

**PANEL: Indian Palace Architecture of the 18th and 19th Centuries (Friday July 6 9.30 – 12.30)**

*Convenor: Dr. Jennifer Howes (The British Library)*

***The British History of the Palace at Madurai***

*Jennifer Howes: The British Library*

In this paper I will examine colonial records connected with the Nayaka palace at Madurai to achieve two aims. First, through written descriptions and artists' impressions and maps made from the mid Eighteenth Century onward, I will show how the palace complex looked before it was largely dismantled in the early Nineteenth Century. Through these pictures and written accounts we can tell that the palace originally covered an area larger than the Minakshi-Sundareshvara Temple at Madurai's centre. We can also gain an idea of how the palace's different areas were used during the pre-Colonial period.

Second, I will look at how British attitudes towards the palace complex changed during the Nineteenth Century. In 1801, when the British formally took control of Madurai away from the Nawab of Arcot, the palace buildings were only considered worthy of upkeep if they could usefully serve as British administrative offices and army barracks. However, by the late Nineteenth Century, the British saw the surviving palace buildings as the architectural remains of a golden era of Madurai's history. Through Robert Fellowes Chisholm's conservation of the large courtyard known as the 'Tirumalai Nayak Mahal', this change in attitude affected the way the palace at Madurai would be perceived until the current day. Chisholm's conservation also had an impact on public architecture elsewhere in Madras Presidency.

***Early British Photography of South Indian Palaces***

*John Falconer: The British Library*

The first photographer to be commissioned by the East India Company to take photographs in the south of India was Linnaeus Tripe (1822-1902). His photographs of the palaces at Madurai, Thanjavur and Pudukkottai, were taken in the late 1850s, and provide Historians and Art Historians with a record of the use and condition of these palaces. A decade later, Edmund David Lyon (1825-1891) was commissioned by the government of Madras to photograph archaeological and architectural antiquities in the presidency. Many of Lyon's photographs were taken at the same places as those taken by Tripe.

This paper will first and foremost look at these two men within the broader history of photography in India by looking at their careers. It will also look at how their work influenced the formation of the ASI, why Lyon had to take photos of the same views as Tripe and the importance of these photographs towards the study of palaces in South Asia. Another avenue of investigation will be how contemporary researchers have read these photographs as historical documents.

***The lives of Indian buildings: uncovering the history of Lucknow's palaces***

*Sophie Gordon*

The practice of architectural history today generally seeks to describe and interpret individual buildings as single, fixed structures, unchanging after the moment of their completion. Written histories concentrate on the period prior to the design and construction of a building, ignoring the subsequent life of a structure as it is used, adapted and altered. It would seem that once the structure is in place, its life is effectively over. Photographic illustrations, by contrast, nearly always present the building as it stands today, ignoring any possibility that the structure may have altered over time.

This practice, developed from the traditional art-historical approach towards the visual arts, has changed little over the years, as several recent publications on Indian architecture illustrate. It leaves a large part of India's architectural history still untold. This history is often difficult to uncover, however, given that written sources have generally ignored it. It is possible to discover at least part of this history by using visual records, in particular, photographs. This in turn introduces the necessity of locating and identifying photographs, as well as subjecting them to the same scrutiny that written sources habitually receive.

This paper takes the palace architecture of Lucknow, in particular the Chattar Manzil and the Qaiserbagh complexes, as a case study to show that the use of photographs can uncover a previously hidden architectural history. It demonstrates that architectural history and photographic history work 'hand-in-hand', as the history of each discipline informs the other. More generally, this paper acknowledges that buildings have 'social lives' that need to be uncovered if we are to understand fully the complexities of India's architectural history.

### ***The Aina Mahal in Kutch***

*Amin Jaffer*

The Aina Mahal, built Maharao Lakho (r. 1741-1760) in Bhuj, Kutch, in the mid eighteenth century, is a remarkable example of the taste for western decoration that existed at Indian courts of the period. The layout of the palace was conceived along Indian lines, but its interiors were largely inspired by western taste and technology and are a showcase for the mirrors, lustres, tiles and prints which the Maharao Lakho imported from Europe. Central to the story of the palace is that of its Gujarati designer, Ram Singh Malam, who had lived in the West, where he acquired expertise in architecture, tile and enamel work, glass-blowing and clock-making. This paper will explore both the historical and artistic context of the palace, in particular focussing on the way in which the ruler used western goods, and locally-produced copies, to enhance his power and majesty.

### ***The Lucknow Palaces, India 1775-1856***

*Rosie Llewellyn-Jones*

During the brief period of less than a century (1775 - 1856) the Nawabs of Awadh made their new capital, Lucknow, one of the most architecturally splendid cities of India. Four palaces complexes were created, the final Qaisarbagh Palace covering an area as large as Versailles.

Rapidly changing political events during this period, most notably the increasing intrusion of the East India Company into the supposedly autonomous post-Mughal province of Awadh, led to pragmatic responses by its rulers. The first palace complex, Macchi Bhawan, on a fortified hill, was designed for defence, but as the nawabs were ruthlessly stripped of their authority, so their palaces became more decorative and whimsical. The formal gardens were filled with follies, statues and fountains.

European critics derided the Nawabs for imitating or copying classical buildings in the West. Dilkusha Palace in Lucknow is based on Seaton Delaval in Northumberland, for example, with some interesting nawabi adaptations, while the front facade of Barowen, a few miles outside the city, has recently been identified as a copy of Government House in Calcutta, itself based on Kedelston House in Derbyshire.

The Nawabs' ambiguous response to the British and the East India Company's increasing ambition forms a poignant contrast with their enthusiasm for western architecture, artefacts, and indeed some westerners themselves. Early buildings in Lucknow by Europeans, particularly those by the Frenchman Major General Claude Martin, also influenced Indian palaces.

This paper will bring together the different strands that made Lucknow an extraordinary city, which visitors compared Constantinople, St. Petersburg, and even, imaginatively, to Oxford.

### ***Falaknuma, Hyderabad***

*George Michell*

The outstanding example of the Neo-Palladian style in India, this grandiose but elegant palace was erected by one of the Paigarh nobles in the 1890s and then "purchased" by the 6th Nizam for his personal use. The talk will introduce the architecture, furniture and fittings of the palace, many of which are still intact, though now decaying. It will also consider how the formal receptions that took place here contributed to a cosmopolitan aristocratic lifestyle that was consciously promoted in Hyderabad at the time. The talk will be illustrated by splendid photographs by Bharathj Ramamrutham.