad during the 1920s among the wealthy was to have small movie theaters installed in their homes for their viewing pleasure. James Buchanan Duke had one installed at Duke Farms\(^{19}\) and it is likely that Doris was able to see any number of films during her time here.

Doris Duke grew up during a time of great interest in “exotic” cultures, and in a family with the resources to pursue any interest that might tickle its members’ fancy. Also, her primary residence during the early years of her life was in New York City, home to many museums and art galleries, and her uncle Benjamin’s home was directly across the street from the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Undoubtedly, as a young girl brought up to participate in elite society, she was taken to these cultural sites as part of her education. She may even have attended

\[\begin{align*}
\end{align*}\]

These biographies, primarily concerned with the sensationalistic aspects of Doris Duke’s life, are some of the only sources to gather information about her, as she left very few writings of her own. While some information in them should be considered suspect, they have certain commonalities that point to a basis in fact, and I have attempted to discount anything from these works that seems unverifiable. Unfortunately, to recreate her early years, few sources are available.

\[\begin{align*}
^{19} & \text{Schwarz and Ryback.}
\end{align*}\]
exhibitions elsewhere, such as in London by such noted experts on foreign cultures as Arthur Upham Pope, premier authority on Persian art and architecture. A photo of her as a child shows her dressed in a kimono with a fan at a gathering, indicating her early interest in the exotic, and the East.\textsuperscript{20} Though she does not mention any visits to exhibits as motivating factors in her creation of Shangri La, her exposure to such things may have predisposed her both to an interest in Islamic art and architecture, and to displaying it in a rather casual, almost jumbled manner. In fact, exhibitions were organized in just this casual, jumbled way by expert Arthur Upham Pope in his 1931 London exhibition of Persian art.

Duke was also a frequent visitor to Florida, where she was to live after her marriage to James Cromwell, also the location of a town made entirely in a storybook Islamic style, Opa Locka. This town was made to resemble the fantastical tales from Arabian Nights. There is no record stating that she ever visited the town, but it is possible that she did, or that she might have heard of it and been intrigued. Without doubt she saw movies popular at the time, including such films as Valentino’s \textit{The Sheik} and \textit{Son of the Sheik}, or even 1926’s \textit{The Adventures of Prince Achmed} an early German animated feature, based on the Arabian Nights

\textsuperscript{20}Shangri La Estate, Honolulu, Hawai‘i: buildings and archival collections.
stories, or any number of the other films out in the years between 1920 and 1935.\textsuperscript{21}

While Orientalist thought and attitudes were inescapable in the world outside of the Duke home, perhaps as influential even as these popular trends of the time was Duke’s father’s taste. James Buchanan Duke, as president of the American Tobacco Company, a virtual monopoly in the production of tobacco products in the United States with 60 percent of the domestic industry\textsuperscript{22}, was ultimately responsible for the manner in which his products were marketed. According to biographies of Doris Duke, before his death in 1925, James B. Duke attempted to pass along to his only child the knowledge that would be necessary for her to take the reins upon his demise. Based on her abilities, which allowed her to not only hold what her father had left her, but grew his empire as well, she learned a great deal about the companies she was left with. Certainly a child spending the time necessary to learn this much about the companies would have been exposed to ephemera from the birth and growth of her father’s tobacco empire, including advertising for the assorted brands of tobacco that were sold by the company. Holly Edwards notes that,

Within this extraordinary conglomerate, there were in actuality three kinds of cigarettes on the market: pure Turkish blends, pure domestic blends, and blends of Virginia and Turkish leaf. This functional standardization made distinctive packaging and brand names

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{21} See IMDb (Internet Movie Database) at \url{http://us.imdb.com/} for listings of most films released in these years.} 
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{22} Edwards, 203}
critical to successful sales. Oriental names were frequently used to grant a particular brand of cigarettes a bold visual appearance and to capitalize on exotic allure.23

Some examples of this type of advertising are Fatima cigarettes that used a picture of a veiled harem girl, Mogul Egyptian cigarettes with a picture of a sheik-like figure in the foreground with mosque style minarets in the background and Omar cigarettes showing a garden scene that included a sultan and houri24, again with a minaret in the background. “In retrospect, the orientalizing trend in cigarette advertisements seems to have coincided largely with the lifetime of the American Tobacco Company.”25 Although this trend seems to have largely disappeared after 1913, when the American Tobacco Company trust was broken up, it is reasonable to believe that Doris Duke would have been given a thorough background of the company she would one day own. Her father likely had ephemera like this still at home or his offices that she would have been exposed to regularly.26 And some of this advertising was still in use when Duke was old enough to take

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23 Edwards 203
24 A houri was a term popular in this era based on the following definition: French, from Persian huri, from Arabic hurlyah
   1 : one of the beautiful maidens that in Muslim belief live with the blessed in paradise
   2 : a voluptuously beautiful young woman
25 Edwards. 204
26 Edwards 203-205. Several of the cigarette advertising items on display in the exhibition that this book accompanied came from the Duke Homestead at Durham, North Carolina.
notice. Orientalism was a pervasive atmosphere in which Doris Duke was raised. She would have been exposed to Orientalist visions of the world at home, at other’s homes, in books she might read, movies she might watch, museums she might have visited, and the business she was being groomed to take over. This Orientalism would be manifested in Duke’s collecting over her lifetime, paralleling Yoshihara’s interpretation of how women became part of the system they were trying to break free of through their involvement in Orientalism. Doris Duke’s great affinity for the cultures she collected from does not negate the Orientalism that came out of her collecting. Nor does it mitigate the message that a visitor to her Shangri La might receive upon experiencing her skewed Western vision of the East. The visitor does not get a true picture of any Islamic culture, they get a picture of the benefits of being an extremely wealthy white woman in the 1930s, from location of her site, to size of the property, to the items she collected (and had shipped to Hawai`i). What is particularly evident is her level of participation in both Orientalism and colonialism through her collecting activities.
Historic Building Precedents

Doris Duke’s Shangri La may seem like an anomaly as an Islamic inspired building constructed not simply in the United States, but also in (what was at the time) the Territory of Hawai`i.\(^\text{27}\) This is not entirely the case, however. There is significant historical basis that makes the genesis of Shangri La not so unusual after all. The story of Islamic influence on Western architecture goes back nearly as far as does Islam itself. The history of the spread of Islam out of the so-called Arab lands and across much of North and sub-Saharan Africa, as well as the Baltic region and parts of the Mediterranean was a history of assimilation and appropriation.

To trace the appearance of Islamic influence on Western architecture, there must be a discussion of what is meant when one talks about “Islamic architecture.”

First, what is considered the Islamic world?

Islam itself is not a monolithic religion, like other large religions, it encompasses a number of sects, with varying beliefs. A Sunni Muslim does not have an identical belief system to a Shi‘a Muslim, nor does a Shi‘ite have the same beliefs as Alawite, or the latter to an Alewi. Not

\(^{27}\) After the 1893 overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy, the islands in 1898 became a territory of the United States, and in 1959 were admitted as a state. This is a separate subject that deserves much more attention, but briefly, the overthrow of the monarchy by American businessmen with the assistance of the United States military and the subsequent annexation can both be considered part of a growing drive toward colonialist and imperialist expansion on the part of the U.S.
only that, but the Islamic world also consists of non Muslims, such as the makeup of the Ottoman Empire, which included Orthodox Christians as well as Jews who were welcomed into the Empire when expelled from Spain in the fifteenth century. There are both broad differences in the cultures as well as subtly nuanced differences, and it is not possible to describe one single Islam.

The various sects of Islam, or those people whose belief system holds that Mohammed was the last and true prophet of the god of the Judeo-Christian faith, are found all over the world now, but historically were somewhat more limited. The religion grew and spread from its roots in the area of present day Saudi Arabia, initially within the Middle East and around the edges of the Mediterranean, and in later centuries to the area including Pakistan and India. Now the religion reaches around the world, with some of the largest numbers in Indonesia, and a significant number in North America as well. Despite this wide distribution of Islam, the area most identified with Islam is the Middle East, and North Africa. When describing Islamic architecture, it is these areas that are most frequently referenced.

Architectural historians have conflated the types of architecture found in these two regions with architecture of the wider Islamic world, describing Middle Eastern and North African architecture as that of Islamic architecture as a whole. On top of that, for the most part, the buildings these historians look at are large public buildings, or the grand
homes of the wealthy, rather than more modest, vernacular structures including everyday homes of the working classes. In their haste to define as Islamic any architecture that falls within a country whose religion is or was primarily Muslim, architectural historians have neglected buildings that might not fall within their understanding of Islamic architecture. Even within a single country, using Turkey for example, architecture varies drastically from one part to another. In the Black Sea region of Turkey, homes are generally multi-story and constructed of wood, while in the southeast, homes are frequently single story and made of adobe-type bricks or stone.
As Muslim rulers gained control of lands, they generally did one of two things in regard to buildings. Either they made use of already constructed buildings for their own purposes, thus assimilating them into “Islamic” architecture, or they made use of builders already living in the region to construct new buildings; most frequently in styles the

Figure 4 Street, Şanlıurfa, Turkey (Author’s Photo)

28 I use quotation marks here to note that the term Islamic as it has been applied to architecture does not have a correlation to a particular style, but an association with the religion of Islam, or countries that are or have been Islamic. Therefore a building built in a country previously Buddhist, Christian Hindu or some other faith might become “Islamic” by virtue of its later conquest.

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builders were accustomed to, thus appropriating indigenous architecture into what is now considered “Islamic” architecture. This, then, is the genesis of “Islamic” architecture. It is not one single style, nor is it found in one single part of the world, nor even a single time-period.

Some characteristics have been described as typical to Islamic architecture, if we accept it as a singular style of architecture. These are pointed arches, horseshoe arches, and courtyards. All of these forms have been appropriated for use outside of the Islamic world, such as pointed arches in Christian ecclesiastical architecture, horseshoe arches are common in Venetian architecture, and courtyards or walled gardens are common in Spanish architecture. No doubt these forms have migrated due to assimilation, but a cathedral would not be considered Islamic architecture because it had pointed arches applied to it.

In fact, the Western conception of Islamic architecture, which is historically based largely on images of the Middle East produced by artists in the Orientalist fashion, is steeped in Orientalism, and does not give an accurate view of architectural forms from the regions interpreted as Islamic. To try to pinpoint the characteristic features of Islamic architecture is a nearly futile exercise as there is at least as much variation in styles of architecture over time and geography as there is in the West.29 That recognition has often been lost in the West, however,

29 Why then should all Islamic architecture be lumped together regardless of country of origin? Why are there only the categories of “architecture” (implying European and American) and “Islamic architecture”?
where the architecture of Europe and the United States carries the title simply of “architecture” while all other forms and regions of architecture must be classified by their affiliation with region or religion. Countless books tracing the history of “architecture” either solely address Western architecture, or cover Islamic architecture only as a brief section, beginning and ending far before the modern era. This is based on the same social Darwinism that helped Orientalism develop. In line with the West’s self-perception of itself as the ultimate society, all other societies must be portrayed as lesser. They cannot be considered as developed as the West in any area, including architecture.

One key to this perception is the assumed unchanging nature of Islamic architecture. It has been portrayed for the most part only in terms of its relationship with the religion of Islam, and the “traditional” culture of the peoples of the Middle East, and this in a romanticized way. Often most attention is paid to the development of Middle Eastern architecture out of nomadic tent forms, and to the function of religion as expressed in architecture. Little or no attention is paid to secular architecture that has altered and changed over hundreds of years, and may not have any relation to either tent forms or the religion of Islam. Much attention has been paid to the importance of the courtyard in Islamic architecture, ignoring the growing exchange of ideas between countries around the world. Certainly, the courtyard has been an important element in much of Islamic architecture, but so has it been in
other architectures as well, and it may have come to the Islamic world from another region entirely. Muslims adopted foreign forms in their architecture from the earliest years of the religion’s expansion, and it is reasonable to believe that this assimilation continued. If that is true, then the Western assumption that Islamic architecture is predicated on forms strictly identified with religion is naïve. Like Western architecture, so-called Islamic architecture could rather be grouped differently. Rather than be lumped together by virtue of shared religious beliefs, it might be grouped based on time period, or region, or even sect of Islam. What is generally termed “Islamic” architecture has only two common denominators: association with the religion of Islam, or presence in a country or region that is or was predominantly Muslim. Examples are: much of the area considered the Middle East, North Africa including Morocco, Turkey, India and Pakistan, as well as portions of the Balkans.

In addition to the association of the Islamic religion and geography with the definition of Islamic architecture, according to Carol Hotchkiss Malt, Oleg Grabar has stated that

‘classical’ Islamic architecture, if it existed, had to have some of the following characteristics: wide cultural acceptance of certain forms as identifying the culture’s functional and aesthetic needs, repetition of standardized forms and design, quality of execution at various levels of artistic productions, and clarity in the definition of viable forms.30 Malt goes on to specify that some of these forms are:

Symmetrical abstract patterns, a rectangular site orientation and axis, an enclosed court area, aisles with columns (Qibla), the mihrab, minarets, horseshoe-shaped arches, colored tiles in abstract patterns and a geometric clarity of the whole design, which often was emphasized by severe external wall surfaces.

Forms varied depending on the function of the building, some more prevalent in public buildings such as mosques and bathhouses, and others more often found in residential structures. The size and status of the building was also a determining factor in the presence or absence of these forms. While minarets and mihrabs were and are associated with mosques exclusively, the courtyard is a more ubiquitous feature, and can be found in many traditional homes in the Islamic world, as well as in mosques. This last feature has been traced back to the form of the Prophet Mohammed’s home, which featured a courtyard, and is considered to have been the first mosque. Rectangular orientation has been a feature in not only individual buildings, but towns and cities as well. A good example of this, by its singular lack of adherence to the rule is Isfahan in Iran. The square in Isfahan is based on a rectangular plan, with all buildings facing in toward the square. The notable exception to this is the Mosque, which is set back from the square at an angle, in order to be oriented toward Mecca, while its entrance remains aligned with the other buildings on the square. Horseshoe shaped arches and quibla arcades are features also found in both public buildings, and

31 A mihrab is the often highly decorated arch shaped niche in the wall of a mosque indicating the direction of prayer toward Mecca.
expansive private homes. Colored tiles again could be found nearly anywhere, from humble homes to the grandest of palaces, and the same range of public buildings as well, the only differences in number and quality of tiles and panels. Finally, the geometric clarity of design combined with the severe simplicity of exterior surfaces can again be seen in an assortment of building types, both large and small, depending on their intended use and relative expression of power. As Oleg Grabar has noted, much of architecture’s meaning comes from the expression of power.32

Due to Islam’s rapid expansion, architecture in a wide variety of locales felt its influence, and contributed their own distinctive styles to what is now considered Islamic architecture. Many domes now identified with Islamic architecture came not organically out of an affiliation with Islam, but from nations that fell under Islamic control after discovering this architectural element. One such example is the mosque layout that is a holdover from Byzantine church design, a square base surmounted by a dome, frequently with smaller secondary half and quarter domes as well. When Islam came to what is now Turkey, rather than demolish the extant churches to build mosques, some of the more important churches were appropriated for Muslim use. Not only this, but rather than import builders the long distances between the Arabian gulf and newly absorbed territory, Muslim leaders were likely to use the talents of local craftsmen to build houses of worship and places to live and grant audience to their subjects. This resulted in an amalgamation of local designs with more traditionally Arabic decoration, to comply with the current ruler’s interpretation of Islamic dictates. This resulted in such monuments as the Blue Mosque in the style of the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, as well as other examples in countries ranging from Persia to India, and as far west as Spain.33

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Not only did Muslims adopt architectural styles from the regions they moved into, but the converse was true as well. When an area converted to Islam, it often took on architectural forms from the regions Islam came out of. Perhaps nowhere in Europe is this more noticeable than in Spain, where Islam was dominant from the ninth century into the fifteenth century. The southern portion of Spain was the site of a large number of buildings in what would come to be termed Islamic styles.

In fact, the influence from Islam on Europe was felt not only in Spain, located so close to a Muslim region, but also in the rest of Europe. In his article, “Influence of Islamic Architecture in Western Europe,” 34 R.A. Jairazbhoy points out two ways in which Islamic architecture’s influence was felt in these European countries:

“In the late 12th Century a revolutionary transformation occurred in the Christian architecture of Europe, when the Romanesque style was replaced by the Gothic. Round arches were no longer used, pointed arches came into favour, and ribbed vaults were introduced in place of groined vaults. Both these key features of Gothic were of Islamic origin.”

Pointed arches were developed by the Omayyads of Syria, while ribbed vaults came from Moorish Spain. The first example of pointed arches in Europe was in the Monastery of Monte Cassino built from 1066-1071 by builders from Southern Italy, who had been involved in trade with Muslim regions. A few years later, an abbot who had visited

Monte Cassino took this concept of pointed arches to France. Then, from France, pointed arches made their way through Western Europe. Ribbed vaults were used in Spanish mosques, before being adopted by Christian churches, and then similarly spread through Europe.

To a certain extent, influence from Islamic culture can now be found throughout Western architecture. These elements have been incorporated for so long into Western architecture however, that they are no longer considered markers of Islamic influence. If the influence of Islamic architecture was felt across so much of Europe, especially those countries bordering the Mediterranean, it follows that much of the architecture in the U.S. dubbed “Mediterranean” is also strongly influenced by Islamic forms. This is an important connection to note when considering the position of Doris Duke’s Shangri La within both United States and Hawaiian architecture of the time.

Buildings in the West that are now considered to have been influenced by Islamic architecture generally share a few common traits, mainly based on exterior layout and decoration. Some of these are the following elements: Horseshoe arches, minarets, courtyards, decorative tile and paintwork. Also in evidence are sometimes domes, as well as water features in landscaping.

How then did Islamic forms make their way into the West? Two main avenues provided for Islamic influence in Western architecture. The first was assimilation of ideas back and forth, through travel and/or
conquest, between varying regions of the Eurasian continent. In this way, one culture took ideas that worked in another culture’s buildings and used them on their own. Assimilation of Islamic style into Western architecture involved a use of elements such as pointed or horseshoe arches that could be used in pre-existing Western architectural styles, to provide an updated look or technological advancement, and is a practice that has been ongoing as far back as the development of the arch and longer. Muslims adopted domes used in Christian Byzantine churches, while Italians adopted pointed arches from Islamic designs. These adaptations resulted in such buildings as the Blue mosque of Istanbul and the Abbey of Monte Cassino in Italy.

The second avenue was the interpretation by Western architects and artists of Islamic elements in Western settings to achieve an effect of having recreated the Islamic world. This type of interpretation resulted in such structures as the Royal Pavilion at Brighton in England. Orientalist uses of Islamic-themed architecture often involved the use of a hodge-podge of architectural elements such as minarets and domes to create a fantastical place of escape, and is a more recent development, becoming popular only in parallel with Orientalism’s eighteenth century expansion in the West.

The association of the Orient with escape and fantasy came partly out of the Orientalist attitudes that held that Islamic architecture was inherently inferior to Western architecture, and not suitable as whole
buildings for use in practical applications. It grew with the popularity of the Orientalist school of painters whose works often depicted city and street scenes created out of buildings and scenes the artist might have seen in completely different cities, or countries, or possibly not even in person. Some painters even based their interpretation of the appearance of Islamic cities on novels or photographs, not on first-hand experience, resulting in an even more skewed perspective.35

When looking for a different style with which to connote a sense of escape and the exotic, building designers began to look to the styles illustrated by these artists. Louis Sullivan is one example of such a designer.36 His familiarity with Islamic designs came secondhand, from exposure to paintings and photographs, rather than firsthand, as he never traveled in Islamic areas.37

The translation of Islamic forms in America comes from three sources, all falling within the two streams of influence that Islamic forms have on Western architecture in general. First, in an Orientalist fashion positioning Islamic themed buildings as places of escape and leisure, is the most noted nearly direct route out of colonial British forms. The

35 Edwards.
36 Sullivan’s designs were more consistent with the assimilation of Islamic design into Western architecture than with Orientalist use of Islamic style. Mainly Sullivan incorporated Islamic elements such as abstract arabesques or geometric designs as decorative elements on otherwise Western styled buildings, albeit buildings of innovative Western style.
United States, with its strong ties to the British Empire followed many of the styles popular in England, including architectural styles. When it came into vogue for Oriental style buildings to be built for certain purposes in England, the trend was soon followed in the United States. Perhaps the most striking example of this was museum and sideshow pioneer P.T. Barnum’s home, “Iranistan.” This home was built in the style of the royal pavilion in Brighton, England. It was intended, as Patrick Conner states, “to act as a permanent advertisement of the novelty and extravagance of Barnum’s enterprises.”

The next and somewhat more organic source of Islamic influence on American architecture is through Spain. Spain was a strong colonial power in Central and South America, but had colonial interests in the southern regions of the North American continent as well. It was present in the western and southwestern states of California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas, as well as Florida.

Spain’s Islamic influence had been long-felt, and left a strong reminder in its architectural traditions. The use of the structural element of courtyards, as well as the decorative elements of water and tile-work are strongly evidenced in Spanish influenced architecture in the U.S. Spanish Colonial architecture had only little reminders of Islamic influenced forms, but when the Spanish Colonial revival came into

vogue, from the late nineteenth century through the 1930s, many more elements of Islamic origin became popular.

The third source of Islamic influence on architecture in America is through the Modern architecture movement. This, like the forms inherited through Spanish influence was a form of assimilation, rather than of appropriation of Islamic forms that appealed to individual architects. Rather than taking Islamic architectural elements wholesale and applying them to otherwise non-Islamic-style structures (appropriation), architects of the Modern movement were far more likely to use Islamic inspired elements, such as simplified plant or geometric motifs (assimilation). Although the first category of buildings are most recognizable as influenced by Islamic architecture, as Westerners imagine it, and the second category, influenced by Spain, is only slightly less of a straightforward connection, the link between Modern architecture and Islamic influence is easily overlooked, but no less present, and possibly even more widespread than ever considered.

In the mid to late nineteenth century in the United States the Exotic Revival Style of architecture was at its height, mainly in the homes of the wealthy as well as in funerary monuments and other buildings such as Masonic (and other fraternal organizations) lodges. The nineteen-twenties and thirties were also a time when exotic architecture was in great demand in the U.S., particularly in public buildings such as theaters, but also in residential buildings such as the
entire town of Opa-Locka in Florida, and Doris Duke’s Shangri-La in Honolulu.

Some primary associations in western architecture with an overtly Islamic influence are the elements of fantasy and leisure. The “Arabian Nights” and “Scheherazade” or other fantastic tales inspired many buildings and most were built as escapes from something. It might be an escape for the leisure class as in a hotel, promotion of a diversion for a cross-section of classes (as in Iranistan), escape from home and work into a fraternal world, with the Masons and Shriners in particular, or escape from their lives in general to movie palaces. These types of

Figure 6 Fox Oakland Theater, author’s photo
buildings aimed at escape most frequently employed stereotypical Islamic elements such as minarets, domes and elaborate decoration to the exterior of the building.

Some of the most readily accessible of these were the movie palaces to be found in most major cities across the United States. These buildings traded on their ability to transport their visitors to another place, and the lure of the East made for a compelling draw for moviegoers. Examples of this can be found in theaters designed by Weeks and Day in the San Francisco Bay area, including the Fox Theater in Oakland. In Shrine temples, elaborate rituals were performed, all in the name of frivolity\textsuperscript{39}. In several cases, Shrine temples doubled as both

\textsuperscript{39} Edwards.
meeting halls for their members and community centers, and often movie theaters at other times. The Shriners signed agreements with organizations such as the Fox theater chain, and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, allowing use of their temples for movies in Atlanta and Boston, and the Academy Awards in Los Angeles.

In a similar way, Spanish influenced architecture was used to convey a sense of escape and relaxation. However, for the most part its use of overt Islamic elements was restrained. Some of its uses in the U.S. of the early twentieth century were for hotels in resort communities of California and Florida. Spanish Revival architecture represents the melding of the two opposing strains of Islamic influence in American architecture. It was often used as an appropriate style for homes in resort areas, both as large casas grandes for the wealthy and as smaller bungalow-style casitas for those of modest income. Palm Beach, Florida was one such development that came out of this style of architecture. One of the earliest resort homes built in Palm Beach was El Mirasol, commissioned by James Cromwell’s mother Eva Stotesbury. This beachfront home was designed by architect Addison Mizner who had been exposed to Islamic influenced Mediterranean styled architecture on trips to Central America and Europe.\textsuperscript{40}

Growing industrialization in the U.S. and the turn of the nineteenth century had led to conflicting desires to both escape the ever

\textsuperscript{40}Worth Avenue, “Palm Beach Story,” \url{http://www.worth-avenue.com/palm_beach_story/next.php}, (accessed June 15, 2005)
more mechanized production of goods and to modernize. This was reflected in the move toward Craftsman and Arts and Crafts styles in art and architecture. These styles valued the production of elements by hand with individual styling not in the manner of cookie-cutter, mass-produced Victorian styles, such as the Queen Anne, which had been popular in the previous decades. Moving even farther away from the older, more ornamental styles was Modern architecture.

Some architects instrumental in bringing this aesthetic to the fore were Louis H. Sullivan, his protégé, Frank Lloyd Wright\textsuperscript{41} in the Midwest and Le Corbusier.\textsuperscript{42} It is also important to note that all of these architects were influenced by “Eastern” styles in their work. Sullivan was influenced most by Middle Eastern forms, while Wright has been historically thought of as most influenced by Japanese styles and standards of workmanship, but also drew from Islamic forms. The impact of the Middle East on Le Corbusier perhaps contributed the most to Modern architecture. Another set of architects that would have a strong influence on architecture of the era from the turn of the century to the 1930s, when Shangri La was constructed, were those involved with the popularization of Spanish Revival styles in such areas as California, Florida and eventually Hawai‘i. The two were not at odds with each


\textsuperscript{42} Le Corbusier was not an American, but his influence was felt throughout Western architecture.
other, but were merely two different roads to arrive at the same destination. Both Modern architects and architects of the Spanish Revival styles were attempting to develop an architecture that was new and different from that of the recent past. Both were trying to break away from the perceived over-decoration of the previous Victorian Era and achieve a new look.

Sullivan was the earliest of these architects, and was most likely to use Islamic forms by way of decoration. This was evidenced in his Wainwright Building and mausoleum St Louis, Missouri, and his Transportation Building for the Chicago World’s Fair in 1893. These buildings used design principles from the Sultan Hasan madrasa in Cairo that Sullivan had discovered in books he acquired in Paris. The Wainwright Building was one of the country’s first “skyscrapers” and Sullivan was an innovator not only for this achievement in height, but also in his use of Islamic style ornamentation on the exterior of the building, while the linear stem and leaf ornamentation on the façade of the Transportation building recalls Iznik tiles. Unlike others who had taken Islamic forms and used them to create fantastical places, Sullivan incorporated aesthetically pleasing designs onto an otherwise typically Western form. This use of Eastern design elements is an example of the

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44 Sweetman, 237.
continued appropriation of forms and decoration from East to West, a legacy going back hundreds of years.

Frank Lloyd Wright trained with Louis Sullivan and was exposed to his design aesthetic. Wright developed his own vision, but that too was influenced by the East, not only Japan, but the Middle East as well. In her discussion of the Ottoman pavilion at the Chicago World’s Exposition of 1893, Celik notes that

David Gebhard has pointed out, this pavilion inspired Frank Lloyd Wright, whose Winslow House in River Forest, Illinois, designed in 1893 and completed in 1894, showed striking similarities to the Ottoman building: it too had an overhanging roof, a band of windows, and terracotta ornament under the eaves. Gebhard has traced other parallels between Wright’s early houses and the Ottoman pavilion, for example in the skylight of his own house (1895) in Oak Park, Illinois (which repeated the pattern of squares on the exterior facades of the Ottoman building) and in the hipped roof, terracotta band, and arched openings of the Isidore Heller House and in the Joseph Husser House (1899), both in Chicago. Indeed, the overhanging roof and the band of terracotta with windows right under the roof became features of his Prairie Houses.45

Both Sullivan and Wright were important precursors to the modern movement, their shift towards simple lines and away from excessive ornamentation laid the foundation for later architectural styles such as Streamline Moderne, International and Modern. Le Corbusier was an influential architect who promoted a move to a more modern style. Along with Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and the architects of the Bauhaus in Germany, Le Corbusier espoused a move toward clean lines, and function taking precedence over form. In the inspiration for his designs,

however Le Corbusier found Middle Eastern styles of architecture to be compatible with his vision of Modern style. Some of his early designs had already displayed an affinity with the Turkish vernacular he had studied: a number of his villas, such as the Villa Jeanneret-Perret (1912), Villa Favre-Jacot (1912), and Villa Schwob (1916), were inspired by ottoman houses in terms of their interior organization around a central hall, their simple spaces, massing and blank street facades. The North African vernacular surfaced sporadically in his work ...the Algerian casbah (the precolonial al-Jaza’ir) entered the modernist discourse of architecture in Le Corbusier’s memorable sentences...Juxtaposing his own housing proposal with the patterns offered by the casbah, Le Corbusier summarized the lessons he had learned: “terraces, suspended gardens, grand bays open to a landscape of dreams conquered by height.” Le Corbusier’s appreciation of the casbah, then focused on isolated features that he interpreted in his own designs.46

Modern architecture, like Gothic architecture centuries before, appropriated Islamic and Middle Eastern forms to create a new Western architectural vocabulary. At the same time, architects looking for a less extreme shift from the architecture of the past were becoming familiar with what would come to be termed Spanish Colonial, or Spanish Revival architecture. This style did not share the same severe ideals with

Modern architecture, but it did share a same root influence in the architecture of the Islamic world, and the Middle East in particular. Spain’s Islamic heritage was long established, and Muslim control had only recently ended when Spain became a colonial power in the Americas.\footnote{Spain’s Christians gained full control over the southern portion of Spain from its Muslim rulers in 1492, the same year Columbus “discovered” the Americas.}

As American architects looked for an architecture suitable to such areas as California\footnote{Arrol Gellner and Douglas Keister. \textit{Red Tile Style: America’s Spanish Revival Architecture}, (New York: Viking Studio, 2002), 9.} and Florida, styles that the Spanish colonists had used seemed appropriate. The inspiration came from colonial architecture, but there was little left to draw from other than the remaining Mission buildings. To add to the pool of elements to draw from, American architects were able to use their experiences during the traditional “grand tour”\footnote{Most who could afford to attend architectural school, or to train with an architect came from moneyed backgrounds, and so could also afford to take a so-called grand tour of Europe to see and appreciate all of its often centuries old architecture.} which had to be altered due to the dangers of World War I. Instead of seeing the architecture of France and Italy, newly trained architects were more likely to tour Spain and sometimes the Middle East to avoid possible conflict in central Europe.\footnote{Gellner and Keister, 22.} This added a wealth of Islamic elements and styles to these architects’ inventory. Buildings from immense train stations to tiny bungalows are designed in Spanish revival styles. Copies are made of the Alhambra in
Spain, while the prevalence of tiled courtyards with fountains grows in California and Florida. New Mexico and Arizona also see a surge in Spanish revival building, with Pueblo revival and its low adobe buildings closely resembling vernacular desert homes of the Middle East.

The eventual number of Islamic influenced buildings in the United States is impossible to estimate, due to the different methods that brought Islamic forms to American architecture, but discussion of Islamic influence on Western and especially American architecture has been lacking. Recognition of the appropriation and re-appropriation of styles from Islamic countries to the West and back again have been examined only infrequently, yet it is still possible to trace patterns in Islamic influence on American architecture. The influence of Islam was felt in American architecture in three ways. The first was through buildings that were based directly on Islamic forms, such as Barnum’s Iranistan, Frederick Church's Olana and Glenn H. Curtiss’ city of Opa Locka, Florida. The second was through the establishment of Spanish Revival styles in areas with histories of Spanish colonization, such as Bertram Goodhue's designs for the San Diego Panama exposition of 1915. The third was through American architects’ adoption and adaptation of Islamic decorative styles, such as Sullivan’s transportation building at the Chicago World’s fair of 1893 and the later interpretation of Islamic forms by Modern architects.
Doris Duke’s decision to build her dream home in Hawai`i in an eclectic style, at the time that she did, at first seems quite unusual. With further investigation however, it seems rather in keeping with the trends of building in Hawai`i at the time. Hawai`i had lost its sovereignty and had become a United States Territory some forty years prior to Duke’s arrival. The islands had been home to a white elite well before the overthrow of the monarchy. This elite, along with the Native Hawaiian elite built homes for leisure activity along Waikiki Beach. As Hawai`i’s economy grew to share the vicissitudes of the United States mainland, it saw a rise in spending during the 1920s and a rise in leisure activity both by residents, and a growing visitor base.

Perhaps one of the first things Duke might have seen upon her arrival on O`ahu would have been the imposing structure of the Royal Hawaiian Hotel on Waikiki Beach. This grand Spanish-Moorish edifice was and still is one of the most recognizable landmarks on the beach, all the more so in the 1930s because of the relatively few hotels in Waikiki. Other buildings that that had been built in the 1920s that Duke may have seen in Honolulu were either Spanish Revival in style, or the increasingly popular “Hawaiian” style based on C.W. Dickey’s designs, and incorporating Spanish Revival styles with Asian elements. The style of the buildings she saw might have served to influence Duke to see Hawai`i as a place that would welcome the very eclectic type of home she intended to build.
The U.S. territory that Doris Duke chose for her new home was a former island nation, still feeling the effects of the abrupt change in government, if not the power structure, working to find its place as a Territory of the United States and within the world.

Colonizing foreigners had for years appropriated land that had been socially important to the indigenous culture for their own purposes. From the missionaries that came in the 1820s who were granted land upon which to build homes and churches;\(^{51}\) to the sugar plantation owners’ arrivals in the mid-1800s, who purchased large tracts of land on which to build fortunes; to the builders of the grand Waikiki Beach hotels also making their fortunes on the use of Hawai`i’s natural resources; to Doris Duke’s construction of her escape home, Shangri La; colonialism has been the primary factor in these foreigners’ ability to build. Colonialism, or its threat, accounted for the actions that allowed all of these building events to come about. The monarchy’s attempts to prevent becoming a colony led to changes in land ownership in the nation that eventually allowed America to become Hawai`i’s colonizer, and allowed settlers to build in the fashion they felt most appropriate, and allowed Doris Duke to construct Shangri La.

\(^{51}\)According to Peek, with the express condition that they remove all upon their departure. Jeanette Murray Peek *Stepping Into Time: A Guide to Honolulu’s Historic Landmarks*, (Honolulu: Mutual Publishing, 1994).
The justification for Europeans and Americans building in formerly sacred and other Hawaiian areas were economically based, as well as the result of the monarchy’s efforts to prevent the exercise of foreign power on Hawaiian lands. For a fair amount of time after European contact with Hawai`i, the monarchy retained control of all the land, as had been the custom for the previous centuries. Only under foreign pressure, and the need to appear to be modernizing, did King Kamehameha III enact the Great Mahele in 1848, allowing for private land ownership, including ownership by foreigners.

Once this ownership was possible, not only did foreign individuals with close ties to the monarchy settle in Hawai`i, but also so did those
who could afford to purchase large tracts of land and set up moneymaking enterprises on them. This led to a shift in power in Hawai`i, robbing the monarchy of its power and eventually leading to its overthrow by American industrialists in 1893. By the time of the overthrow of the monarchy, foreigners owned a large amount of land and Honolulu had become a city filled with western style multi-story buildings.

After exposure to the superior power of European visitors, Hawai`i’s monarchs saw value in giving in to foreign requests to a certain extent. At first, missionaries had seemed a relatively benign group to allow to take up residence in the islands. Later, when the monarchy began taking on Western trappings in an effort to be seen by the European powers as a people capable of self-government and thereby avoid the loss of their power, the Mahele was seen as a means to express how much Hawai`i’s thinking had “advanced.” This however, proved only to be a postponement of the eventual outright transfer of power out of the hands of Hawaiians to the new colonial power of the United States. Once foreigners could own and amass property, they could also wield power in Hawai`i’s government through the threat of intervention by their home country in any dispute with the local government.

This eventually led to the overthrow of the monarchy in 1893, and the imposition of power by the United States. Once Hawai`i was a U.S. territory, after 1898, Americans were a direct colonial power in the
Pacific, and no longer needed to negotiate with the Hawaiian government to install buildings of their own. While Hawai`i previously had foreign influences and buildings, its identity was still that of a sovereign nation, with its own identity based on its indigenous culture. Now, Hawai`i needed to negotiate a new identity with its position as a U.S. territory. Part of this identity negotiation included the development of a new style of architecture that was identifiable as “Hawaiian.” The resulting architecture however, was far from truly Hawaiian.

In the view of mainland architects, the Spanish Revival architecture popular at the time was appropriate for any warm beach destination, whether there might be a Spanish history there or not. This worked out quite well in places such as California and Florida, but its presence in Hawai`i is more problematic. In fact, it highlights the colonialist mentality at work amongst the white elite of both the U.S. mainland and Hawai`i as well.

Not only did mainland architects (generally of the upper classes) feel it their right to impose upon Hawai`i the architecture they felt was most suited to its role as play destination of the wealthy, but also the powerful (usually white) property owners of the Territory agreed upon the suitability of a style not at all rooted in Hawai`i’s past. They showed this in their commission of these architects with little knowledge of Hawai`i to design buildings with little connection to Hawai`i. Repeatedly, architects brought in from prestigious mainland firms designed properties without
so much as visiting Hawai`i, or researching the suitability of their designs for the planned locations. At the time of the greatest colonial expansion the world had seen, mainly by Britain and France, the powerful in the U.S. exercised the power they held in the Pacific at least in part by redesigning Hawai`i more in the United States’ own image.

The residents of Hawai`i had come to expect access to the same kinds of homes, buildings and leisure activities they may have experienced through trips of their own to the U.S. mainland, or through exposure to such media as magazines and movies. The late 1920s and 1930s became a veritable building boom in Honolulu. The buildings produced ranged across styles popular at the time in the continental U.S. and encompassed an expanding “Hawaiian style” based on the designs of noted architect C.W. Dickey. This style was much more closely tied to Spanish Revival and Mediterranean architecture than to anything indigenously Hawaiian, and so, Hawai`i’s negotiation of its identity in relation to the United States began to resemble the American interpretation of the exotic resort location it was to become.

The 1920s had seen the establishment of Matson’s passenger ship line from the U.S. mainland to Honolulu, as well as the construction of the Royal Hawaiian Hotel to give their passengers a place to stay during their visit to the islands. This was one of the earliest hotels on Waikiki beach, the second largest after the Moana Hotel, and was the first to offer a resort experience. Included was more than just a place to stay, but
also activities for guests to participate in, from tennis, swimming and surfing to restaurant recommendations, and arrangements for trips to visit the pineapple cannery and other attractions. The well-heeled visitor to Hawai‘i now expected an experience much like he or she would have elsewhere in the United States, like in Florida or California.

While the Royal Hawaiian Hotel on Waikiki beach had directly utilized the Spanish-Moorish style, buildings that were designed later would have more diverse inspiration. The Royal Hawaiian Hotel’s architectural firm was a prestigious New York one, and the primary architect did not make a visit to Honolulu before undertaking the design. Not only did this result in difficulties relating to the site during construction, but it points to the assumption on the part of architects of the time that designs for resort buildings could have similar styles no
matter the vacation destination. Whatever the destination, California, Florida or Hawai`i, the Spanish-Moorish style was a perfect fit.

The Royal Hawaiian Hotel on Waikiki Beach is located on a piece of land that had multiple uses. Early records indicate the property contained a sacrificial heiau, and excavations have indicated there was also a game field. The hotel that now stands on this spot was erected as a site for the recreation of the wealthy with no regard to its previous history as a site of veneration to Hawai`i’s gods. Zeynip Celik has done a great deal of exploration of colonial architecture in France’s colonization of Algiers, noting that sites important to the Algerians were co-opted by the French and transformed into sites that glorified the French colonizers. This has similarities to the attitudes and designs deposited in Hawai`i by its local and foreign white elite. Powerful settler colonialists may not have intentionally set out to appropriate sites of power and sacredness from Hawai`i’s indigenous population, as the French did in Algiers, but the result was the same, greater power and access for the colonizers.

Doris Duke’s Shangri La, an expression of her fondness for Hawai`i was at the same time an exercise of her power as a wealthy white woman. For a price, and because of her connections on the mainland,

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52 Peek, 85  
53 Çelik, Urban Forms.
she could acquire the land she desired, alter it to suit her wishes, and build the home of her dreams.
Shangri La is indeed a modern building. It conforms to ideas popularized by the modern movement in architecture, including the use of new/innovative materials, in this case, reinforced concrete and glass. The house molds to its site on a hillside, rather than molding the hillside to it. The glass allows the outside and inside to act as one, where it is used. Within this modern structure, however lies a home with a distinct separation of public and private spaces, those to be used by visitors,
servants and the homeowners are distinct from one another. This is a variation of a configuration particular to Islamic communities with the resources to build a large home. Where feasible, in the Islamic world, public and private spaces have been separated, and accessed in a variety of ways to prevent outsiders from directly entering, or even viewing the private spaces of the home. Wyeth’s original sketches for the design of the home called for the ties to Islamic culture to be made in its outward appearance, but consultation with Duke resulted in modifications, and ultimately the expression of its ties with Islamic culture are in the layout and interior design of the home.

The architect Duke chose to build her Hawai‘i home was Marion Sims Wyeth, who had worked on many homes for wealthy clients in Florida. Wyeth trained with Addison Mizner, designer of James Cromwell’s mother’s home in Palm Beach, Florida, El Mirasol. He was part of the group of architects at the time furthering development of Florida’s real estate through Spanish Revival designs for society vacationers, both through homes and resort hotels, and thoroughly familiar with both Spanish Revival styles, including the so-called Hispano-Moresque style. Wyeth was also familiar with designing homes for wealthy clients in the tropical climate of Palm Beach. This combination of factors resulted in Duke’s selection of Wyeth for the design of her home, and the home’s seeming suitability for its location in

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54 Worth Avenue

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Hawai`i. Sharon Littlefield points out that the home was originally intended to be in a style similar to the Hispano-Moresque style of El Mirasol.55

Though Duke owned a number of homes inherited from her father, she had not yet had one constructed to her own specifications. This home would be the first to reflect her personal taste as opposed to her parents’. Wyeth’s initial design scheme bore some similarity to fantasy Islamic-themed buildings in the U.S. with stylized minarets and an

imposing walled façade. Duke rejected this design, preferring a more understated layout. The layout she preferred dispensed with the minarets, lowered the walls, and oriented the home to take into account the ocean that would be just steps away, as well as Diamond Head just northeast of the home. This clarification of Duke’s interpretation of “Islamic” allowed Wyeth to design a home that was both more in keeping with traditional Middle Eastern home design and more modern in feel.

Kazi Ashraf criticizes Don Hibbard’s characterization of the home as Islamic-styled, and states that the home more correctly belongs to the

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56 Ibid, 22-23.
tradition of Modernism, popular at the time it was built. Ashraf does not recognize the influence of Islamic architecture on Modernist architecture, nor does he examine the relationships between Islamic styles, Moorish and Spanish styles and American styles, which certainly all come into play when discussing Shangri La and its influences.\textsuperscript{57} It might be more appropriate to characterize Shangri La as neither an Islamic styled home, nor a Modernist style home, but as a combination of the two, exemplar of what perhaps might have been built at a similar location at a similar time by someone of equal means in the Middle East.

Duke’s changes to Wyeth’s original plans might at first seem to take away from the similarities to Middle Eastern homes, but in fact

\textsuperscript{57} Kazi Ashraf, “A Review of Mr. Don J. Hibbard’s Manuscript on Shangri-La,” (Unpublished, February, 2002).
served to make the home more similar to those found in the Middle East, and at the same time more similar to buildings in the Western Modern style. While most American buildings with Islamic themes had sought to emphasize the exotic character of their buildings through the exterior elements, homes in the Middle East have traditionally been more functional, with privacy as the primary focus. As a constant target of photographers and the press, Duke valued what little privacy she could carve out for herself. A home modeled on the traditional Middle Eastern style home was not only a perfect fit for the first and only home Duke was to have built for herself, but at the time it seemed a perfect fit for its location in Honolulu.

Shangri La is set on an estate of nearly five acres, a large lot by Hawai`i’s residential standards, and is accessible by a long down-hill-
winding driveway from a gate at the end of a nondescript street in a quiet residential neighborhood just south of Diamond Head. When it was constructed, the home had no neighbors close-by, yet the entry was as unobtrusive then as it is today. At the foot of the driveway surrounding a large banyan tree, is the main entrance to the home. The visitor is faced with two white-stuccoed walls, undecorated save for a large solitary wooden door centered in each wall. The only indication of the main entrance to the home is the statues of two camels flanking one of these doors. Entrances to many homes in the Middle East are even less marked than this one, frequently nothing but a simple wooden door located along an expanse of stone or plaster wall along a narrow street or alley, that leads into a courtyard or a side room of the home. Modern homes, on the other hand, might have any manner of entryways, from simple, and unobtrusive, such as this one, to large and imposing. The space beyond the door is a foyer, surrounded at ceiling height with Moroccan painted glass windows, and a Moroccan painted wooden ceiling, as well as a screened view of the courtyard beyond. Off of the foyer were originally two rooms, one of them an office for Duke’s secretary. Down the stairs from the foyer is the “Purely Persian” courtyard as Duke described it, although Kazi Ashraf has asserted that it is more of a Spanish and North African design than truly Persian. While its elements are Persian in origin, such as the style of the columns

58 Shangri La tour, guide comment, 2005.
59 Ashraf.
separating the courtyard from the walkway, similar in style to those found on a Persian *talar* \(^{60}\) and ornamented with reflective sheets of stone. The decorative rafter tails that overhang the courtyard are similar in style to those found on Persian talars as well. The tile decoration facing the foyer stairways, on the stair structure itself, and on the side walls are also Persian styled. The interior of the courtyard is filled with flowering plants, a golden shower tree, and a small twelve pointed star.

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\(^{60}\) An outdoor reception area found in Persian palaces such as the Ali Qapu and the Chihil Sutun both in Isfahan, Iran.
shaped fountain. Branching off of the courtyard at each of the four corners are doorways, the Southwestern leads to rooms that previously served as a billiards room and bathroom, with an upstairs office. The Northwestern door leads to a hallway that in turn leads to the private bedrooms of the house.

The billiards room, bathroom and office were transformed in the 1980s into what Duke termed the Turkish and Baby Turkish rooms.
Both come from a room in a historic Damascus\textsuperscript{61} home, purchased by Duke after her decision to stipulate the establishment of the home as a museum upon her death. These may be the most authentically installed artifacts in the home, as by this time Duke had taken an interest in preservation and the correct ways to protect and preserve her home and its contents.

Once the rooms had arrived at Shangri La, Duke began the process of meticulously cleaning the centuries of dirt and soot accumulated on the walls with cotton swabs, while having the original rooms that these new walls were to be placed in altered to suit the specifics of this purchase. The ceiling of the downstairs room was raised up to the height of the top floor, and a reproduction ceiling was installed. Meanwhile the floor was excavated to best suit the dimensions of the purchased elements. During the floor excavation, the excavated dirt was built up along one wall to provide a seating area, after which an indoor fountain was adapted to suit the size of the room and installed, and tile cut and laid to cover the floor. Finally, the doorway leading off of the upstairs foyer became an indoor balcony looking out over the new Turkish room. The process was similar in the Baby Turkish room, save for the overlooking door, central fountain and seating area.

\textsuperscript{61} Though the rooms came from Syria, which has not been part of the Ottoman Empire (or Turkey) since 1918, the style of the rooms is typical of Ottoman interiors of the time in which they were constructed, as Damascus had long been a major city within the Ottoman Empire.
Across the courtyard, through the Northwest door and down the hallway are the home’s bedrooms: James Cromwell’s former bedroom, Duke’s stepdaughter’s room, and Duke’s own bedroom, designed and built for her in India, inspired by the Taj Mahal, and the inspiration of Duke’s desire to build the house in the first place. This wing has a second, more private courtyard, also with its own fountain and columns. This more private area of the home more closely resembles the haramlik found in Islamic homes, where the family is able to be most relaxed, and free from the eyes of strangers. The name itself comes from the Arabic haram, for forbidden, where guests were not allowed to visit. With the doorway to the courtyard closed, the wing itself is indistinguishable from any other section of the house, with no emphasis placed on it by a large hallway, or staircase, as are typically found in American homes.
At the north- and southeast of the central courtyard are entries to the living room, as well as doors leading to the servants' wing on one side and the yard and pool on the other. The living room again has its own Moroccan style ceiling, fabricated during construction to Duke's specifications. At the time of construction, the living room was very simply decorated, with only the ceiling and fabricated Indian jali-type screens in the windows as permanent Islamic elements within the room. It was in fact most prominently dominated by its enormous floor to ceiling elevator mounted glass door that slid into the basement at the

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62 While other historic architectural elements are used throughout the estate, most historic looking ceilings were fabricated due to the vagaries of the sizes of the rooms at Shangri La. Most of the time, Duke fit artifacts into her home rather than fitting her home to the artifacts, the notable exceptions being the Turkish and Baby Turkish rooms.
touch of a button. This huge window allowed unrestricted views of the yard, the Playhouse beyond, and finally Diamond Head just north of the home. With another simple sliding motion, the jali screens retracted to allow the sights and sounds of the Pacific Ocean into the room.

Shortly after completion of the home, Duke acquired a rare thirteenth century mihrab and installed it facing the sliding window, on the wall of the hallway leading to the dining room. This was to become the second major element of the home. The first was the bedroom/bathroom suite that was the impetus to build in the first place,
and the second was the placement of the mihrab. Duke placed the mihrab so that it became a counterpoint to the view of Diamond Head. On the one side was the most idealized landmark that represented one of her loves, Hawai`i, and on the other a powerful symbol of the Islamic cultures that she had also come to love. Located south of the living room, the mihrab room is one of the smallest in the home, essentially a glorified hallway, with a small seating area and niches for display in
addition to the mihrab mounted on the wall. However, its location at the opposite end of the living room of the view of Diamond Head makes its placement ideal. This is one element that makes Duke’s home distinctly not Islamic, for in an Islamic home, the placement of such an element would certainly be considered more for its correct indication of direction, than for aesthetic purposes.

Beyond the mihrab is the area Duke referred to as her “library,” merely another portion of this hallway, free of books, with Persian doors
installed in the wall leading to the dining room. When the dining room was first designed, it was in a Hawaiian theme rather than Islamic. It is oriented on the same axis as the living room, with a view of Diamond Head out one set of windows and the Pacific Ocean out another. Along the wall opposite Diamond Head were originally large fish tanks. The wall facing the ocean held a shell collection. When Duke became interested in historic preservation, and also in the idea of leaving her estates in trust to become museums in the 1960s, she had this room made over. She had the fish tanks removed and installed Islamic tile panels in their place, replaced the shell collection with an Ottoman style fireplace, and finally draped the ceiling and walls, with fabric she had manufactured to resemble a nomadic tent.
Off of the dining room is the kitchen and butler’s pantry, and beyond these the staff quarters, now offices. None of these areas contained Duke’s collections, but were strictly functional, and while they cannot be discounted from the plan overall, they were not areas that Duke used often for herself, and may not have entered into her consideration for the feel of the layout of the home. At the same time, however, the staff areas are somewhat typical of a traditional home in the Islamic world. Areas where domestic work was performed were also

Figure 20 Entryway to Staff Quarters (Source Mason Architects)
separated from the public areas of the home in order to shield the women of the household who performed those duties from any visiting men. This same concept guides the placement of the three bedrooms that made up Duke’s private living quarters. In placing all these rooms down separate corridors from the main courtyard, Duke and Wyeth conformed to the tenet that private and public spheres should be separate as expressed in Islamic domestic architecture.

Traditional homes in most of the Middle East are thought to have a few features in common. The first is the presentation of a façade with relatively few decorations or features such as windows and doors. Second is the inclusion of a courtyard, whether enclosed within the home, as in areas with smaller lots, or exterior to it, in areas with larger lots. City streets are often made up of such blank façade walls with unremarkable doors set into them at intervals. A door in this façade might open up directly into the reception area of the home, or it might open onto the courtyard instead. When the door opens into either, it opens to a buffer that prevents visitors from seeing directly into the interior of the home. In urban areas, the courtyard generally has other rooms radiating off of it, mainly public rooms, allowing greater privacy for private sections of the household. The private rooms of the home were generally located farther away from the public rooms, down a corridor that also usually leads off of the central courtyard. In some cases, only the walls of the property might enclose the courtyard, while the living
areas may be clustered to one side of the enclosure. The courtyard itself serves multiple purposes. It can be used for work: cooking or laundry, or for leisure: dining or lounging.

In the areas that were used primarily by Duke, Shangri La fits this model. However, when considering the areas of Shangri La that were the staff’s domain, the plan deviates from what might be considered typical. These deviations, along with several other elements are what might cause the home to be considered a Modern style building. If a modern style building typically has characteristics such as a low profile, lack of exterior ornament, non-symmetrical layout and a use of state of the art technology, then Shangri La also fulfills those requirements. As Ashraf has pointed out, Shangri La does not present an imposing edifice when viewed from land. The exterior of the building, on its most public exteriors at the entry and at the ocean, is quite severe, with little decoration, and a uniformly white wall surface. The floor plan of the main building is definitely asymmetrical, with arms radiating out from the central courtyard. Finally, Duke spared no expense in her installation of such technologically forward looking elements as the elevator mounted floor to ceiling window in the living room, and the adjustable height diving boards. Also, the home was built of poured concrete, a very modern building material at the time for a home.

Is the home Islamic, or Modern? Neither, or both? It is an Islamic Modern home, with unquestionable elements of both. Considering the
influence of Islamic forms on the Modern movement in architecture, and the global enthusiasm for the Modern movement, it is reasonable to believe that this home could have been built in the United States or the Middle East. It would fit in equally well in either location, at the time it was constructed, and at the present time.
Doris Duke - Collector

"Collecting is a very different matter. It begins with a tourist’s search for memorabilia and ends with a passion for certain categories of objects. Both exoticism and casual collecting had been present since the early nineteenth century, although systematic and thematic collecting did not really flourish until the appearance, late in the nineteenth century, of an art market."63

Duke’s collecting mirrored that of her peers in wealth and also eclectic artists such as Frederic Church who is not regarded a collector, but an artist. His home, Olana was designed in a fantasy of Islamic style, influenced more by mosques and monumental buildings than by homes found in the Islamic world, in close collaboration between owner and architect. This was similar in manner to Shangri La, although Shangri La possessed more characteristics of a home that might be found in the Islamic world. Like Duke after him, Church contributed much to the design of Olana during its construction in the 1870s, and filled it with collections he amassed during his trips to the Middle East, including Turkish carpets, Persian tiles and more. The attraction in the latter nineteenth century for Middle Eastern forms as a style of interior decoration was widespread. According to John Sweetman,

Potter Palmer’s house by Cobb and Frost at Chicago was only the most expensive of many to secrete within picturesque medieval exteriors

63 Grabar, “Roots and Others”, 6
elaborate sunken pools or fountains on Moorish lines. ... One of the most remarkable of the wealthy experimenters with Islamic style of the day was Mrs Arabella Yarrington Worsham, who in 1884 married Collis P. Huntington, the railroad millionaire. The ceremony took place in a house in New York, 4 West 54th Street, which she owned for years and where she had recently created the Moorish sitting or smoking-room now in the Brooklyn Museum.\textsuperscript{64}

This room features a horseshoe arch shaped fireplace, and Moroccan styled painted ceiling, in addition to other details with Islamic styling.

Isabella Stewart Gardner was another prominent collector, a little earlier than Duke, in the late 19\textsuperscript{th} and early 20\textsuperscript{th} centuries. She too was considered unconventional in her social behavior, as well as in her collecting. In addition to standard European art, she collected from the Middle East as well, traveling to the Ottoman Empire. Like Duke, Gardner also employed the services of an arbiter of taste, an art expert to assist her in gathering her collection. Gardner’s was Bernard Berenson, an art historian who specialized in the renaissance, while Duke’s was renowned Persian art expert Arthur Upham Pope. During her lifetime, she not only collected, but designed a home/museum. The museum was established in Boston in 1903, in a building designed by Gardner in collaboration with an architect, and like Shangri La presented a simple façade to the exterior, though its inspirations were palazzos of Venice (which themselves show Islamic influences), and it features a glass enclosed courtyard at the interior.

\textsuperscript{64} Sweetman.
Gardner, unlike Doris Duke started out with plans to design a museum that could be lived in, rather than a home that later became a museum. Gardner sometimes lived in the building while it was an active museum prior to her death in 1924 and, like Duke with Shangri La, continued to alter it as she acquired new pieces.

William Randolph Hearst also collected on a grand scale, and, like Duke seemed to have unending funds with which to construct his dream home, and to decorate it. Again, like Duke and Gardner, he was extremely involved in the design of San Simeon in California, in collaboration with his architect Julia Morgan, and he filled it with antique and newly constructed art and architectural elements gathered from across the world. Hearst too was more mainstream in his collecting than Duke was in collecting for Shangri La, gathering more from Europe, a great deal after the end of World War I, when the cost to collect in that part of the world was low.

While there have been great women collectors over time, the number of women collectors was relatively few when compared with men who have collected. Men and women may have collected for similar reasons, to establish an identity for themselves, but often their collections painted an identity that was acceptable to their social peers, or their intended social peers. Many men with social aspirations during the Industrial Revolution sought to collect objects that they hoped would cement their status in the elite circles that their wealth alone could not
entirely guarantee them entrance to. Women too collected for much the same reasons. However, Duke collected for somewhat different reasons. The collections she acquired were not, for the most part, gathered to express either her wealth or her status. Her acquisitions were made with a significant amount of secrecy—not unusual in the world of art collecting with its issues of authenticity and provenance, but seemingly unnecessary as her purchases were mainly for their aesthetic as opposed to monetary value.

Duke was not the first to go against the grain in her collecting practices. She in fact seems to follow a strong tradition of wealthy eccentrics both male and female who collected what they liked. She also followed a tradition of behaving in a manner which was at odds with conventional behavior of the times. To put it very broadly, two styles of collecting and behavior existed amongst the wealthy in America and Europe. These were the acquisition and collection of status reinforcing items in concert with conventional behavior and the converse, the acquisition and collection of items less conventional items and corollary unconventional behavior.

Duke’s collecting and behavior falls into the latter category. This category itself, however is a type of conventional behavior amongst the wealthy. Doris Duke then, was both collecting and behaving much more conventionally than she might have liked to think. As long, it seems as there have been those with wealth, status and power demanding that
others of their social status behave in the same manner, there have been those who have refused to behave in that manner and have created circles of like minded individuals.

Arthur Upham Pope, Doris Duke’s primary contact in her search for expertise on Middle Eastern art and architecture, (as well as in her search for dealers of the same) has been portrayed in the Western realm of academics as a man who was the expert on Persian antiquities. His motivations in pursuing his love of Persian art and antiquities has generally been shown to be as out of a desire to promote the valuable contributions of Persia to the art of the world. Mohammed Gholi Majd points out however, that Pope’s contributions to Persia are more the product of self-promotion on Pope’s part and lack of understanding on the part of those that considered him to be an expert. Perhaps a more pertinent explanation of his actions comes from examining them in light of the pervasive Orientalism of the time combined with the mechanisms of colonialism still in place in the Middle East.

Pope, who was not trained in archaeology, or the history and cultures of the Middle East, came to be considered the expert in Persian art and architecture, not through his actual expertise, but his perceived expertise. Pope’s academic background was in philosophy, specifically aesthetics, so in effect, he was qualified only to speak to the Western perception of the beauty of Persian art. He used this expertise to achieve remarkable success in both the West as well as Iran. Beginning with his
early exposure to and appreciation of Persian carpets, Pope cultivated an assumed expertise that came not from experience, but from his aesthetic training. He arranged exhibitions of carpets during college, primarily with an end to selling those carpets to make a profit for himself as well as the sellers. In later years, he used this background combined with his training in aesthetics as a basis to position himself as a consultant to wealthy collectors of Persian carpets and objects. When he had made enough profit in this venture, he was actually able to travel to Persia in 1925, seeking to further his expertise and make contacts for more extensive participation in his dealings with wealthy collectors. Pope was convinced that his interest in Persia was mainly philanthropic. He took up the cause of promoting Persia to the Western world as a formerly great civilization that needed to be recognized for its contributions to the aesthetic development of the world. His contacts in the American legation to Persia endorsed him to the recently installed Persian government as such, and Shah Reza attended a lecture given by Pope on this topic. Regardless that Pope spoke no Persian; the Shah was sold on the speech and thereafter gave Pope unprecedented access to Persia’s artifacts of all kinds. Pope was not an archaeologist, yet he had access to any site he desired.65

The Shah, however, had been installed through the assistance of the British government, and thus his authority to give Pope this access

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was not without opponents. In fact, Pope and an associate dealer of his, A. Rabenou, were suspected of systematically looting Persia’s shrines and mosques. Not only this, but Pope’s promotional activities on the part of Persia often appear to be elaborate advertising schemes, to create interest on the part of Westerners in order to sell artifacts that he had almost exclusive access to. He became the procurer of Persian objects for Chicago’s Oriental institute, as well as the University of Pennsylvania, frequently making a profit. More than his dealing activities place him in an Orientalist light however. The main justification for that is his image of himself as benevolent Western midwife to Persia’s great rebirth. He thought that Persia needed to be promoted to the West as a source of great civilization. And considering the West’s relative ignorance of the contributions of the Middle East to world advancement his idea might not seem so unreasonable. But the assumption that Persia was incapable of remembering its own greatness and needed to be reminded by a Westerner was effrontery at its most pure. Pope, benevolent as he might have wanted to be, was a contributor to the Orientalism of the time, and a participant in its exercise as well.

Duke’s first major collecting trip after her honeymoon in 1938 took her to Iran, Iraq, Syria, Turkey and Egypt. Her companion and assistant on this trip was Mary Crane, a graduate student of Pope’s, and her dealers came mainly through Pope’s network of associates. Without his

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assistance, she may not have been able to gain access to the large amount of objects that she did. Soon after this trip she acquired what is now considered to be the most important piece in her collection of Islamic art, a thirteenth-century Persian mihrab by one of the most highly respected tile-makers of the time `Ali Ibn Muhammad Ibn Abi Tahir, and one of only a handful of mihrabs of this age and quality still in existence.

Duke was interested in a mihrab during her trip, and Pope let his associate, Rabenou know that. Ultimately however, Rabenou either had no mihrabs at the time or had none that Duke felt strongly about. In the end, that acquisition came from another dealer, Hagop Kervorkian, and was surrounded in such secrecy that it was not until after the opening of Shangri La as a museum in 2003 that experts on Islamic tile discovered that this rare item had not been lost forever.

Though other items in her sizeable collection\textsuperscript{67} are not considered as important as the mihrab, they nonetheless, can be seen as fairly significant losses to the cultures from which she acquired them. British semi-colonial power benefitted Duke to the detriment of Persia and the current nation of Iran. The British had installed Pope’s benefactor, the Shah, and Duke acquired a degree of that British colonial power through Pope’s connections, making her able to exert her Orientalist visions.

\textsuperscript{67}Duke’s collection is estimated to be the fifth largest collection in the United States. Littlefield, 62
She was able to fill her fantasy home with Persian art and architectural elements. Her own connections to American colonial power in Hawai`i allowed for her to build Shangri La in the manner that she wanted, rather than as Hawai`i’s law required. Hawai`i law requires that the beachfront be accessible to the public up to the vegetation line, but Duke wanted to build up the shoreline, to provide a level location for her pool and playhouse, and construct a small harbor for a boat. Through Duke’s husband, James Cromwell and his connections in the U.S. government, urging from President Roosevelt resulted in a complicated series of land swaps with the territorial government allowing for Duke’s construction to proceed, without providing public shoreline access.

Duke’s collecting did not abate once her home was constructed. She continued to evidence an Orientalist attitude in her intentions especially while collecting after the 1950s. At this point she had become interested in preservation through participating in the restoration of Newport, Rhode Island, home to her Rough Point estate. It was also during this period that she began to contemplate the future of her estates and homes after her death. Her will created three museums from her three favored residences, Rough Point, Duke Farms in New Jersey, and Shangri La. Each of these museums has a theme. Rough Point’s is mainly the Newport lifestyle and preservation efforts; Duke Farms’ is agriculture and the natural setting; while Shangri La’s is Islamic art and culture. It was at this point that she began altering Shangri La to hold
almost exclusively Islamic elements. During these years Duke also acquired in Thailand an entire Thai village that she hoped to set up as a cultural site in Hawai‘i. The only thing that kept her from making this reality was the lack of availability of what she felt was a suitable location to rebuild the village. In both cases, Duke was trying to promote her vision of Eastern cultures as the authority to be learned from.

Shangri La was the only home that Doris Duke collected for in a significant way. She inherited other homes (Rough Point, Duke Farms, etc) and bought Falcon’s Lair, but Shangri La was the only one that had been hers from its inception, and so was the one she most identified with. Collecting Islamic art and objects to decorate Shangri La was Duke’s “primary means of expression.” Surrounding herself with exotic oriental objects allowed Duke to see herself as far away from the stresses of her day-to-day life, and to imagine herself in almost another world entirely. It allowed her to construct an exotic, and playful identity of herself.

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68 Don Hibbard, Shangri La, (Unpublished Manuscript, stored at Shangri La, Honolulu, Hawai‘i, 2001). Also see Last Will and Testament of Doris Duke.
Interpretation of Shangri La

Doris Duke’s mandate to establish her home as a center for the study of Middle Eastern art and culture is in itself an act of Orientalism. By using her collection and creation to present Islam and the Middle East to a presumably Western audience of visitors and scholars, Duke presumes to establish her view as one of a well-informed authority. When a western scholar of the East or Islam presents information for western consumption, they are considered Orientalist because their intended audience is the West, and they are by necessity simplifying cultures of the East to make them understandable to a western audience. Do either the collection or its presentation counter this issue of Orientalism in the establishment of the estate as a site for study and exposure to Islamic art and culture?

To a degree, Shangri La is more purely an art museum than a museum of culture; the only way to learn about the culture is through a guide on a tour of the estate. This makes the information that the guides disseminate crucial. As there is no interpretive data, such as labels on objects or written material posted about the history of the estate, within Shangri La to guide the visitor, it must be done through another medium. This issue has been addressed through the use of interpretive tours led by trained guides. A problem with interpretive guides, however,
is the variation in interpretation from guide to guide. One guide might be interested in Duke’s travels around the world, while another might favor stories about her philanthropic efforts, and still another could focus on the tile panels that she collected. Another problem faced by Shangri La as a museum is the interest of the visitor. Many who come to Shangri La do so because of the lure of visiting the former home of a wealthy celebrity, rather than any interest in Islamic art and cultures. That may draw visitors in, but it was not the intent of Duke’s dedication of the estate as a museum, and so it that lure must be met with information that will both sate the appetite of the visitor for information about the home’s former resident, as well as whet their appetite to learn more about Islamic art and culture, as Duke’s will mandated, as well as the cultures themselves deserve. This might more effectively be done in a different way than through interpretive guides, who come to the position with varying levels of interest of their own about Islamic art and culture and Doris Duke. One option might be printed guide material for visitors to read on their own, or recorded material, that does not vary so much as guides might. Also, the interaction between visitor and guide allows for a wide range of topics that might arise and be addressed during the tour, possibly occupying all of the tour time, and preventing any meaningful interpretation of the art and culture connected to it.

There is a fine line between entertaining visitors and giving them a lesson on Islamic art, architecture and culture. Guides have to make the
tour worth the 25-dollar fee, but cannot take the time necessary to elaborate in detail about each item. This problem will only be exacerbated in the future when more areas are completed and opened to the public. Tours are only about one and a half hours, barely enough time to see the entire house, much less explain the origins and significance of each room. A minor attempt is made to point out that the elements are from different places and eras, and the fact that the house expresses Doris Duke’s unique vision is emphasized, but no mention is made of how Duke’s vision might differ from someone who might live in an Islamic country. Care is taken to point out that the placement of the Mihrab is for aesthetic rather than religious purposes, and that the chandelier in the dining room was created in Europe for the Indian market.69 Care is taken to show that this object is not of Islamic origin, although not unlikely to show up in an Indian home. Care is also taken to show examples of pieces that Duke altered to suit her sensibilities, or had commissioned based on original works that inspired her. Her Mughal bedroom/bathroom suite is one example. This was inspired by the Taj Mahal, but contemporarily made. The differences between antique items and contemporary items is difficult to spot for someone not trained in the field, so it would be helpful to make more of an effort to

69 This is an example of appropriation crossing back and forth from culture to culture, Indian aesthetics and style making its way to Europe, to be translated to something to be exported back to India, then purchased from its original owner to be taken back to the west. A phenomenon that was at work not only in art collection, but in ideas as well, contributing to the transmittal of architectural forms from their places of origin throughout the world.
show these, or explain the general divisions between what was antique, “off the rack” as Collections Manager Owen Moore puts it, or commissioned. One of the problems pointed out by critics of Orientalism is western scholars’ inability to recognize change over time in the Middle East and Islamic countries. Too frequently, these countries are described as having been frozen in time, or something similar. Much of Doris Duke’s collection is either antique, from the early years of Islam, or commissioned based on items she saw that were antique, muddling any distinctions that might have existed were the items found, rather than produced for a specific use. This lack of distinction helps to further the notion that these regions and countries truly are frozen in time, if antique and newly made artwork or crafts are indistinguishable from one another.

Ultimately, Duke’s intent was to open the house as a center for the study of Islamic art and culture. The tours’ final product is a well-integrated combination of Islamic art and architecture with Duke’s life and personal vision of her home. The guides are careful to relate only verifiable anecdotes in addition to information about items in the house gleaned from their training. They also bracket their opinions and conjecture as such, so that the visitor hears stories that are entertaining, but is aware of what is and is not based in verifiable fact.

Shangri La is a home inspired by Islamic forms. It follows a number of precedents in Islamic inspired buildings, from fantasy escapes
built by artists and theater companies, to Spanish Revival architecture that only referenced Islamic forms secondhand through Spain, to Modern architecture in the West. Some may not consider it to be a building that holds true to traditional Islamic forms, but it nonetheless was intended to reference Doris Duke’s travels in the Islamic world, and was filled with both art and architectural elements from that world. It is a structure based in Orientalism. Its purposes as a home to escape to, and to live out Doris Duke’s fantasies are typical of Western thought associated with Orientalism. In addition, the assumption of expertise that allowed Duke to mandate that her home be opened for the study of Islamic art and culture is blatant Orientalism.

The one way that it does not display Orientalism is in its outward design. This design was more in keeping both with traditional Islamic domestic architecture and with Western Modern architecture. It fitted onto its site without overwhelming it, and provided a blank slate, almost a white cube upon which Duke was able to display her collections of Islamic art and architectural elements. It did not call attention to itself outwardly as did the vast majority of architecture intended to invoke the East, and all of the exoticism considered inherent there.

Due to the existence of Orientalism in Western society, and Doris Duke’s exposure to perhaps the pinnacle of Orientalist thought in America, Duke’s Shangri La cannot avoid being based in Orientalist attitudes, as the construction and vision of a wealthy white American
woman of the 1930s. The fact that Duke felt that she was a friend to the Islamic world, and wanted to enlighten the Western world about the beauty and history of Islamic cultures only places her more firmly within the Orientalist tradition. Her outlook was framed by the culture of widespread Orientalism that she grew up in. Duke was in contact with dealers and artisans from the Middle East, made multiple trips to the region, and yet she seemed to have no non-business relationships with anyone from the region. There is no mention of her befriending, or even seeking for advice, any scholars from the Islamic world, only from western scholars of the Middle East such as A.U. Pope. Her assumption of expertise about the Islamic world upon which she based her decision to open her home as a museum and site of cultural study can only be based on an Orientalist belief that, as a Westerner, she had special knowledge that neither Easterners nor other Westerners possessed.

Doris Duke’s background was steeped in Orientalism, so her design for a resort home that incorporated Islamic elements was in keeping with the tradition of Orientalism that connected all things “Oriental” to leisure and sensuality. Her decision to build this home while on her honeymoon may well be related to the connection with leisure and sensuality as well. Her continued use of the home over her lifetime was as a place of refuge and play.

Shangri La was apparently Duke’s favorite home, the only one she built for herself, and decorated entirely to her own tastes. She spent
much of each year in Hawai`i, doing her best to avoid the nearly constant scrutiny that was her lot in life on the U.S. mainland at her other homes. Her photograph was sought after, and her activities were the fodder of the society gossip columns. In Hawai`i, for a good number of years, she could escape this constant surveillance, and live as she liked. Waikiki had become one of the playgrounds of the wealthy in the early part of the twentieth century, and the arrival and departure of celebrities was noted, but for the most part, Honolulu was still a small city, outside the mainstream of American society, and so less susceptible to its fads.

Without breaking with societal tradition so drastically as to build a home in one of the Islamic countries that Duke grew so fond of, the construction of Shangri La allowed her to experience some of the excitement of living in a foreign land. Hawai`i, as a U.S. territory, had certain advantages to Duke that actual foreign countries did not afford her. The U.S. had not expanded as a colonial power in the other parts of the world that Duke had grown so fond of. Therefore she might not have been able to exert the power to build in the manner that she desired in a country that was not controlled by a government that believed Duke to be valuable. Hawai`i’s English speaking status also allowed her to pursue friends outside of her normal society sphere.

This living out her escapist fantasy; in concert with her undeniable exposure to Orientalism as she grew up; her association with other Orientalists such as Arthur Upham Pope; and her continued expression
of Orientalist ideals such as the aborted reconstructed Thai village cultural site, places Doris Duke very much within the tradition of Orientalism. Her home, despite its lack of typically western overtly Islamic forms in its exterior appearance is nonetheless more a product of the Orientalism of Duke’s thinking than of a simple appropriation of functional or aesthetic design ideals by an architect. In other words, Shangri La has more in common with the Shriner’s temple, or a movie palace than it does with Sullivan’s or Le Corbusier’s designs, even though its exterior might appear more like the latter than the former.

Such as minarets and domes, like most other Islamic inspired architecture in the west. For example, Church’s Olana, or the Shriners’ temples, or movie palaces of the 1920s.
Conclusion

The first impression of Doris Duke’s Honolulu estate Shangri La is an Islamic style home filled with Islamic art, architectural elements and artifacts built by a wealthy white woman. How could it not be the epitome of Orientalism? Whether she intended to promote the messages Edward Said has attributed to Western “experts” on the Orient or not, in simply exercising her position and power to collect all of these things, Doris Duke was by definition practicing Orientalism. In fact, as Zeynip Celik pointed out during the public portion of the “Shangri La Unfolding” architectural symposium,71 Duke benefitted from and participated in the dominant colonialism by purchasing the majority of her collections from dealers located in colonized countries: Syria, Morocco and India.

I set off in my research believing that Duke’s creation of Shangri La was more in keeping with any wealthy collector, be they in the Orient or Occident than with an Orientalist trying to bring her vision of the East to the West. Several patterns, however, show Shangri La to be, a vision of Orientalism.

First, the prevalence of Orientalism during Duke’s formative years was inescapable in American society. Even if Duke had been sequestered from the rest of American society due to the threat of harm or kidnapping, she still had ample exposure to Orientalism within the sphere of her own home. Her expression of that Orientalism manifested

71 Personal notes taken at public portion of “Shangri La Unfolding” architectural symposium January 18, 2006, Doris Duke Theater, Honolulu Academy of Arts.
itself in the construction of Shangri La. Its outward appearance is not in keeping with most other Eastern themed buildings in the United States, but Duke’s intent to use it as a home to escape to, where she could express herself as she desired, epitomizes the Orientalist interpretation of the Islamic world. Not only do her background and construction of Shangri La make the final product a fantasy vision of the Islamic world, but when her intent shifted from collecting and creating the aesthetic of her Hawai`i home to educating the public, Doris Duke strayed even farther into the realm of Orientalism. By positioning her vision as important and to be studied, rather than for personal enjoyment, the label of Orientalist may be applied to Doris Duke.

This intent to educate was expressed in her will by the 1960s, the same decade that she became interested in bringing a reconstructed Thai village to Hawai`i along with Thai artwork. This decade may be the point at which her personal collecting transformed into a more recognizable form of Orientalism. What at this time made her see that her personal interests might be valuable to the general public of not only Hawai`i, but the rest of the world, if she did not possess an Orientalist perspective? Shangri La could only have become an expression of the Orientalism prevalent at the time it was built, in which Doris Duke was steeped. Though times changed, Doris Duke was still a product of the times in which she was raised. Whatever her love for the arts, architecture and
even peoples of the Middle East, her home is an unwitting example of the us/them dichotomy set up by Orientalism.

Although there is a more organic, not overtly Orientalist tradition of the appropriation of Islamic decoration and forms into Western architecture, as in the adoption of arches and domes during the Medieval period; the nineteenth century designs of Sullivan, Wright and the Modernist movement; the confluence of factors that resulted in the Shangri La’s construction and decoration came out of an Orientalist tradition.

The tradition of appropriation of Islamic designs both directly and indirectly by Westerners with the status to travel to Islamic parts of the world resulted in the construction of buildings with Islamic architectural details. Entire rooms in homes of the wealthy were constructed in Islamic style, and entire buildings were constructed in “Islamic” style, both as homes for the wealthy, and sites of diversion and escape for all classes. Much of the inspiration for these buildings came from two areas. First was travel to the area by the owner of the building, as in the case of Frederick Church, or Doris Duke. Second was inspiration from secondhand, and even further removed, exposure to the arts of Islamic world. This exposure came from such sources as the work of Orientalist painters such as Church and others, and more widely circulated sources such as novels and eventually films, as in the case of The Sheik both in novel and film form. The results of all of this pervasive Orientalism was,
by the time Doris Duke was growing up, an unquestioned association of the East with exoticism, sensuality and escape in the popular Western perception.

Shangri La is not unraveled easily. It is both a product of the pervasive Orientalism of the time in which it was built, and the tangible evidence of Doris Duke’s fondness for Islamic culture and art. It is both a modern building and showcase for her Islamic art collection as well as home and retreat from the world.

The collaboration between Marion Sims Wyeth and Doris Duke resulted in a building like no other, both eastern and western, modern and traditional, Orientalist in its original purpose (escape and leisure), but respectful of the Islamic art and culture it would ultimately represent to its visitors in its form, layout and decoration.

Now that Shangri La is open as a museum for the promotion of a greater understanding of Islamic art and culture, it has to contend with its Orientalist origins. Orientalism has not disappeared in the popular imagination and Shangri La at its surface does little to dispel the idea of the East as exotic and fantastic. Tour guides at the estate are trained to point out the different sources for many of Duke’s collections and architectural installations.72 However, guides with many visitor questions to contend with, and the wide variety of interests represented

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72 Shangri La Guide Training Manual including various articles written by Shangri La staff, and uncited articles from books and journals.
by those questions, are challenged to convey a message that is able to also expose the Orientalism at work in the artifacts of Doris Duke’s life.

However, in a time when the concept of Orientalism is not widely known outside of academic circles, Shangri La must present itself in a manner that acknowledges its connection to Orientalism while striving to set a new course toward changing the public perception of Islamic culture and arts.
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