

Spanish Baroque Architecture



Murcia Cathedral, Spain (1742-54)

The three main phases of the development of Baroque architecture in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Spain were the subject of an intensive course of lectures by Professor Mercedes Gomez-Ferrer Lozano to students attending the MA in Baroque Studies course at the International Institute for Baroque Studies at the University of Malta.

Professor Gomez-Ferrer Lozano is a renowned scholar in architectural history at the department of Art History of the University of Valencia in Spain.

The course, which focused on the so-called 'golden age' (*Siglo de Oro*) of Spain, covered different aspects of the Baroque architectural expression in the Iberian peninsula, placed within the context of the painting activity of Velasquez and Zurbaran and the plays of Lope de Vega and Calderon, all renowned among the finest achievements of the European Baroque heritage.

Professor Gomez-Ferrer also spoke about the export of Spanish Baroque architecture to the Spanish American colonies and

discussed in depth the unique architectural treatise of Juan de Caramuel, known as the *Arquitectura Civil recta y oblicua* which formed the basis of architectural expression in Andalusia in the second half of the seventeenth century.

Other topics discussed were the Jesuit contribution to Spanish Baroque and the superb interventions in the cathedrals of Santiago de Compostela and Toledo.

The Director of the International Institute for Baroque Studies, Professor Denis De Lucca, said that Spanish Baroque was one of the important contributions to the history of European architecture, and that a proper understanding of its 'spirit' and underlying theory is an essential component of the postgraduate course on Baroque studies at the IIBS.

The lectures on Spanish Baroque were concluded with a discussion on the Royal Palace in Madrid and the residence in Aranjuez.

The IIBS plans to hold another course of lectures on Spanish Baroque architecture in January 2002.