

# الإسلام اليوم



حماية حق الحياة في الشريعة الإسلامية

العلوم الكونية والبحوث المدنية في ميزان الإسلام

نحو اكتشاف جديد للثقافة الإسلامية

مراكز الحضارة الإسلامية — اسطنبول

الأسلوب الإسلامي في تعليم القراءة

الاحتفاء بالذكرى 900 لوفاة أبي حامد الغزالي

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دورية تصدرها المنظمة الإسلامية للتربية والعلوم والثقافة - إيسيسكو

## بنات الهندسة المعمارية البنغالية وتطورها

ملخص لمقال السيد مشارف حسين (٥)

لعله من الصعب استخلاص تصور عام عن الحضارة الإسلامية ببلاد البنغال انطلاقاً من المؤلفات التاريخية. فهذه المؤلفات نادرة، ثم إنها تتحدث عن النشاط السياسي للملوك المسلمين أكثر من حديثها عن شؤون الثقافة والمعرفة. فلذلك لم يمكن التعرض للعهد الإسلامي في البنغال، من حيث الأساس، إلا عن طريق وثائق ومعارف قليلة نجد آثارها في مركز دلهي وغيره من المراكز الإسلامية.

ومن حيث التركيب، نرجح أن أسلوب الهندسة المعمارية الإسلامية للبنغال تأثر بالتصاميم الهندسية الإسلامية التي سبقتها والتي تبدو رواسبها الأكثر شهرة في عدد من البلدان الإسلامية. ومن ناحية أخرى لا مراء أن التقاليد والمميزات المناخية في البنغال أضفت طابعاً محلياً على أسلوب تلك الهندسة.

وفي آخر القرن الثالث أمكن جمع معلومات دقيقة عن الهندسة المعمارية البنغالية. ويتبين من معاينة المعالم التاريخية لذلك العهد، خصوصاً من حيث النحت على الحجر وصفائح التماثيل، أنها تقوم على تزاوج بين الأسلوب المحلي والأساليب والأنماط الأجنبية مثل الفارسية والإفريقية - الشمالية.

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(٥) أستاذ التاريخ والثقافة الإسلاميين بجامعة راشاهي بينغلاديش

وقد توافق حكم أسرة الغانيش، أول القرن الخامس عشر، مع بروز أسلوب هندسي بنغالي متفرد وظل سائدا طوال قرنين.

ولذا ففي الإمكان التحدث عن أسلوب الهندسة المعمارية الإسلامية للبنغال اعتبارا لطورين أساسيين : طور الأسرة المالكة لالياس شاهي (1442 - 1487) وطور الأسرة المالكة لحسين شاهي (1493 - 1438)، ففي هذين العهدين بقيت الطبيعة العامة للتركيب الهندسي على سالف وضعها اللهم إلا ما كان من الزخرفة الطينية للتماثيل، التي بلغت أوجها في عهد إلياس شاهي. أما عهد حسين شاهي فقد تميز بدقة ورقة ملحوظتين في أحكام الزخرفة.

وقد تأثرت بالعهدين المذكورين معظم المعالم والمآثر ذات الأسلوب البنغالي، وهي موزعة في يومنا هذا بين جهات الدولة الهندية لجنوبي البنغال وبنغلاديش.

وكان من نتيجة الغزو المنغولي للبنغال، متم القرن السادس عشر، أن أضفي على أسلوب الهندسة المعمارية البنغالية طابع إقليمي يشبه في ملامحه الأسلوب الذي أتى به المنغول إلى «دلهي» و «أغرا» و «فتبورسكي» و لاهور. ويتميز هذا الأسلوب بالتغير المتجلي في التصميم والطرائق المتبعة والتراكيب وأنماط الزخرف. غير أن بعض أشكال الأسلوب الأسبق ظلت قائمة ومنها بخاصة ما يتعلق بالمنسبطات وبالزخرفة الطينية وما يستعمل من أدوات المعابد القديمة، والتماثيل.

ويجوز، بناء على ذلك كله، أن نخلص إلى أن أسلوب الهندسة المعمارية البنغالية تطور بفعل تلاحم منسجم بين خصائص الهندسات المعمارية الإسلامية العتيقة والخصائص الموروثة من التقاليد المحلية.

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## **Bengal style of muslim architecture an introduction to background and development**

**A.B. Musharaf HUSAIN (\*)**

The conquest of Bengal in 1204 by Muhammad Bukhtiyar Khalji, an able lieutenant of Qutbuddin Aibak, still a commander of Muizuddin bin Sam of Ghor, was almost simultaneous with the establishment of Muslim rule in Delhi. Whatever currents of islamic thought in political, social and cultural fields were therefore brought to Delhi must have also been passed to Bengal which became at once a province of the Delhi Sultanate. It is unfortunate that we have very little informations about the early muslim rule in Bengal in the contemporary persian sources which being written mostly under the patronage of the Delhi Sultans were engaged in eulogizing the glories of the reigning sultans or their predecessors and their activities in and around Delhi unmindful of their governors' role in the distant province. Whatever references are there were concerned mostly with political activities, particularly the power struggle narrating the ascendancy of one, the rebellion and the defeat of the other.

We have, however, some material remains in the form of arabic inscriptions and coins but their numbers and contents in totality are also so scanty that any reconstruction on the basis of these evidences is not sufficient to delineate a clear picture of any aspect of the society. The history of the first century of the muslim rule in Bengal is therefore in many respects in a period of hypothetic reconstruction, strengthened in some cases on the basis of the later available materials in Bengal or the contemporary knowledge of the powerful centre of Delhi or islamic world in general.

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Architecture was no exception to this. The author of the *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* informs us that after the conquest of Nudia, Muhammad Bukhtiyar Khalji erected mosques, madrasas and khanqas. But how were these erected or what were their models have not been explained. The hypothesis, therefore, is that these structures must have been built in the same methods as were practised in other parts of the islamic world after conquest, i.e., conversion or adaptation of the existing buildings to suit requirements, or erection of new structures by the spoils of older buildings or fresh materials. On the analogy of Qutbuddin Aibak's mosques of Delhi and Ajmer, and on the strength of many later extant examples, it is possible to come to the conclusion that the buildings of the early period of muslim rule in Bengal must have been erected by the spoils of the older buildings. Not to speak of the temple columns and lintels which are frequently seen in the extant monuments, it is curious that even the mihrab, the element to indicate the direction of the qibla and perhaps to symbolize the presence of the prophet, was also shaped out of temple blocks containing sculptures of gods and goddesses. In the latter instance the front of the blocks containing the images was put towards the core of the wall, while the back was carved concave to fashion the mihrab. The use of these stone materials in the period of the independent sultans or after them even during the period of the Mughals was in the main for strengthening the structure which were mostly of bricks, but occasionally were also to beautify the naked brick fabric with polished stone relievings of black colour.

About the model again we are not sure. It is likely that they had the standard plans of early islamic monuments in mind as we see in Delhi, but for want of expertise and sufficient resources, they had probably to remain contented with whatever they could make in the time and circumstances. The discovery of a small standard mosque plinth (C. 13th century) in the Mahasthangarh in Bogra district testifies to this.

From the end years of the thirteenth century we have, however, some informations about the current architecture from the surviving examples. The remains of the mosque and tomb of Zafar Khan Ghazi at Tribeni (C. 1298 A.D.) in Hughly district and the Bari Masjid and Minar at Chhota Pandua in an adjacent area speak of the use of older temple materials in their construction. The plans of the mosques are, however, very simple — a rectangular covered area without sahn and riwaq in front. This as I have just mentioned must have been on the one hand to satisfy the minimum requirements that could be achieved at the moment, and on the other to exclude the part considered unnecessary in the experience of the bengali climatic conditions, particularly the heavy rainfall which would create sewerage problem within the sahn of the mosque itself. The simple rectangular structure was however beautified by the erection of a number of domes over the roof on imitation



probably from some persian type derived eventually from the oblong Sassanian vaulted gallery represented by the known example of the gunbad-i-Karkha in Khuzistan. Question may be asked why was such multi-domes adopted in Bengal as a feature when this was not accepted in the parent city of Delhi. The answer obviously is to be found in the difference between the building materials of upper India and Bengal. In Delhi the building material was stone which would create problems for erecting domes, whereas in Bengal the material was brick very suitable for the construction of the same. It is because of this that early islamic monuments in Delhi did not have multiple domes, and even those domes which were erected symbolic of islamic character were constructed in unsuitable Hindu technique — that of corbelling. The rectangular multi-domed design which were seen in the mosque of Zafar Khan Ghazi and Chhota Pandua Masjid eventually became the model for the Bengali mosques, erected subsequently for centuries. The rounded minaret near the Bari Masjid was again persian, but the stepped design in which it was built appears to be of North African — Aghlabid and Fatimid. The Mamluk commercial relations with Gujarat in Western India and through it perhaps Bengal must have been responsible for this sort of cultural relations. In spite of all these foreign influences, the monuments were not without indigenous marks. Carved bricks and terracotta plaques of traditional craftsmanship were used in abound for ornamentation.

The building of the great Jami of Hazrat Pandua (1375 A.D.) in Malda district by the independent Ilyas Shahi Sultan Ibrahim Shah is the last of the attempts to continue the standard plan of a mosque in Bengal, this time not by a dependent governor but by an independent and sovereign sultan. The inscription of the mosque although speaks of its design to have been copied from the Jami Masjid of Damascus, in reality persian features such as the deep and vaulted arcadings round the sahn and the wide open nave roofed over by a tunnel vault are distinct. The mosque being one of the largest in the whole of the subcontinent is a great architectural feat commensurate with the dignity of a rival sultan of Delhi, but the plan was found totally unsuitable for the climatic conditions mentioned above and was never repeated again. The local character of the building however is to be noticed in the terracotta ornamentation, the motifs being abstract geometric designs or unnatural vegetations of persian and local origins.

The taking over of the reigns of government by a local dynasty of the House of Ganesh towards the beginning of the fifteenth century (all the earlier rulers, dependent on Delhi or independent, were foreigners) is a landmark in the history of the Muslim architecture in Bengal. Hitherto the architectural inspiration, whether in plan or design, was foreign, and local character was noticed only in aspects of decoration ; but now on

new designs adapted from indigenous housings were incorporated in such a way that a new style was inaugurated in the variety of islamic architecture, known as the bengal style. The style is marked particularly by the curvilinear form of roof, derived from the bengali thatched huts, corner towers without cupolas derived from the bamboo poles of the same huts, the use of hut-shaped vaults over roof, the panel decorative designs consisting of vegetal and conventionalized motifs in terracotta — in fact a new appearance of the old islamic fabric. The first building to have the honour of this distinct look is the Eklakhi Mausoleum, the tomb of Sultan Jalaluddin Muhammad Shah (1418-31 A.D.) at Hazrat Pandua. The plan of the monument itself is persian, a square monument with a hemispherical dome overhead derived ultimately from the Sassanian **chahar-taq** model through structures like the tomb of Ismail the Samanid at Bukhara, and adapted here probably from such structures as the tombs of Iltutmish and Ghiyasuddin Balban of Delhi. Unlike the domes of most of the bengal monuments which are set on corbelled pendentives of a type peculiar to Bengal, the dome is erected here on squinches, another persian feature, but the personality of the building has been fashioned to such an extent that in all its appearance it is a new building, cut off from two centuries old tradition. The style established here set the character of bengal architecture which continued triumphantly for the next two hundred years.

The bengal style of architecture which has now begun may be divided into two important phases, viz., the phase of the later Ilyas Shahi dynasty (1442-87 A.D.) and the phase of the Husain Shahi dynasty (1493-1538 A.D.). In the two phases the character of muslim architecture in Bengal remained almost the same with the exception that in the Husain Shahi period some hitherto rarely used techniques of ornamentation were widely used. The techniques consist in stone carving of terracotta imitation, the use of tile — a persian feature, and the use of gilding, an early islamic method derived originally probably from Byzantium. In overall character the buildings of the two periods remained the same in plan and design except that terracotta ornamentation qualitatively reached its apogee in the Ilyas Shahi period, whereas in the Husain Shahi period there is a marked exuberance of richness and detail in ornamentation beside the various methods just mentioned.

Most of the extant monuments of the bengal style of architecture are from these two periods. The surviving examples, scattered now in both Bangladesh and the Indian State of West Bengal, according to forms, may be divided into various groups such as mosques, tombs, madrasas, Qadam Rasuls etc. Of these the first one is of course numerous. According to the plans and the number of domes they contain, these mosques again are generally divided into several categories such as square single-domed (occasionally also called kiosk type) or multi-domed



mosques, rectangular multi-domed mosques with or without a vaulted nave, the vaults being in the form of bengali **chauchala** (quadrilateral slopping-roofed) huts. In both the single or multi-domed types, sometimes a variation is effected with the addition of a verandah in front. It is curious that mosques with such a verandah are occasionally met with in the turkish architecture of Anatolia, derived probably from the parent style of the Persian Seljuqs. Two important features, however, seem to have been developed from indigenous taste. They are the insertion of a number of mihrabs in the qibla wall corresponding to the number of arched openings in the front façade of the liwan, and the placement of a maqsura in the form of a second storey attached to the right hand side of the qibla wall. These characteristics are peculiar to almost all the congregational mosques attended on fridays by the Sultan or his vicegerent. Of all these mosques mention should perhaps be made of the Khan Jahan Jami at Baherhat (middle of the 15th century) which is the largest of the bengal style of mosques, the Chhota Sona Masjid at Gaur (early 16th century) which is perhaps the most ornate of all the existing examples of the style, and the mosque at Bagha which represents the most lavish use of terracotta ornamentation. All of them are now in Bangladesh.

Of the other forms of monuments, the number of extant examples are not many to permit generalizations. Nevertheless it is not impossible to make some legitimate remarks. The examples of the Eklakhi mausoleum and the tomb of Khan Jahan (c. 1459 A.D.) at Bagerhat clearly state that the tombs were of the kiosk type, sometimes hardly distinguishable from mosques of similar design; the excavations at the Darasbari madrasa proves that it was of the persian type with the arrangement of cells round a central sahn; and the Qadam Rasul (1531 A.D.) at Malda, strengthened by a similar Mughal example at Dhaka, testifies that they consisted of a single domed structure with a verandah running on sides. The conception of a Qadam Rasul must have come from the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem which again from the conceptual point was probably influenced by the pre-islamic church of the Ascension situated nearby.

The conquest of Bengal by the Mughals towards the end of the sixteenth century brought a change in the style of architecture which now became a provincialized version of the grand style introduced by them in Delhi, Agra, Fathpur-Sikri and Lahore. With the change of ideas naturally there occurred changes in plans and methods of construction and decoration. Nevertheless the character was not wholly lost, and quite a few of the features such as the curvilinear form of roof, terracotta ornamentation and the use of old temple materials were there and persisted even in the end century of the Mughals.

Bengal style of architecture from the point of view of development is therefore a happy combination of features of early Islamic architecture and indigenous traditions. In narrower view it is Bengali, but in wider outlook it is Islamic. Like all other great architectures of Islam, say Umayyad, Abbasid, Persian or Maghrebi, it has its own individuality. But when studied as a whole it is a part of the Islamic family. It is in this context that the Islamic architecture in Bengal is to be studied, and its character judged.

## APPENDIX

### A Short Chronology of the History of Bengal

1. Pre-Islamic Hindu-Buddhist Period, to 1204 A.D.
2. Period of the Governors of Delhi Sultans, with occasional declarations of local independence, 1204-1338 A.D.
3. Independent Sultanate, 1338-1576 A.D.
  - 1) Ilyas Shahi dynasty, 1338-1410 ;
  - 2) House of Raja Ganesh, 1410-1442 ;
  - 3) Later Ilyas Shahis and the Abyssinian Regime, 1442-1493 ;
  - 4) Husain Shahi dynasty, 1493-1538 ;
  - 5) Afghan conquest and the last Afghan Sultans, 1539-1576.
4. Mughal Rule, 1576-1757 A.D.
5. British Rule, 1757-1947 A.D.
6. Partition of Bengal as East Pakistan and West Bengal (the latter forming a part of India), 1947 A.D.
7. Independent and sovereign Bangladesh since 1971 A.D.

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## **1) L'Architecture islamique bengalie : ses structures et son développement**

**MUSHARAF Hussain (\*)**

Il serait ardu de reconstituer la civilisation bengalie à partir des ouvrages historiques : souvent rares, ces ouvrages se rapportent pour la plupart aux seules activités politiques des souverains musulmans. De ce fait, la restitution du règne musulman au Bengale a été essentiellement inspirée des documents de l'époque, réunis dans quelques centres islamiques et, pour la plus grande partie, à Delhi.

Du point de vue conceptuel, le style islamique en architecture, au Bengale, était probablement imprégné des vues et plans islamiques antérieurs, dont les vestiges sont actuellement éparpillés à travers le monde musulman. Par ailleurs, les traditions et les conditions climatiques du Bengale ont, elles aussi, marqué ce style d'une empreinte locale.

Ce n'est que vers la fin du treizième siècle qu'il a été possible de recueillir des informations plus exactes sur l'architecture du Bengale. Les monuments historiques de cette époque révèlent un mélange entre le style local et des styles étrangers. Le premier se caractérise par la sculpture des briques et des plaques de terre cuite des métiers traditionnels et les seconds par le modèle rectangulaire et la multiplicité des dômes, d'inspiration persane, et par celui des paliers, d'origine nord-africaine.

Le règne de la dynastie des Ganesh au début du quinzième siècle coïncidait avec l'introduction dans l'architecture musulmane bengalie d'un nouveau style, qu'on pourrait désormais appeler le style du Bengale. Il marquera pour deux siècles cette architecture.

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Ainsi pouvons-nous retracer l'histoire de l'architecture musulmane au Bengale en deux phases importantes : la phase de la dynastie d'Ilyas Shahi (1442-87), et celle de la dynastie de Hussein Shahi (1493-1538), pendant le règne desquelles le caractère général des constructions est resté le même, hormis la décoration de terre cuite, qui a atteint son apogée avec Ilyas Shahi. Quant à l'ère de Hussein Shahi, elle fut marquée par une exubérance et une richesse ostentatoire ainsi que par le foisonnement de détails dans la décoration.

Aujourd'hui la plupart des monuments de style bengali, mosquées, tombeaux, écoles, procèdent de l'influence des deux ères et se trouvent à présent dispersés dans l'Etat Indien de l'Ouest du Bengale et pour la plupart au Bangladesh.

La conquête du Bengale par les Mongols vers la fin du seizième siècle a introduit dans l'architecture bengalie une version provincialisée qui rappelle l'apport mongol à Delhi, Agra, Fathpursiki et au Lahore. Ce style se traduit par un changement assez marqué dans les plans, les méthodes, les constructions et les décorations néanmoins, quelques formes antérieures ont subsisté, comme la forme courbe-plane dans la décoration de terre cuite et l'usage d'anciens matériaux de temples.

On peut donc conclure que le style de l'architecture musulmane du Bengale s'est développé sous la forme d'un alliage heureux entre les caractéristiques islamiques et celles héritées de traditions locales.