

THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

This thesis has been submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for a postgraduate degree (e. g. PhD, MPhil, DClinPsychol) at the University of Edinburgh. Please note the following terms and conditions of use:

- This work is protected by copyright and other intellectual property rights, which are retained by the thesis author, unless otherwise stated.
- A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge.
- This thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the author.
- The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the author.
- When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given.



Nationalism and Architecture in Postcolonial Bangladesh, 1947-1971

A thesis in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Architectural History

Edinburgh School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture (ESALA)

The University of Edinburgh

By

Mohona Tahsin Reza

December 2022

Abstract and Lay Summary

Buildings built between 1947 and 1971 played an important role to seek national identity during the postcolonial period of Bangladesh when the country was known as East Pakistan and was unified with West Pakistan. In a decolonised setting of rebuilding one nation with two halves of Pakistan, this thesis will unravel the connections between geopolitical tensions, socio-economic concerns, and cultural and religious perplexities through an investigation of a series of governmental and institutional buildings designed by local and internationally renowned architects. The analysis examines the relationship between nationalism and architecture through a study of power and design in the postcolonial context of East Pakistan.

The analysis of the buildings includes distinct and at times contradictory interpretations. Architecture of East Pakistan not only depicts spatial transformation but also represents a narrative of awakening from supremacy. In an attempt to gain control in the Eastern part, the ruling Government of Pakistan sought to appease the subaltern populace by developing the province. Alongside architectural readings, this is demonstrated through the studies of nationalism, governmental development schemes, ample outsourced funding and both foreign and local architects who executed their diversified designs within a postcolonial network. Although these buildings introduced an architectural shift in the region, nevertheless, the transitions from colonial to postcolonial architecture were overshadowed by the neo-colonial subjugation of Pakistani authority.

The two key concepts – nationalism and architecture serve both as a critical lens for historiography as well as a framework for detailed analysis of the case studies. The key ideas are divided into sections and sub-sections of themes and tropes that form a deeper meaning of diverse ideas incorporated in this thesis related to culture, tradition, ethnicity, religion and politics. The research method is informed by existing literature, archival materials, photographs and architectural drawings in which these buildings have been identified typically either Regional or Tropical architecture. This research challenges the traditional ideas arguing for a rational and contextual architecture by connecting critical understanding of the concepts of multi-layered and changing interpretations of nationalism. This occurs through a historiographic analysis of the case studies combined with an intricated architectural reading of the building designs from three perspectives: how it relates to the multi-layered nationalism and religious dogmatism; to what extent cultural incorporation was applied in the design and construction techniques; and the relationship between the client and the architect(s) for the individual projects.

By analysing the governmental and institutional buildings of East Pakistan within a broader historical and global context, this thesis explores how nationalism had altered meaning to seek ethnic and religious identity and how the political events, global funding and design implications interpret these spaces. This research not only unlocks a wider possibility for new research in the history of Bangladeshi architecture but also highlights the formations of twentieth century postcolonial countries and the emergence of nation-states through architecture.

Name of Student: Mohona Tahsin Reza

University Email: s1678304@ed.ac.uk

Degree Sought: Doctorate

Title of Thesis: Nationalism and Architecture in Postcolonial Bangladesh, 1947-1971

UUN: S1678304

Total number of words: 91,606

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank my parents, Faridur Reza Sagar and Kona Reza and my sister, Meghna Reza for their unconditional support against all odds and for being continuous sources of inspiration. Pappa, thank you for always believing, supporting and inspiring me. Mummy, thank you for giving me the courage to keep my spirit up. Meghna, thank you for your continued moral support during our everyday conversation. This thesis is dedicated to you three.

The completion of the thesis would not have been possible without the support and assistance of many people and several institutions. I would like to express my gratitude to my principal supervisor, Dr Richard Anderson for his continuous guidance and mentoring at all stages, from my MSc until the present day, which has been invaluable and greatly helped to advance my research. I would also like to thank my secondary supervisor, Prof Alex Bremner who has provided helpful and insightful comments on many occasions that have substantially improved my research. I am grateful for valuable feedback from Prof Miles Glendinning, Prof John Lowrey and Dr Peter Clericuzio during my annual reviews which structured my path towards completion.

I have faced discontinuities during my thesis due to the unforeseen deterioration of my father's health and needed to take intervals to take care of him. The postgraduate research administration team at Edinburgh College of Art has been very supportive and assisted me throughout my hardship. I especially thank two student support advisers, Fiona Hunter and Fiona Walker for patiently guiding me with my enquiries

and the formal regulations of the university. I am also grateful for the financial support for my travels to archives, libraries and conferences which was provided by the Postgraduate Research Expenses Grant at the University of Edinburgh.

I was fortunate to receive expert advice from architects and architectural historians who provided me not only with important materials related to this thesis but also my conversations and discussions with them influenced and informed my writing and helped me to redefine my ideas. I want to thank Prof Zainab F. Ali, who continued to motivate me and provided me with invaluable encouragement. I have benefitted greatly from the discussion with Dr Nurur R. Khan who provided important insights on my thesis argument. I am also grateful to Shameem Aminur Rahman, the Chief Architect of the Department of Architecture of Public Works Department, who provided me access to the archive to collect and study old and delicate architectural drawings.

I am eternally grateful to my niece and nephew, Myra and Myron, my brother-in-law, Rafaat Khan and my sister Tanisha Nahar whose refreshing presence uplifted my energy during the writing phase. For their intellectual insight and camaraderie, I thank my friends for supporting me in various stages of the thesis, Humayun Kabir, Maahiat Hasna, Maisha Hossain, Raihanul Islam Khan, Ravindra Singh, Sameya Priom, Ismat Ara, Anastazja P., Renata Wilczewska and Sanjida Kazal Trina. I especially thank Safa Binte Safiullah, Khairul Islam Tufan, Md. Milon and my brother, Tonmoy Hossain for accompanying me on the trips conducted for this thesis in different cities of Bangladesh. Humayun Uncle, thank you for being a great support throughout my PhD journey. My gratitude to my friends – Maahiat who effortlessly spent hours with me in

the PWD exploring very old architectural drawings from the dusty shelves; Maisha who constantly checked on my work progress and mental health, even being thousands of miles away; and Safa, who not only travelled with me for the thesis but also listened to my thesis brainstorming and patiently provided feedback. I express my profound gratitude to my friend, Katja Robinson who took sincere time and patience to proofread and edit my manuscript.

I would not be able to complete my thesis, if I was not mentally and physically healthy. During my final year, I worked more than ten to twelve hours a day sitting on a chair in front of a computer. Therefore, I decided to become a member of Elevate98 where I exercised daily which helped me to be healthy and improved my focus to produce the thesis draft. I would like to express my gratitude to the coaches of Elevate98 – Sean Mckirdy, Michael Hutchison, Cameron Begbie and Sam Capes for your camaraderie and sincere physical training during the sessions.

Finally, I would like to thank five important women in my life who have inspired me to be a courageous and resilient person – my sisters Suzana Chowdhury and Sonali Ferdousi Majumder, my grandmother Eva Alam, my late aunt Afsana Chowdhury and my late grandmother Rabeya Khatun.

Table of Contents

Abstract and Lay Summary ..... **ii**

Acknowledgements ..... **v**

Table of Contents ..... **viii**

List of Abbreviation ..... **xii**

List of Figures ..... **xiii**

Chapter 1: Introduction **1**

1.1 Between Formation and Representation 2

1.2 Theoretical Framework 9

1.3 Methodology and Approach 11

1.4 Outline of the Thesis 17

Chapter 2: Literature Review **20**

2.1 Research Rationale 20

2.2 Nationalism, Nation Building and Architecture 22

2.2.1 Concepts of Nationalism and Nation Building 23

2.2.2 Emergence of Bangladeshi Nationalism 32

2.2.3 Architecture in Shaping Bangladeshi Nationalism 40

2.3 Critical Resurgence of Modern Architecture in Postcolonial Context 53

2.3.1 Modern Architecture 54

2.3.2 Postmodern Architecture 58

2.3.3 Regional and Tropical Architecture 63

2.3.4 Paradoxes of Architectural Genealogies in Bangladeshi Nationalist Discourse 80

2.4 Search for Identity: Dilemma between Culture and Religion 82

2.5 Conclusion 90

Chapter 3: Architecture of Bengali Identity 92

3.1 Introduction 93

3.1.1 Existing Literature 95

3.1.2 Chapter Argument 111

3.2 The Islamic Nation: Dualism in Nationalism 112

3.2.1 Islamic East Pakistan: Development or Conflict? 114

3.2.2 The Islamic Phase of Modernism 120

3.2.3 The Islamic Debate for a United Pakistan 130

3.3 The Beginning of Resistance 132

3.3.1 The First Bangladeshi Architect 133

3.3.2 Searching for Bengali Identity through Architecture 137

3.4 The Construction of Bengali Identity 153

3.4.1 Western Influences and 'Bengaliness' 155

3.4.2 The Collaboration: Five Polytechnic Institutes 162

3.4.3 Masterplans of the Universities 170

3.5 Conclusion 184

Chapter 4: Architecture of the 'Tropics' 190

4.1 Introduction 191

4.1.1 Existing Literature 192

4.1.2 Chapter Argument 197

4.2 Rural Interpretation and Provincialism 198

4.2.1 Rural Development Programmes 200

4.2.2 The Double Meaning – Interpreting Architecture 206

4.3 The American Acceleration 210

4.3.1 The University Projects 212

4.2.3 The Transportation Hub 229

4.4 Architectural Education 235

4.4.1 Institutional Context 236

4.4.2 The First Architectural Department: Curriculum 245

4.4.3 The First Architectural Department: The Building 257

4.5 Conclusion 272

Chapter 5: Architecture of Independence 277

5.1 Introduction 278

5.1.1 Existing Literature 280

5.1.2 Chapter Argument 293

5.2 Architecture and Power 294

5.2.1 The Client and The Architect 295

5.2.2 The Mediator 299

5.2.3 The Sojourns 301

5.2.4 The Dilemma of the Other Capitol 304

5.3 Monumentalism, Religion and Architecture 308

5.3.1 Placing the Citadels 309

5.3.2 Form, Design and Monumentalism 317

5.3.3 Religion and Legislature 329

5.3.4 Regional and Climatic Perplexities 335

5.4 Politics and Transformation of the Nation 340

5.4.1 Dualism in Democracy 342

5.4.2 A New Nation 345

5.5 Conclusion 354

Chapter 6: Conclusion 359

Bibliography 372

List of Abbreviation

AA – Architectural Association

AU – Agricultural University

BCSIR – Bangladesh Council for Scientific and Industrial Research Laboratories

BUET – Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology

C&B – Communications and Building Department

DA – Doxiadis Associates

EPUET – East Pakistan University of Engineering and Technology

HAG – Harvard Advisory Group

IAB – Institute of Architects Bangladesh

ICA – The International Co-operative Alliance

IIM – Indian Institutes of Management

J. J. School of Art – Sir Jamsethji Jijibhai School of Art

METU – The Middle Eastern Technical University

MoMA – Museum of Modern Art

NAP – National Awami Party

NATO – The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

NCA – National College of Art

NIPA – The National Institution of Public Administration

PPP – Pakistan People's Party

PWD – Public Works Department

RIBA – Royal Institute of British Architects

TAP – The US Technical Assistance and Productivity Program

Texas A&M University – Texas Agriculture and Mechanical University

TSC – Teacher-Student Centre

UMassD – The University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth

UN – United Nations

UNESCO – The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

USAID – United States Agency for International Development

List of Figures

Chapter 1

Figure 1: Map of the British Indian Empire 1909. Source: Heritage Archive of Bangladesh History 3

Figure 2: Map of the Indian Subcontinent showing the geo-placement of East and West Pakistan. Source: Heritage Archive of Bangladesh History 4

Figure 3: Map of 1905 Bengal Partition. Source: HT podcast: In Bengal, a Partition and a movement. *Hindustan Times*. Published on Aug 22, 2022. Accessed 8 Nov 2022..... 37

Figure 4: Founders of All India Muslim League at All Muhammadan Educational Conference (AIMEC) in Dhaka, 1906. Source: *Wikipedia*. Accessed 8 Nov 2022.. .. 37

Figure 5: Chapter 30 of 1947 Indian Independence Act. Source: Parliamentary Archives. Catalogue Number: HL/PO/PU/1/1947/10&11G6c30. Accessed 15 April 2019..... 38

Figure 6: National Martyr Memorial, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Source: *The Daily Star*. Published on 19 February 2015. 51

Figure 7: National Monument (Smriti Shoudho) of Bangladesh. Source: *Wikipedia.* Accessed 8 Nov 2022..... 51

Figure 8: Shait Gambuz Mosque, Bagerhat. Source: Abu Sayeed Ahmed, *Mosque Architecture in Bangladesh*, (Dhaka: UNESCO, 2006), 78. 52

Figure 9: Bengal Hut. Source: Alexander Tzonis, Liane Lefaivre, and Bruno Stagno, eds. *Tropical Architecture: Critical Regionalism in the Age of Globalization*, (Chichester: Wiley-Academy, 2001), 30. 52

Figure 10: National Parliament Building, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Source: Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania..... 52

Figure 11: Jean Prouvé Maison de Peuple, Clichy, Paris (1937-39). Source: 'News: Foster, Prouvé and Loos in Paris,' *The Architects' Journal (Archive: 1929-2005)* 177, no. 10 (Mar 09, 1983): 23. 65

Figure 12: Charles Correa, Gandhi Ashram Memorial Museum, Ahmedabad, India (1958-63). Source: Robert L. Vickery. Artstor 79

Figure 13: Le Corbusier, Sara Bhai House, Ahmedabad, India. Source: *Architectural Digest.* Accessed April 18, 2020. 79

Figure 14: Louis I Kahn, Trenton Bath House, Ewing New Jersey, USA. Source: *Architects Journal.* Accessed April 18, 2020. 80

Figure 15: Muhammad Ali Jinnah's Speech at public meeting at Dhaka on March 21, 1948. Source: *Wikimedia*. Accessed 8 Nov 2022. 84

Figure 16: A Special Issue of The Architectural Review and O. H. Koenigsberger's Article. Source: O. H. Koenigsberger, "India, Pakistan and Ceylon,' *The Architectural Review* 128, no. 761 (July 1960): 53-58. 99

Figure 17: O. H. Koenigsberger's Article showing the Public Library by Muzharul Islam as Pakistan's architecture. Source: O. H. Koenigsberger, "India, Pakistan and Ceylon,' *The Architectural Review* 128, no. 761 (July 1960): 53-58. 100

Figure 18: Raymond Lifchez's Article in the Architectural Record, 1968. Source: Raymond Lifchez, "Masterplan Study gives East Pakistan New Approaches for Tropical Architecture," *Architectural Record*, no. 9 (September 1968): 153-60..... 101

Figure 19: Raymond Lifchez's Article in the Architectural Record, 1968. Source: Raymond Lifchez, "Masterplan Study gives East Pakistan New Approaches for Tropical Architecture," *Architectural Record*, no. 9 (September 1968): 153-60..... 101

Figure 20: Cover and Content of Chetana. Source: Abdul Mohaimen and Saiful Haque, eds. *Chetana*, vol. 2 (Dhaka: Khansons PTE Ltd, February 1987). 102

Figure 21: Muzharul Islam's National Library featured in Chetana and Article written by Farooq Ameen. Source: Abdul Mohaimen and Saiful Haque, eds. *Chetana*, vol. 2 (Dhaka: Khansons PTE Ltd, February 1987). 102

Figure 22: Mentors and Students discussing Muzharul Islam's drawings in the session of February 2020, Bengal Institute, Dhaka. Source: Bengal Institute Website. Accessed 19 November 2021 107

Figure 23: Entrance of the Bengal Stream Exhibition, Basel, Switzerland. Source: Author 108

Figure 24: Display showing Chetana's contribution to promote Bangladeshi Architecture, Bengal Stream, Basel, Switzerland. Source: Author 108

Figure 25: Muzharul Islam's projects on display at 'The Project of Independence,' Exhibition at MoMA. Source: Author. 109

Figure 26: American President John F. Kennedy receiving President of Pakistan Ayub Khan at the White House in Washington D.C., 11 July 1961. Source: Bridgeman Art Gallery 118

Figure 27: Holy Family Hospital by Coleman Hicks, Dhaka. Source: Farida Nilufar. "Architecture of Pakistan time in Bangladesh since 1947 to 1971," *Asiatic Society of Bangladesh*, (2007): 67-85. 123

Figure 28: A Plan of Estate Development for 504 Flats Coleman Hicks, CB&I. Source: Redrawing by Sanjida Kazal Trina, from Coleman Hicks, "Flats at Dacca," *Building* (November 1950): 421. 124

Figure 29: Residential Layout for Housing by Coleman Hicks. Source: Redrawing by Sanjida Kazal Trina, from Coleman Hicks, "Flats at Dacca," *Building* (November 1950): 421. 124

Figure 30: Gulistan Cinema Hall, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Source: Source: Archives of Architecture (Bangladesh) 126

Figure 31: Dhaka Improvement Trust Building (DIT), Dhaka, Bangladesh. Source: Source: Archives of Architecture (Bangladesh) 126

Figure 32: Supreme Court, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Source: *The Daily Star*, 10 October 2018 127

Figure 33: Baitul Mukarram Mosque, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Source: Archives of Architecture (Bangladesh) 127

Figure 34: Axonometric Drawing of Baitul Mukurram Mosque. Source: Archives of Architecture (Bangladesh) 128

Figure 35: Muzharul Islam (1923-2012). Source: Zainab F. Ali, and Fuad H. Mallick, eds. *Muzharul Islam Architect*, (Dhaka: BRAC University Press, 2011). 135

Figure 36: Site Allocation for the Fine Arts Institute. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive 138

Figure 37: Muzharul Islam's Site Sketch for the Fine Arts Institute. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive 139

Figure 38: Site Plan, Fine Arts Institute (1952-1953), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive 139

Figure 39: Plan, Fine Arts Institute (1952-1953), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive 140

Figure 40: Fine Arts Institute (1952-1953), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive 141

Figure 41: Courtyard of the Fine Arts Institute (1952-1953), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive 141

Figure 42: Free-flowing Staircase of the Fine Arts Institute (1952-1953), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive 143

Figure 43: Comparison between Jali Treatment of the Fine Arts Institute and the Tomb of Salim Chishti, Fatehpur Sikri, Agra, India. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive, Artstor. 144

Figure 44: Wooden Louvre of the First Floor, Fine Arts Institute (1952-1953), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive 146

Figure 45: Comparison of Pavilions between the Fine Arts Institute and Fatehpur Sikri, Agra, India. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive, Artstor. 146

Figure 46: Model Showing the Existing Waterbody at the Fine Arts Institute (1952-1953), Muzharul Islam. Source: Adnan Morshed, “Modernism as Postnationalist Politics: Muzharul Islam's Faculty of Fine Arts (1953–56),” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 76, no. 4 (2017): 532-49. 147

Figure 47: Image of the Pond recalling the existing Waterbody of the Fine Arts Institute (1952-1953), Muzharul Islam. Source: Artstor, Sanjana Islam 147

Figure 48: Elevation, Fine Arts Institute (1952-1953), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive 148

Figure 49: Ground Floor Plan, Public Library (1952-53), Muzhural Islam. Source: Nurur. R. Khan..... 150

Figure 50: Public Library (1952-53), Muzhural Islam. Source: Zainab F. Ali, and Fuad H. Mallick, eds. *Muzharul Islam Architect*, (Dhaka: BRAC University Press, 2011). 150

Figure 51: Elevation, Public Library (1952-53), Muzhural Islam. Source:Nurur R. Khan 151

Figure 52: Maison Jaoul’s section drawing by Le Corbusier showing the interior, 16 April 1952. Source: Artstor. 151

Figure 53: Petite Maison de Weekend’s Axonometric Drawings showing the curved roof. Source: Fondation Corbusier Archive. 152

Figure 54: Plan, Bangladesh Council for Scientific and Industrial Research Laboratories, Dhaka (1963-65), Muzharul Islam. Source: Zainab F. Ali, and Fuad H. Mallick, eds. *Muzharul Islam Architect*, (Dhaka: BRAC University Press, 2011).... 157

Figure 55: Bangladesh Council for Scientific and Industrial Research Laboratories, Dhaka (1963-65), Muzharul Islam. Source: Zainab F. Ali, and Fuad H. Mallick, eds. *Muzharul Islam Architect*, (Dhaka: BRAC University Press, 2011) 157

Figure 56: National Institute of Public Administration, Dhaka, Bangladesh (1964), Muzharul Islam. Source: Zainab F. Ali, and Fuad H. Mallick, eds. *Muzharul Islam Architect*, (Dhaka: BRAC University Press, 2011)..... 158

Figure 57: Shodhan Villa, Le Corbusier, Ahmedabad, India. Source: Artstor 158

Figure 58: Architect's own Residence, Dhaka, Bangladesh (1969), Muzharul Islam. Source: Zainab F. Ali, and Fuad H. Mallick, eds. *Muzharul Islam Architect*, (Dhaka: BRAC University Press, 2011..... 160

Figure 59: 3-D model of Architect's own Residence, Dhaka, Bangladesh (1969), Muzharul Islam. Source: Archives of Architecture (Bangladesh) 160

Figure 60: Harivallabhdas House, Ahmedabad, India (1962), Achyut Kanvinde. Source: Artstor..... 161

Figure 61: Masterplan of Rangpur Polytechnic Institute (1966-1978), Muzharul Islam and Stanley Tigerman. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive..... 163

Figure 62: Masterplan of Bogra Polytechnic Institute (1966-1978), Muzharul Islam and Stanley Tigerman. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive..... 164

Figure 63: Masterplan of Pabna Polytechnic Institute (1966-1978), Muzharul Islam and Stanley Tigerman. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive..... 164

Figure 64: Masterplan of Sylhet Polytechnic Institute (1966-1978), Muzharul Islam and Stanley Tigerman. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive..... 165

Figure 65: Masterplan of Barisal Polytechnic Institute (1966-1978), Muzharul Islam and Stanley Tigerman. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive..... 165

Figure 66: Elevation and Plan of the Main Building, Prototype for Five Polytechnic Institutes (1966-1978), Muzharul Islam and Stanley Tigerman. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive 166

Figure 67: The stack effect: hot air rises due to buoyancy, and its low pressure sucks in fresh air from outside. Source: Brown, G. Z. and Dekay, Mark, *Sun, Wind, and Ligh*t, (New York: Wiley, 2001). 168

Figure 68: Staggered Mass of the Polytechnic Institute (1966-1978), Muzharul Islam and Stanley Tigerman. Source: Author 168

Figure 69: Rangpur Polytechnic Institute (1966-1978), Muzharul Islam and Stanley Tigerman. Source: Archives of Architecture (Bangladesh)..... 169

Figure 70: Masterplan, Chittagong University (1968-1971), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive. 172

Figure 71: Site Plan, Chittagong University (1968-1971), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive. 173

Figure 72: Floor Plan, Chittagong University (1968-1971), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive. 173

Figure 73: Plan and Elevation of the Academic Building, Chittagong University (1968-1971), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive. 174

Figure 74: Floor Plans, Chittagong University (1968-1971), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive. 174

Figure 75: Plan of Auditorium, Chittagong University (1968-1971), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive. 175

Figure 76: Section of Auditorium, Chittagong University (1968-1971), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive. 175

Figure 77: Auditorium, Chittagong University (1968-1971), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive. 176

Figure 78: Staff Quarter, Chittagong University (1968-1971), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive. 177

Figure 79: Student Dormitory, Chittagong University (1968-1971), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive. 178

Figure 80: Student Dormitory, Chittagong University (1968-1971), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive. 178

Figure 81: Masterplan of Jahangir Nagar University (1967-1975), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive 179

Figure 82: Detailed Floor Plan, Jahangir Nagar University (1967-1975), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive. 181

Figure 83: Plan of the Student's Hostel, Jahangir Nagar University (1967-1975), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive 181

Figure 84: Quarters for Class IV Employees, Jahangir Nagar University (1967-1975), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive 182

Figure 85: Jahangir Nagar University (1967-1975), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive 183

Figure 86: Jahangir Nagar University (1967-1975), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive 183

Figure 87: Constantinos A, Doxiadis (1913-1975). Source: Doxiadis Archives. Accessed April 15, 2020. 200

Figure 88: Basic Layout of Rural Development Programme. Source: Doxiadis Associates, ‘Two Academies for Village Development: Comilla, East Pakistan - Peshawar, West Pakistan,’ *Ekistics* 45, Vol. 8 (1959), 70 202

Figure 89: Entrance, Academy of Rural Development Programme, Peshawar. Source: Doxiadis Associates, 'Two Academies for Village Development: Comilla, East Pakistan - Peshawar, West Pakistan,' *Ekistics* 45, Vol. 8 (1959), 67 202

Figure 90: Academy for Rural Development Programme, Comilla. Source: Doxiadis Associates, 'Two Academies for Village Development: Comilla, East Pakistan - Peshawar, West Pakistan,' *Ekistics* 45, Vol. 8 (1959), 66 203

Figure 91: Courtyard, Classroom Block and the Auditorium, Academy for Rural Development Programme, Comilla. Source: Khairul Islam Tufan 204

Figure 92: Linear Corridors with Columns, Academy for Rural Development Programme, Comilla. Source: Khairul Islam Tufan 205

Figure 93: Dining Hall of University College, Ibadan, Nigeria, Maxwell Fry. Source: RIBA Photo Archives 207

Figure 94:Pages from Doxiadis' diary showing his visit to Naulakha Pavilion, Lahore. Source: Doxiadis Archives..... 208

Figure 95: Dunham's employment letter from Berger Associates. Source: Katherine Dunham 212

Figure 96: Dunham at the Berger Associates office. Source: Katherine Dunham.. 213

Figure 97: Berger Office at Dhaka, 1960. Source: Katherine Dunham 214

Figure 98: Site plan of the Rajshahi University by Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham 215

Figure 99: Student Dormitory Block of Rajshahi University. Source: Katherine Dunham 217

Figure 100: Exterior of the Library, Rajshahi University. Source: Katherine Dunham 217

Figure 101: Interior of the Library, Rajshahi University. Source: Katherine Dunham 218

Figure 102: Courtyard of Medical Centre, Rajshahi University. Source: Katherine Dunham 219

Figure 103: Roof detail of Medical Centre, Rajshahi University. Source: Katherine Dunham 220

Figure 104: Roof detail of Students' Cafeteria, Rajshahi University. Source: Katherine Dunham 220

Figure 105: Brick Detail of the Student Dormitory in Agricultural University by Stanley Tigerman. Source: Author 222

Figure 106: Site Plan of the Agricultural University by Paul Rudolph. Source: The Paul Rudolph Institution for Modern Architecture 222

Figure 107: Google Map of Agricultural University and Rajshahi University for approximate measurement of the area. Source: Google Maps 223

Figure 108: Site Plan of University of the Massachusetts, Dartmouth by Paul Rudolph. Source: The Paul Rudolph Institution for Modern Architecture 223

Figure 109: Courtyard and Stair connection of main building, Agricultural University, Paul Rudolph. Source: Author 224

Figure 110: Architectural Model of Main Buiding of the Agricultural Building, Paul Rudolph. Source: The Paul Rudolph Institution for Modern Architecture 224

Figure 111: Vice Chancellor Residence in the Agricultural University, Daniel Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham 227

Figure 112: Guest House in the Agricultural University, Daniel Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham 227

Figure 113: Library, Agricultural University, Richard Neutra. Source: Author 228

Figure 114: Wooden Louvre of the Library, Agricultural University, Richard Neutra. Source: Author 228

Figure 115: Corridor of the Library, Agricultural University, Richard Neutra. Source: Author 229

Figure 116: Kamalapur Railway Station, Dhaka, Daniel C. Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham 231

Figure 117: Masterplan of Kamalapur Railway Station, Dhaka, Daniel C. Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham 231

Figure 118: Construction of the Canopy Structure, Kamalapur Railway Station, Dhaka, Daniel C. Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham 232

Figure 119:Workshop attended by Dunham in GSD at Harvard University. Source: Katherine Dunham 232

Figure 120: Pointed Arches for the Canopy, Kamalapur Railway Station, Dhaka, Daniel C. Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham 233

Figure 121: Vaulted Roof, Elevation of the Kamalapur Railway Station, Dhaka, Daniel C. Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham 233

Figure 122: Boughey's letter to Mary Frances about Dunham's 'dome umbrella scheme.' Source: Katherine Dunham 234

Figure 123: Site of Architecture Department in EPUET, Dhaka. Source: Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham, eds., *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka* (Dhaka: 2011), 7. 241

Figure 124: Ahsanullah Engineering College in 1960. Source: Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham, eds., *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka* (Dhaka: 2011), 8. 242

Figure 125: Richard Edwin Vrooman. Source: Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham, eds., *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka* (Dhaka: 2011), 99. 242

Figure 126: The Brochure of Department of Architecture, EPUET, 1964. Source: Katherine Dunham 244

Figure 127: Students in Classroom at EPUET in the 1960s. Source: Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham, eds., *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka* (Dhaka: 2011), 23. 246

Figure 128: The Final Curriculum and Teaching Staff names from the Brochure | Source: Katherine Dunham 248

Figure 129: First Female Students of EPUET: Nazeema Habib, Shaheen Chowdhury and Wajeda Rab. Source: Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham, eds., *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka* (Dhaka: 2011), 126. 249

Figure 130: Daniel Dunham in Design Class with Wajeda Rab | Source: Katherine Dunham 250

Figure 131: Daniel Dunham with his students at EPUET. Source: Katherine Dunham 253

Figure 132:Daniel Dunham with his students at EPUET. Source: Katherine Dunham 253

Figure 133: Joan Walden taking Design Class. Source: Katherine Dunham 254

Figure 134: Design Classes conducted by Walden (outdoor) and Dunham (indoor), Students' drawings and models prepared for Design class. Source: Katherine Dunham 254

Figure 135: Architecture Department Building, Dhaka. Source: Author 258

Figure 136: First Classroom and Corridors. Source: Katherine Dunham 258

Figure 137:Vrooman's rendering of the Architecture Department Building. Source: Katherine Dunham 259

Figure 138: The Given Site and the Master Plan. Source: Qazi A. Mowla, “Architectural Education in Bangladesh: An Exclusive Interview with The Delegate," (2015), 2. 260

Figure 139: Plan of the Architecture Department Building designed by Richard Vrooman. Source: Department of Architecture, BUET 262

Figure 140: Semi-circular Facades with Large Circular Plant Holders. Source: Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham, eds., The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka (Dhaka: 2011), 59 262

Figure 141: Bamboo Scaffolding for Construction. Source: Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham, eds., *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka* (Dhaka: 2011), 63-69. 263

Figure 142: Jury Space in the Administrative Building. Source: Author 264

Figure 143: The Classroom Corridors. Source: Author 264

Figure 144: Plan and Elevation of EPUET Faculty Housing, Daniel C. Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham 267

Figure 145: Plan of EPUET Faculty Housing, Daniel C. Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham 267

Figure 146:Construction of EPUET Faculty Housing, Daniel C. Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham..... 268

Figure 147: EPUET Faculty Housing, Daniel C. Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham 268

Figure 148: Site Plan of the complex of Titumir Boys Hostel. Source: Google Map270

Figure 149: Typical Floor Plan of Residential Wing of Boys Hostel. Source: Fatema Tasmia and Mahmudul Anwar Riyaad, “Sensitivity Towards Context and Climate: An Understanding of Robert G. Boughey’s Architectural Works in Bangladesh,” Journal of Architecture 18, no. 1 (2021): 37. 270

Figure 150: Boys Hostel Complex in 1964. Source: Fatema Tasmia and Mahmudul Anwar Riyaad, “Sensitivity Towards Context and Climate: An Understanding of Robert G. Boughey’s Architectural Works in Bangladesh,” *Journal of Architecture* 18, no. 1 (2021): 35. 271

Figure 151: Rainwater Downspouts and Devices. Source: Fatema Tasmia and Mahmudul Anwar Riyaad, “Sensitivity Towards Context and Climate: An Understanding of Robert G. Boughey’s Architectural Works in Bangladesh,” *Journal of Architecture* 18, no. 1 (2021): 36. 271

Figure 152: View towards the Southern Wing of the Building. Source: Fatema Tasmia and Mahmudul Anwar Riyaad, “Sensitivity Towards Context and Climate: An Understanding of Robert G. Boughey’s Architectural Works in Bangladesh,” *Journal of Architecture* 18, no. 1 (2021): 36. 272

Figure 153: Louis I. Kahn (1901-1974). Source: Artstor 278

Figure 154: The National Assembly Building, Dhaka, Bangladesh (1962-1984). Source: Artstor 278

Figure 155: Model of National Assembly Building at the exhibition 'Louis I. Kahn' in MoMA, April 26-May 30, 1966. Source: The Museum of Modern Art Archive. IN797.10. Photograph by George Cserna 281

Figure 156: Front Page of the Aga Khan Program Newsletter, Vol. 4, No. 2, Spring 1992. Source: The Aga Khan Foundation Archive 284

Figure 157: Exhibition Entrance of 'Louis I. Kahn: In the Realm of Architecture,' 14 June - 18 August 1992. Source: The Museum of Modern Art Archive. IN1627. Photographed by Mali Olatunji 285

Figure 158: Model of the National Assembly Building displayed in the exhibition. Source: The Museum of Modern Art Archive. IN1627.19. Photographed by Mali Olatunji 285

Figure 159: Proposed Master Plan for the Presidential Estate by Louis Kahn for Islamabad. Source: Farhan S. Karim, “Sculpted Landscape: The Unbuilt Public Square of Islamabad,” in *Contemporary Urban Landscapes of the Middle East*, ed. Mohammad Gharipour (Abingdon, Oxon, 2016), 97. 306

Figure 160: Plan for the Triangular Building by Louis Kahn. Source: Farhan S. Karim, “Sculpted Landscape: The Unbuilt Public Square of Islamabad,” in *Contemporary Urban Landscapes of the Middle East*, ed. Mohammad Gharipour (Abingdon, Oxon, 2016), 107. 306

Figure 161: Model of Presidential Complex for Islamabad by Edward Durell Stone. Source: Farhan S. Karim, “Sculpted Landscape: The Unbuilt Public Square of Islamabad,” in *Contemporary Urban Landscapes of the Middle East*, ed. Mohammad Gharipour (Abingdon, Oxon, 2016), 108. 307

Figure 162: Initial Plan of Presidential Complex by Edward Durell Stone. The plan demonstrates the relationship between landscape and main buildings. Source: Farhan S. Karim, “Sculpted Landscape: The Unbuilt Public Square of Islamabad,” in *Contemporary Urban Landscapes of the Middle East*, ed. Mohammad Gharipour (Abingdon, Oxon, 2016), 109. 307

Figure 163: Site plan sketch by Kahn. The sketch shows distance between the Citadel of Assembly (bottom) and Citadel of Institutions (top). Source: Sarah Williams Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn’s Situated Modernism* (New Have, Yale University Press, 2001), 174 310

Figure 164: Sketch of Citadel of Assembly by Kahn. This early site plan shows National Assembly Building (bottom centre), mosque (centre) and Supreme Court (top) with hostels on each side. Source: Sarah Williams Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn’s Situated Modernism* (New Have, Yale University Press, 2001), 175 311

Figure 165: Elevation sketch by Kahn showing the massive scale of the building complexes of Citadel of Assembly with a dot depicting human scale in between the mosque’s minaret and the Assembly Building. Source: Sarah Williams Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn’s Situated Modernism* (New Have, Yale University Press, 2001), 176 312

Figure 166: Early Site Plan of the Capitol Complex showing Citadel of Assembly (right) and Citadel of Institutions (left), 12 March 1963. Source: Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 297 313

Figure 167: Masterplan of 3 May 1963. Source: Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 298..... 314

Figure 168: Masterplan of 21 December 1963. Source: Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 298 314

Figure 169: Masterplan of 10 May 1964 showing small scaled prayer hall and Supreme Court have no insulation. Source: Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 299..... 315

Figure 170: Masterplan of February 1965 showing the Supreme Court no longer in the same axis as the National Assembly Building. Source: Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 300. 315

Figure 171: Published Masterplan of January 1973. B5 showing Supreme Court has been included as a part of Citadel of Institutions I Source: Source: Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 300. 316

Figure 172: Site plan highlighting the main functions. Source: Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 293. 321

Figure 173: Brick arches under the Presidential Square. Source: Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania..... 321

Figure 174: A Comparison of Plan of La Ville de Chaux, 1804, France by Claude-Nicolas Ledoux and Initial Plan of the National Assembly Building. Source: Sarah Williams Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism* (New Have, Yale University Press, 2001), 195. 323

Figure 175: Taj Mahal at Agra and the National Assembly Building similarly elevated on a plinth reflected in an artificial lake. Source: Artstor..... 323

Figure 176: Axonometric view of the Citadel of Assembly. Source: Archives of Architecture (Bangladesh) 324

Figure 177: Section (above) and plan (below) of the National Assembly Building. Source: Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 288. 326

Figure 178: Section (left) and plan (right) of Exeter Library, New Hampshire. Source: Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 289. 326

Figure 179: Elevation of the National Assembly Building punched with primary shapes. Source: MoMA Archive 327

Figure 180: Elevation of First Unitarian Church, Rochester, Louis I. Kahn. Source: MoMA Archive 327

Figure 181: Elevation study of the National Assembly Building. Source: Sarah Williams Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism* (New Have, Yale University Press, 2001), 183. 327

Figure 182: Office blocks of the National Assembly Building with stacked aperture. Source: Archives of Architecture (Bangladesh) 328

Figure 183: Porches of Taj Mahal similar to the abstract deep facades of the National Assembly. Source: Artstor 328

Figure 184: Interior of the Prayer Hall, National Assembly Building. Source: Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania 334

Figure 185: Study of the prayer hall shifted towards Qibla. Source: Author 335

Figure 186: Low land areas of the site of Capitol Complex. Source: Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania 336

Figure 187: Deep facades of the exterior. Source: Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania 337

Figure 188: Contrasting material of the National Assembly Building in concrete and Hostels in red brick. Source: Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania 337

Figure 189: Play of shade and shadow in the interior. Source: Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania..... 338

Figure 190: 1000 Taka Banknote of Bangladesh. Source: Tahsin Rahman 348

Figure 191: Octagonal 'umbrella' constructed in reinforced concrete, Assembly Chamber. Source: Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania 352

Figure 192: Top view of the Assembly Chamber. Source: Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania 353

Figure 193: Section of the Assembly Chamber. Source: Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania 353

Chapter 1: Introduction

On 10 January 1972, *Bangabandhu* Sheikh Mujibur Rahman delivered a speech at the Race Course Ground in Dhaka after his release from a Pakistani jail stating: 'Now, my Bangladesh is independent […] and the people of Bengal have been liberated. My Bengal will remain free.'[1] Rahman's declamation culminated a two decade long struggle for independence from Pakistan which encapsulated a complex and multifaceted political history of Bangladesh. This narrative started with the formation of Pakistan as two halves – East and West – that led to bilateral anxiety resulting in separation. Between decolonisation and independence, the history of Bangladesh unfolds multi-layered conflicts related to politics, economy, religion and culture.

This historical backdrop is the core of this thesis which investigates the architectural production in which two distinct nationalisms played simultaneous roles – Islamic nationalism and Bengali nationalism. It was in this context in which Pakistan emerged as an Islamic nation overlooking the cultural significances of its Eastern counterpart that led to Bengali nationalism in the same period. Here is an interdisciplinary research that attempts to unravel the relationship between architecture and politics in a context of ideological conflicts and economic discrepancies. This research contributes to the fields of Bangladeshi and South Asian postcolonial architectural historiography and political and cultural studies. It also provides a basis to study further architectural production after the independence of Bangladesh. The thesis investigates architecture

[1] Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was known as the Friend of Bengal (*Bangabandhu)*. He is also known as the Father of the Nation. He served as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh between 1972 and 1975. See, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, "We Don't Know Defeat," *Strategic analysis* 45, no. 6 (2021): 663, https://doi.org/10.1080/09700161.2021.2012046.

of mostly governmental and institutional buildings focussing on individual actors – politicians and architects – in order to understand the context of development and designs between 1947 and 1971 with a background of international funding, political uncertainties and religious and cultural conundrums.

1.1 Between Formation and Representation

Throughout its existence, Bangladesh has been known by several names – the Bengal Delta, Bengal, East Bengal and East Pakistan according to different periods. The first three identities were a constant part of India and existed under a series of rulers from different regions from the third century until the twentieth century, such as Buddhist monks, Hindu Jains, Persian Sultans, Mughal Emperors and the British rulers (fig. 1). The territory became East Pakistan as a part of the new nation of Pakistan, segregating itself from India in 1947 (fig. 2).[2] The creation of Pakistan was unique and at the same time it was idiosyncratic for three reasons. Firstly, the country was founded on religious nationalism which resulted in severe uncertainties such as the mass migration of Hindu population in India and the Muslim population in Pakistan. Secondly, Pakistan was given two discrete territories to govern as one state which were separated from each other by thousands of miles of Indian region . West Pakistan was larger and consisted of the Western regions of Punjab and Sind, Baluchistan, Capital territories of Karachi and tribal areas on the border adjacent to Afghanistan (fig. 1). In contrast, East Pakistan was densely populated consisting of the area of modern-day Bangladesh. These two aspects – religious nationalism and geographical

[2] Initially the Eastern province of Pakistan was known as East Bengal. Later, it was renamed East Pakistan in 1955.

placement generate the third reason. After the partition, Pakistan inherited regions that were mostly rural and focussed on raw-material productions. In contrast, India acquired the central administrative states of the British colony such as New Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata which had civil bureaucracy, military services and ports.[3] Therefore, India succeeded the old administrations of colonial power and Pakistan had to establish itself from the scratch in terms of government formation, administrations, armed forces, roads, railways and the urban planning of the cities.



Figure 1: Map of the British Indian Empire 1909. Source: Heritage Archive of Bangladesh History

[3] Willem van Schendel, *A History of Bangladesh* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 129.

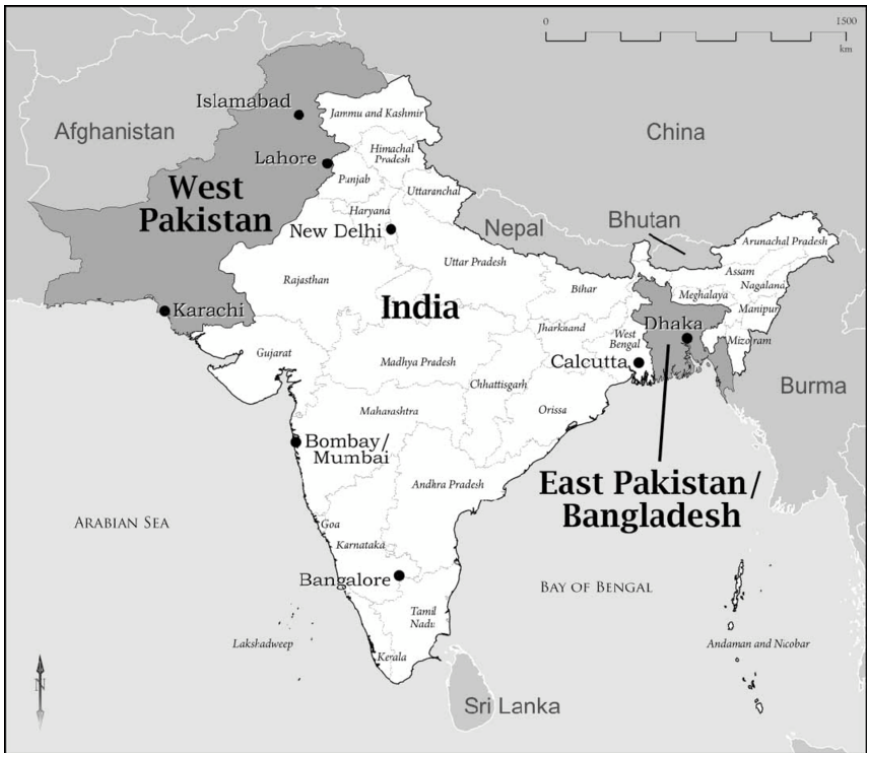


Figure 2: Map of the Indian Subcontinent showing the geo-placement of East and West Pakistan. Source: Heritage Archive of Bangladesh History

The key point for mentioning these three reasons is to address why the formation of Pakistan gradually antagonised its Eastern counterpart resulting in civil war. Did architecture even play any role at all amidst this situation? Pakistan was faced with a massive task of building the nation in which the 'quest for an identity was both Islamic and national.'[4] Alongside forming governing bodies for the two provinces, urban planning and the construction of public buildings became the utmost priority for Pakistan's development. This brought opportunities for locals to be trained as architects and the country received attention from the West – especially the United States of America who assisted by sending expert architects and engineers as well as funded development schemes. Initially, the two halves of Pakistan imagined a similar vision of building a unified Islamic nation, however, during the process, the two

[4] Ayesha Jalal, *The Struggle for Pakistan: A Muslim Homeland and Global Politics* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004), 11.

provinces were faced with internal politics that raised issues dealing with power, language, culture and economy.

The main focus of this thesis consists of two themes – the political backdrop and the architecture that was produced amidst the circumstances. The first conflict to arise between the two wings of Pakistan was regarding the language issue in which then Governor-General and Prime Minister of Pakistan respectively, Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan repeatedly imposed that 'Urdu should be the language of millions of Muslims.'[5] This was not acceptable for Bengalis as the majority of the population (56%) spoke the Bangla language and were from East Pakistan. This led to protests and strikes amongst Bengalis denouncing Urdu as the state language culminating in Language Movement Day on 21 February 1952. Although the language issue was resolved, nonetheless, the agitation continued and the East Pakistan's politicians formed the National Awami Party (NAP) – a leftist wing separating themselves from the Muslim League.[6] Led by Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani and other progressive leaders and activists, NAP played an important role in the secessionist movement and liberation of Bangladesh.[7] Despite continuing criticism and domination of West Pakistan over the East, the government attempted to keep the provinces together. This was evident mostly during the military regime of President Ayub Khan between 1959 and 1969 in which he declared the constitution of provincial administrations and bureaucratic bodies as well as colossal development projects in both wings of

[5] Hasan Zaheer, *The Separation of East Pakistan: The Rise and Realization of Bengali Muslim Nationalism* (Karachi, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).
[6] Jalal, *The Struggle for Pakistan: A Muslim Homeland and Global Politics*.
[7] Shireen Hasan Osmany, *Bangladeshi Nationalism: History of Dialectics and Dimensions* (Dhaka: The University Press, 1992).

Pakistan. Another reason Khan wanted to keep the peace between the provinces and appease the East Pakistanis was in order to win their votes during elections.

Despite the continuing political agitation and economic discrepancies, East Pakistan experienced rapid development both in governmental and institutional sectors. This thesis examines selected buildings as case studies built between 1947 and 1971 arguing that architecture played an ideological and nationalist role that neutralised dominant administrative and legislative mechanisms of the Pakistani Government. Key actors in my research are the local and expatriate architects who were commissioned to design and construct the public buildings. The study of the architectural buildings will be examined through the philosophies and design techniques of individual architects and how they perceived their client – the Government of Pakistan (mainly Ayub Khan) during the political turbulences.

The architectural readings are loosely chronologically structured in order to comprehend the subtle transformations within the built environment as well as to compare the designs of the various architects. The thesis is thus organised according to three themes – architecture that identified Bengali characteristics, architecture that contributed to 'tropical' design and construction techniques and architecture that expressed independence of the country. The first theme explores the architectural transformation between the postcolonial Islamic style of the governmental and private sectors following Muzharul Islam's western influenced designs combined with Bengali characteristics. Alongside featuring Islam's transition both in his architectural career and in his designs, this theme also explores a collaboration project undertaken by

Islam and Stanley Tigerman. The second theme investigates a larger body of architects who primarily worked in East Pakistan during the 1960s. These architects were part of broader developing schemes and international funding projects, namely Constantinos A. Doxiadis, Daniel C. Dunham, Robert Boughey, Paul Rudolph and Richard Vrooman. Their architectural endeavours will be examined focussing on site-specific language such as climate consideration and how they perceived Bengal's past as an inspiration in their designs. The third and last theme provides a critical analysis of the Capitol Complex of Bangladesh designed by Louis I. Kahn which was originally conceived as the Second Capitol Complex of Pakistan. By demonstrating Kahn's perception of the region, design development and change of client, this study represents the final transition of East Pakistan into its new identity of Bangladesh.

These architectural themes have been discussed by a range of scholars. Either separate architectural projects by individual architects have been explored or studies have focused on group architectural works during the Pakistani period of Bangladesh.[8] However, there has been no comprehensive analysis of the architectural projects that examined the buildings as nationalist products and how they were particularly conceived in the context of East Pakistan.

This thesis addresses this gap in research by combining a historiographical analysis of the formation of Pakistan and its geopolitics with detailed readings of architects and architectural projects in order to develop an insightful and nuanced contextual

[8] These themes structure chapter 3, 4 and 5 of this thesis. The relevant scholars are cited with the associated chapters.

interpretation. It thus provides a new interpretative layer in which to value the construction of buildings in East Pakistan during a period of political turmoil, both as historical and architectural subjects. Detailed analysis of the case studies also allows for broader architectural themes such as Modernism, Regionalism, and the Tropical approach to be understood in new and diverse ways.

In this thesis, the relationship between architectural buildings and political settings is often analysed either separately or by making parallel links. This will assist in demonstrating the connection between the ambivalent nature of Pakistani politics and the ambiguities that architects faced during their design development. However, with detailed examination of the buildings, the projects achieve more relevance in the realm of architecture and politics. I also attempt to understand the uncertainties between architecture and politics through multiple historiographical narratives from multidisciplinary perspectives. The thesis contributes to postcolonial architectural narratives and at times exposes contradictory interpretations. Nevertheless, it offers an analysis that synthesises disciplines such as history, architecture, politics, religious and cultural studies.

The thesis aims to provide a better understanding of the architectural development and evolution of design alongside a comprehension of the critical geo-political context of Pakistan between 1947 and 1971. The analyses are developed with a methodological approach that considers multiple interpretations. Rather than seeking to provide a direct answer for these buildings as nationalist products, both inconsistencies as well as continuities will be explored.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

The research interest in this study does not seek to celebrate the architectural projects built between 1947 and 1971. Instead, the thesis extends across and in between diverse and polarised time periods interpreting these buildings as a search for particularities of Bengali identity, new methods and techniques of design and hope for liberation as enacted throughout the twenty-four years of being part of Pakistan. There are two aspects working simultaneously in this research – architecture and politics – both manifest multiple dimensions as the analysis proceeds.

Most of the buildings that have been selected as case studies were either initiated or completed during the 1950s and 1960s. Architectural readings are informed by either 'marginal' or 'other' types of Modernism within a background study of the theoretical analysis of building styles.[9] The architecture of South Asia during the 1950s and 1960s has been grouped as a product of Regionalism or as buildings of tropical approach similar to the recognition of African development of the same era. Nevertheless, the case for Regionalism loses its meaning when a building is studied with critical analysis of its surrounding context and the psyche of the people for whom it is built. For this reason, the case studies of this thesis are explored according to diverse interpretations of architectural analysis and construct a framework to comprehend the relationship between architecture and culture within a multidisciplinary matrix.

[9] Maryam Gusheh, "Louis Kahn in Dhaka: Ruin as Method" (Doctor of Philosophy, University of New South Wales, 2013), 8.

Another aspect of political critique emerges with the meticulous study of nationalism in this thesis. The focus period between 1947 and 1971 experienced multiple layers of nationalism. The creation of Pakistan was solely based on religious nationalism. The main reason for partition during the decline of colonial power was because the Muslim majority demanded their own separate nation. However, under the umbrella of Muslim consciousness, the people of East Pakistan were discriminated against, criticised and imposed upon with the insistence that they should adopt their new Islamic culture and deny their ethnic and traditional roots. Right after the formation of Pakistan, language became a main concern between the two wings. Between 1947 and 1952, the conundrum of the Urdu-Bangla language initiated a new and segregated ethos of Bengali nationalism. The continuity of political disagreement generated the most crucial point of East and West Pakistani history which was the General Election in 1970.[10] The Bengali nationalist party, the Awami League won with a huge number of votes and Pakistan's Peoples Party (PPP) failed to win any governing seats in East Pakistan. Subsequently, then Prime Minister Yahya Khan and the PPP denied the Awami League's majority win causing political unrest, military lockdown and genocide that eventually led to the War of Independence. The war continued for nine months and East Pakistan became an independent state of Bangladesh on 16 December 1971. In the last two years of being Pakistan, Bengali nationalism was transformed into Bangladeshi nationalism – amalgamating traditional and cultural values with sovereign and individual identity.

[10] For a detailed history see, Zaheer, *The Separation of East Pakistan: The Rise and Realization of Bengali Muslim Nationalism*; Lawrence Ziring, *The Ayub Khan Era: Politics in Pakistan, 1958-1969* (Syracruse: Syracruse University Press, 1971); Jalal, *The Struggle for Pakistan: A Muslim Homeland and Global Politics*.

These three layers of nationalism – Islamic, Bengali and Bangladeshi – work as a core backdrop for the thesis to examine the architectural case studies. Furthermore, alongside buildings, the changing nature of Pakistan's political scene was also an important aspect for architects to take in account during either their stay in or visit to the country. The aim, therefore, is to study the architectural buildings alongside their architect(s) within the complex political and cultural context. The research will thus be acknowledged as a historical subject and will reveal its potential relevance in postcolonial architectural discourse.

1.3 Methodology and Approach

The thesis is largely based on architectural readings in relation to drawing analysis, construction techniques with the present-day conditions of the building being taken into consideration. Core studies are supported by analysis of political historiography, global relations and the architects' academic and professional backgrounds. I present a number of case studies of architectural buildings which have been broadly studied, however, there are also some examples that have not received much attention in existing scholarship. From conception to realisation, my main attempt is to offer a comprehensive investigation of the buildings' commission, design development, construction methods and to highlight the literal and abstract meanings behind design philosophies within the historical and cultural context. My research features an overview of a range of materials collected from site visits, archives, old journals, exhibitions, interviews, conceptual and existing literature, informal conversations and unpublished documents.

During my research, I travelled to Bangladesh for a brief period for site visits of the case studies in different cities and consulted a wide range of archives in Dhaka. My site visits included trips to North Bengal (Pabna, Rajshahi, Bogra and Rangpur), Barisal, Sylhet, Mymensingh, Comilla, Chittagong and Dhaka. The majority of the selected case studies as well as the archives are situated in Dhaka; therefore, the capital city offered me first-hand experience to investigate the architectural buildings of Muzharul Islam, Daniel C. Dunham and Louis I. Kahn as well as the urban fabric of the Old Town and other historical buildings built during the Mughal and British colonial periods. Other cities provided individual buildings or university campuses to survey with regard to architectural analysis, inspection of site and surroundings and user experiences and photographs of current conditions were taken. Furthermore, the North Bengal trip offered an extensive display of historical monuments and structures that assisted me to understand the cultural and religious past of Bengal. These heritage buildings included *Jor Bangla* Temple in Pabna, *Puthia* Temple, *Govinda* Temple, *Bagha* Mosque, *Pancha Ratna* and *Choto Sona* Mosque in Rajshahi, Kherua Mosque and *Mahasthangarh* in Bogra and *Tahjat* Palace in Rangpur.

I visited three archives in Dhaka – the Archives at the Department of Architecture of Public Works Department (PWD), the Muzharul Islam Archive in Asia Pacific University and the National Archives. Chief Architect Shameem Aminur Rahman has mentioned that most of the archival documents in PWD are either lost, were burnt during the Liberation War or disappeared when offices were moved or renovated.[11] Nevertheless, I have collected architectural drawings by colonial architects working for

[11] A. S. M. Aminur Rahman, interview by Author, Tape Recording, August 13, 2018.

East Bengal PWD which provided me with insights about how an inclusion of mosque was so important in any functional building in the region. Meanwhile the Muzharul Islam Archive provided me with original architectural and working drawings for Islam's projects and I also acquired a lot of historical data and documents such as legislative and parliamentary proceedings and economic plans for East and West Pakistan from the National Archive. Alongside Bangladesh, I visited the British Library in London which holds brief materials and documents on Bengal history in its Asia, Pacific and Africa Collections. Finally, I visited the Constantinos and Emma Doxiadis Foundation in Athens which provided me with primary resource materials such as architectural drawings, notes and sketches. In addition, I have also obtained architectural drawings and photographs remotely from The Paul Rudolph Institute for Modern Architecture in New York, the Louis I. Kahn Collection in the University of Pennsylvania and Katherine Dunham provided me with her father Daniel C. Dunham's architectural materials, notes and photographs. I also visited two exhibitions which focused on the architecture of postcolonial Bangladesh at the Swiss Architecture Museum in Basel and the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York.[12] Additionally, further findings have materialised from substantial remote archival research of digital folders at the Ford Foundation Archives and MoMA Archives.

As a result, my studies are informed by a broad range of primary source materials and particularly by architectural drawings and sketches, brochures and catalogues, unpublished notes and issues raised about East Pakistan, reviews of architectural buildings in the region published in newspapers and articles, such as O. H.

[12] Detailed experience and photographs are included in Chapter 3.

Koenigsberger article in the *Architectural Review*, Raymond Lifchez and James Walden's article in the *Architectural Record*, the seminar journal *Regionalism in Architecture* aligned with the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, *MARG* and *Mimar*.[13] I have discovered new findings from various resources at times relevant yet contradictory. For example, the political relationship between the USA and Pakistan revealed the US's intention to deploy 'soft power' on the new nation as it was closer to Russia and this was actually one of the major reasons why Pakistan was receiving ample funding from the organisations.[14] Furthermore, the amount of information and material I collected also necessitated selectivity, as I focussed on analysing selected buildings with appropriate themes during the turmoil period of East Pakistan. However, the historiography of Bengal is also intertwined with the later creation of East Pakistan, so I referred to both cultural and ethnic values comparing these with the architectural context. I, therefore, narrowed down relevant references from history in order to provide a nuanced yet complex framework which negotiated political events alongside architectural production.

My research has also benefitted from interviews conducted with key scholars and architects who are actively contributing to Bangladeshi architectural practice and scholarship. Additionally, I interviewed historians of Bangladesh who were able to offer knowledge of East Pakistan's political and civil war situation. This included key

[13] Articles are referred in required chapters. O. H. Koenigsberger, "India, Pakistan and Ceylon," *The Architectural Review* 128, no. 761 (July 1960); Raymond Lifchez, "Masterplan Study gives East Pakistan New Approaches for Tropical Architecture," *Architectural Record*, no. 9 (September 1968); James Walden, "Memoir: My Dacca Days," *Architectural Record* 200, no. 3 (2012); Robert Powell, ed., *Regionalism in Architecture* (Singapore: Concept Media, 1985).
[14] Farhan S. Karim, "Between Self and Citizenship: Doxiadis Associates in Postcolonial Pakistan, 1958-1968," *International Journal of Islamic Architecture* 5, no. 1 (March 2016), https://doi.org/10.1386/ijia.5.1.135_1.

Bangladeshi educators namely Muntassir Mamoon and Abdullah Abu Sayeed who were active during the Liberation War in 1971. They provided a first-hand overview of East Pakistan's political situation, its condition before the genocide on the night of 25 March 1971 and the complex aftermath that stretched to war, all of which has informed all of my chapters and provided relevant historical background information. Architectural historian Adnan Morshed who is actively writing about architecture related to Bangladesh provided a comprehensive insight into how to connect the buildings to East Pakistan's political context which helped me select the case studies thematically. I was able to interview several scholars who worked closely with Muzharul Islam namely, Zainab F. Ali, Fuad H. Mallick, Shamsul Wares, Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, Shamail Inan, Nurur R. Khan and Ehsan Khan. They described their experiences working with Islam including how he used to approach design and how involved he was with history and architecture of Bangladesh. Whilst working with Islam at *Vastukalabid*, Wares and Ashraf recalled the influences and inspiration he had gained from Le Corbusier and Kahn. Furthermore, Nurur Khan, who recently finished his Ph.D. on Muzharul Islam and the politics of Bangladesh at IUAV University of Venice, provided valuable insights into the connection between Islam as an activist and Islam as an architect. This symbioisis of being an activist and architect at the same time played an important role in Islam's design development. Bangladeshi scholars have also reflected on how Islam was instrumental in inviting several American architects namely Rudolph, Tigerman and Kahn to the country and have described their architectural contributions. Dahlia Nausheen, Islam's daughter has shared personal anecdotes and facts about her father, revealing how he truly was as a person, something which I would not be able to find in existing literature.

Farhan S. Karim, assistant professor at the University of Kansas has informed me on Doxiadis' architecture and how he developed his designs differently for East and West Pakistan respectively. Finally, Katherine Dunham has kindly reviewed my documents related to Daniel Dunham providing relevant information that has enriched my research. Whilst Kahn's National Assembly Building has been celebrated and analysed by multiple scholars, the other case studies of my research remain largely less examined. Therefore, in most cases, I approached my analysis with methods of observation from the architectural drawings, sketches and notes, interviews and archival documents mentioned above.

In order to establish a relationship between nationalism and architecture, I adopted Benedict Anderson's concept of 'imagined communities' in my research.[15] This approach assisted me with understanding the Bengal Muslim – Muslim Bengal dilemma which was one of the major concerns of the people of East Pakistan during the political turbulences. The Bengali's search for identity remains a key theme throughout my analysis which interrelates not only with architecture but also with cultural, religious and economic contexts. In this way, the thesis offers a better understanding of the motives behind the design and production of the featured architecture as well as the governmental dominance over East Pakistan.

Finally, by analysing the architecture and the architects' understanding of how to implement their designs in the region, my research challenges the commonly

[15] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Revised ed. (London: Verso, 2016).

perceived notion of pre-independent Bangladeshi architecture as 'Regional' or 'Tropical,' which was prevalent during the 1980s and remains largely acceptable today. Rather than agreeing with this perspective, I argue for a rational and contextual aspect of Modern architecture. This approach is divided into three themes in my thesis with each theme exploring one layer of architectural significance related to the analysis of the design whilst creating a dialogue with the ongoing political and cultural context. These themes will be elaborately discussed in the next section alongside a summary of the chapters.

1.4 Outline of the Thesis

Chapter 1 introduces an essential background for the research in order to provide a contextual setting in which the case studies will be analysed. Furthermore, it covers the theoretical framework and demonstrates how I will address the gaps which have not been examined in previous literature. Subsequent chapters outline conceptual and thematical analyses in order to grasp a broader understanding of nationalism and architecture in the postcolonial context of East Pakistan.

Chapter 2, Literature Review, examines the conceptual themes of the research – nationalism, architectural transition and cultural context. The first theme outlines an understanding of the concept of nationalism and interrelates its significance with nation building and architecture. The second theme – architectural transition – provides a study of different architectural styles which have been acknowledged for the buildings of the 1950s and 1960s. Exploring various architectural resurgences in a postcolonial context, this study attempts to comprehend the paradoxes of

architectural genealogies and how case studies are to be perceived in this thesis. Finally, the third theme – cultural context – largely studies the dilemma of the Bengal psyche of being either Muslim or Bengali. This theme compares the different ideologies of East and West Pakistan and how nationalism was transformed from being religious to regional.

The next three chapters 3, 4 and 5 are my main data chapters in which I examine architectural case studies in different themes and tropes. Chapter 3, Architecture of Bengali Identity, explores the architectural buildings which were built immediately after the partition in 1947 in order to understand the transformations in design as the two halves of Pakistan faced the language conflict. This chapter is divided into two tropes: the first segment examines the public buildings designed by governmental and private sectors in East Pakistan who were strictly following the religious requirements within their design and construction; and the second segment extensively analyses the architectural career and design of Muzharul Islam, who started his practice in the simultaneous period offering a new insight into design ideas which reflected fresh trajectories for Bengali's search for a new identity which separated itself from that of Pakistan.

Chapter 4, Architecture of the 'Tropics' outlines the architectural endeavours of expatriate architects who were commissioned to work in East Pakistan. This chapter comprehensively investigates the US-Pakistan political relationship during the Ayub Regime and how foreign architects were assigned to the development schemes. By exploring the architecture of Doxiadis, Dunham, Rudolph and Boughey, the first

section of this chapter provides various insights into the Western methods and techniques of tropical design and how they perceived the heritage of Bengal's past as an influence in their designs. The second section overviews the importance of architectural education in the region by analysing the establishment of the first architectural department which was assigned to Vrooman.

Chapter 5, Architecture of Independence analyses the Capitol Complex of Bangladesh designed by Kahn. Unlike other chapters, this chapter remains focussed on only one building in order to understand not only Kahn's design approach and philosophies but also to understand important shifts in nation building through this legislative building. A core aspect of analysing the National Assembly Building individually is to understand how it was conceived as a secondary legislative infrastructure for Pakistan and how on final completion it had become a national icon and main Capitol Complex for the independent country of Bangladesh. This narrative reflects the motives of both architect and client and how their political and philosophical perspectives finally shaped the edifice.

Chapter 6, Conclusion summarises the analysis and synthesises the findings. The concluding chapter offers an ultimate glimpse of political tensions between the two halves of Pakistan and positions the interconnections between the politicians, architects and architectural buildings. Finally, the chapter discusses further scope for this research and how it might be extended or expanded for analysing the contemporary architecture of Bangladesh.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter demonstrates the foreground and validation for undertaking this thesis. This research is largely based on the study of both theoretical and existing literature. The theoretical literature will be outlined in this chapter covering three major themes: nationalism, architectural transition and religious-cultural context. These themes will be explored in order to provide an overview of the theoretical framework for the spatial study of selected case studies in the further chapters of this research.

2.1 Research Rationale

The interpretation of buildings is explained either by its spatial and visible existence or through its social and cultural usage. In his article entitled 'Architecture and Meaning,' Robert Hershberger illustrated that the meaning of architecture can be demonstrated according to two theories: 'representational' and 'responsive.'[16] The representational theory focusses on the physical aspects of architecture such as form, material, colour, shape etc. In contrast, the responsive theory has a more subjective focus that attempts to address issues related to concepts, evaluation and perspective, which is also the key point of this research. Responsive theory shapes the social and political facets of architecture which also deals with subjects concerning 'thoughts' and 'emotions.'[17] By exploring the aforementioned themes and tropes rather than only studying the architectural significances, this thesis focusses on the study of social and cultural aspects evolved with politics. The selected governmental and institutional buildings

[16] R. G. Hershberger, "Architecture and Meaning," *The Journal of aesthetic education* 4, no. 4 (1970): 37-55, https://doi.org/10.2307/3331285.
[17] Hershberger, "Architecture and Meaning," 37-55.

examined in further chapters have been extensively explored in terms of their architectural and constructional values. Nevertheless, the studies have seldom been examined in the light of political history dealing with constant paradoxical concepts of nationalism and identity crisis. This research will study the architectural production of pre-independent Bangladesh (East Pakistan period, 1947-71) by analysing how nationalism and social issues were intertwined with the political historiography.

The themes are explored in order to connect with the architectural reading of selected case studies as well as to engage with existing literature in later chapters. The theoretical analysis of the three themes is also studied, focussing on the culture and context of East Bengal's transformation into East Pakistan and later Bangladesh. Firstly, the idea of nationalism is analysed in relation to Bangladeshi concepts of nation-building through architecture. Secondly, in order to understand the architectural transition of East Pakistan, the paradoxes of overlapping architectural styles between the 1950s and 1960s such as Modern, Postmodern, Regional and Tropical will be explored. And lastly, the third theme will focus on the study of culture and religion in relation to the search for identity of Bengalis in a conflicting political environment. Rather than a generic study, these social issues will be explored within the context of political anxiety and its impact on the architectural historiography.

The themes explored in this chapter provide a foundation for the literature studies of the further chapters. The existing literature study for the later chapters is divided into three sections: firstly, the architectural transformation of colonial to postcolonial East Pakistan and identifying the 'search for identity' through Bengali Modernism. From the

continuing works of governmental architectural office to the designs assigned to Muzharul Islam, this analysis attempt to establish the significance of those public buildings in relation to political and social aspects. Secondly, the architectural design and construction process of foreign architects who exclusively brought the concept of the 'tropics' in the region and how this dealt with the inspiration of past histories of Bengal. Thirdly, a critical analysis of the National Assembly Building designed by Louis I. Kahn which represents an exceptional transition from its change of client to an altered nation's identity.

By providing an overview of the theoretical framework, this chapter aims to subsume a coherent interpretation of the radical concepts of nationalism, architectural transition and culture. This chapter will attempt to provide a clear perspective by exploring cross-disciplinary scholarly writings in order to create an eloquent dialogue between the various concepts and theories.

2.2 Nationalism, Nation Building and Architecture

The journey of achieving Bengali identity was a complicated process for East Pakistan. Alongside the leftist political agenda, the fields of the fine arts, literature and theatre acted as national catalysts for Bangladesh's independence during the cold war. Architecture also played an important role for national growth in expressing Bengal's rooted identity. In the beginning, however, the developing scheme was to build the nation of Pakistan with an Eastern region which desired to express its rooted culture, something that would soon problematise the concept of one united Islamic country. Nonetheless, for both wings of Pakistan, nation-building was effective through

westernised modernisms that later transformed, as many critics claim, on the one hand, either Regional or Tropical Architecture; or both Regional and Tropical Architecture on the other. Modernism was transformed when architects designed buildings which considered the local climate, implementing functional solutions suited for tropical regions such as cross ventilation, material usage, flat roofs and so on. Globally, this is not a new technique for architects, as they have altered and modified designs in consideration of the site and context. For instance, many cities in Africa were decolonised and nation building was promoted with built environments suited to their climate and traditions. For the newly-built nations, constructing important public buildings and infrastructures different from those built by their previous rulers was one of the key points for nation building. Similar actions were witnessed when the Indian subcontinent was divided and the chosen architecture for nation building was successful to promote a nation's new identity. However, for East Pakistan, nationalism and architecture had altered meanings woven into the history of paradoxical search for identity. These meanings were related to a region's desire to achieve sovereignty in order to harmoniously exist with both its religion and culture. Thus, the transformation in nationalism and architecture which occurred during East Pakistan's journey to become Bangladesh will be examined through a critical survey of the scholarly writings on nationalism, nation building and architecture.

2.2.1 Concepts of Nationalism and Nation Building

The idea of nationalism is a complex concept to define and interpret. Although from the beginning of civilisation, collective groups of people are known to have connected with their native regions and the traditions of their ancestors and to have established

types of territorial administration, nevertheless, it was not until the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that nationalism originated as a concept of 'sentimental activity' in which the 'feeling of anger aroused by the violation' of certain norms and customs were evoked by another dominant authority.[18] The diverse concept of nationalism is related to different perceptions of the emergence of various nationalist movements ideally connected to cultural and political issues.[19] The first powerful manifestations of nationalism relate to the American and French Revolutions.[20] The notion of nationalism spread across the Western regions, such as the newly-built nations of Latin America, to central Europe in the early nineteenth century and to Eastern Europe in the mid-nineteenth century. It was not until the early twentieth century that the rise of powerful nationalism and nationalist movements occurred throughout Asia and Africa in the Eastern regions. These nationalist movements were actuated by the 'thought' and 'emotion' generating sentiment manifested by each nation to protect 'its unity, purity, autonomy and strength.'[21] In all cases, the development of nationalism is noticeable in the context of societies with rapid population and urban growth due, for example, to the expansion of religious communities, monarch-related societies and centralised political administration.[22] Whilst these are common cases for the age of nationalism in Europe, the emergence of nationalism in Asia and Africa was formed through decolonisation and for postcolonial sovereign nations.

---

[18] Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2008), 1.
[19] R. Beiner, *Theorizing Nationalism* (Albany: State University of New York, 1999); Louis L. Snyder, *The Meaning of Nationalism* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1954).
[20] E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, Second ed. (Cambridge: Cambreidge University Press, 2012), 121.
[21] Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*.
[22] Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, 42; Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 36.

Nationalism was an active political choice throughout history, but it became a subject of research during the eighteenth century onwards.[23] Evaluating studies on nation and nationalism, many critics provided ambiguous explanations of the chosen subject as most of them agreed that it was a very complex idea to elucidate and comprehend. Scholars of comprehensive analysis on nationalism struggled to devise an undeviating hypothesis. Eric J. Hobsbawm argues, 'Neither objective nor subjective definitions are thus satisfactory, and both are misleading.'[24] Benedict Anderson disputes, 'Nation, nationality, nationalism – all have proved notoriously difficult to define, let alone to analyse.'[25] Hugh Seton-Watson observes, 'no scientific definition of the nation can be devised; yet the phenomenon has existed and exists.'[26] However, these scholars did achieve an explanation for the notion of nationalism by connecting it with various political and social aspects. Some of the best analyses are demonstrated in the early writings of John Stuart Mill such as *Considerations on Representative Government* (1861) and Ernest Renan's famous lecture on 'What is nation?' (1882)[27] The discourse on nationalism soon became a passionate subject for analysis amongst Marxist scholars who perceived it as a modern discourse on the international socialist movement and connected it with powerful intellectuals such as Otto Bauer, Lenin, Kautsky, Luxemburg, Stalin and so on.[28] One of the most useful inquiries into

---

[23] Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, 1.
[24] Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, 8.
[25] Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 3.
[26] Hugh Seton-Watson, *Nations and States : An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism* (London: Methuen, 1977), 3.
[27] John Stuart Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government* (Auckland: The Floating Press, 2009), Chapter XVI; Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation? (Conférence faite en Sorbonne, le 11 mars 1882)* (Paris: C. Levy, 1882).
[28] For a recent survey see, Eugene Lunn, *Marxism and Modernism: An Historical Study of Lukács, Brecht, Benjamin, and Adorno* (London: Verso, 1985); Anthony Giddens, *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory; an Analysis of the Writings of Marx, Durkheim and Max Weber* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971); Anthony Brewer, *Marxist Theories of Imperialism A Critical Survey* (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2012).

nationalism is perceived in the academic study of Carlton Hayes and Hans Kohn, published after World War I.[29] These two authors provided a modern sense of the concept which later multiplied and advanced greatly in the following decades in the scholarly writings of Karl Deutsch, John Breuilly, Benedict Anderson, Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm and Anthony Smith.

In 1774, the first theoretical definition of nationalism was devised by the German philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder in which he argued nationalism to be inherently a 'state of mind, a collective consciousness of identity generated, constituted and constructed through memory, fantasy, whim and myth.'[30] Similarly Hans Kohn argued nationalism is,

> A state of mind, permeating the large majority of a people, and claiming to permeate all its members; it recognised the nation state as the ideal form of political organisation and the nationality as the source of all creative cultural energy and economic well-being. The supreme loyalty of man is therefore due to his nationality, as his own life is supposedly rooted in and made possible by welfare.[31]

In summary, nationalism 'harbours emotional issues, cultural issues and political and religious ideologies.'[32] In order to understand nationalism, most of the literature concerning it asks a common question: what is a nation? Hobsbawm suggests, nation

---

[29] Carlton Hayes, *The Historical Evolution of Modern Nationalism* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1949); Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism: A Study of Its Origins and Background* (New York: Macmillan, 1946).
[30] Cited in, James G. Kellas, *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, Second ed. (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), 17-19.
[31] Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism: A Study of Its Origins and Background*, 3.
[32] Bayezid Ismail Choudhury, "The Genesis of Jatio Shangsad bhaban at Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka" (PhD diss., The University of Sydney, 2015), 27.

is ‘the product of particular, and inevitably localised or regional, historical conjectures.’[33] To establish this thought, nation(s) often sought common grounds such as ‘language or ethnicity […] common territory, history or cultural traits.’[34] Thus unity of collective community produces the sense of nationalism and this alongside national identity are interrelated with nation and these are logically inseparable from one another. However, most scholars and theorists agree that the existence of nation is assured by nationalism and not vice-versa.[35]

Nationalism represents ‘the philosophical and ideal aspects that bind together like-minded people with similar political and cultural groundings’ and national identity is the characteristics ‘that shapes one’s national character.’[36] The discussion of nationalism becomes complicated for complex political settings resulting in a continuous discourse amongst scholars, political leaders and the elites of the society.[37] Ernest Gellner defines nationalism as a ‘political principle which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent.’[38] Eugene Kamenka also observes nationalism both as a cultural and political product.[39] Furthermore, Louis Synder interprets nationalism as a ‘unity of culture’ involving political and historical aspects.[40] Therefore, this thesis will address nationalism both as a cultural and political element of a nation.

---

[33] Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, 5.
[34] Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, 5.
[35] Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1992), 45.
[36] Choudhury, "The Genesis of Jatio Shangsad bhaban at Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka," 26.
[37] Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*; Kellas, *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity*; Anthony D. Smith, *Theories of Nationalism* (London: Duckworth, 1971).
[38] Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 1.
[39] Eugene Kamenka, *Nationalism : the nature and evolution of an idea* (London: Edward Arnold, 1976).
[40] Snyder, *The Meaning of Nationalism*.

As a country, Bangladesh placed itself on the global map 'as a product of a deep-rooted cultural system.'[41] Anthony D. Smith argues Afro-Asian nationalism to be focussed on 'independence, decolonisation and development.'[42] Nation-building can be defined as 'the creation of a national community through political integration of its members.'[43] For the governments of the newly built countries, nation-building has been not only favourable but also an achievable goal.

Thus, through the study of several governmental and institutional buildings, this thesis attempts to explore the political aspects related to the culture and tradition that generated the concept of nationalism. These buildings will be identified as products of nation-building for Bangladesh rather than Pakistan. This can be represented by exploring underlying issues related to 'solidarity and unity evolving' from the power of nationalism.[44] As Benedict Anderson disputes,

> Nationalism has to be understood by aligning it, not with self-consciously held political ideologies, but with the large cultural systems that preceded it, out of which – as well as against which – it came to being.[45]

In order to understand nationalism, scholars have examined the concept through various types and components. Thomas Eriksen has suggested that three factors

[41] Choudhury, "The Genesis of Jatio Shangsad bhaban at Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka," 16.
[42] Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, 69.
[43] Sanghamitra Bandyopadhyay and Elliott Green, "Nation-Building and Conflict in Modern Africa," *World Development* 45, no. C (2013): 108, http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2012.09.012.
[44] Choudhury, "The Genesis of Jatio Shangsad bhaban at Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka," 16.
[45] Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 12.

contribute to the significance of nationalism: autonomy, unity and identity.[46] Alongside these components, two other aspects are pivotal to comprehending nationalism namely, religion and language.[47] Anderson suggests that cultural roots systems associated with religious community and dynastic realm are the key elements of nationalism.[48] Kellas argues that 'language is closely linked to ethnicity and nationalism, and it is also a facet of human nature.'[49] All these aspects were highly influential in shaping the notion of Bangladeshi nationalism. The creation of East Pakistan evolved from the idea of a Muslim territory in contrast to the concept of Bangladesh which emerged 'as an independent nation because of its people's need to protect and maintain their cultural inheritance.'[50] Nationalism deals with 'territoriality' and one of the main sources of regional boundaries comes from cultural interference.

The emergence of cultural nationalism in the East has a very different narrative from that of the West. As Smith defines, nationalism is 'really only anticolonialism' and it is seen as 'a response to foreign oppression.'[51] In contrast, most of the nationalist movements in the Eastern world occurred predominantly as a resistance to the supreme class dominating the peasant class inhabitants. Through cultural nationalism, the institutional framework of the nationalist movement was formed.[52] The movements

[46] Thomas Hylland Eriksen, "Ethnicity versus Nationalism," *Journal of peace research* 28, no. 3 (1991): 265, https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343391028003004.
[47] Lloyd S. Kramer, *Nationalism in Europe and America: Politics, Cultures, and Identities since 1775* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 11.
[48] Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 12.
[49] Kellas, *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, 15.
[50] Choudhury, "The Genesis of Jatio Shangsad bhaban at Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka," 28.
[51] Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, 65.
[52] Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism: A Study of Its Origins and Background*, 11.

emerged in East Pakistan in order to generate the notion of a new sovereign nation and to also demonstrate the concept of cultural nationalism.

Benedict Anderson promoted the idea of cultural nationalism through a psychological approach known as the theory of 'imagined communities.'[53] Anderson argues, 'A fundamental change was taking place in modes of apprehending the world, [which] more than anything else, made it possible to "think" the nation.'[54] Furthermore, Anderson defines nation as 'imagined political community' which is sovereign and suggests nationalism begins at the cultural roots of a homogenous society.[55] His idea became popular, and scholars merged his concept with the nationalism related to the Eastern world. Many scholars of Bengali and Bangladeshi nationalism connected the concept of 'imagined communities' in their writings in order to understand the cultural and religious dilemma of the nation. This will be discussed in the next sections of this chapter.

As much as nationalism can empower a nation through independence and to achieve rights, there are also disadvantages to nationalism. Scholars argue that nationalism can be the reason for separation. Marxist scholars view nationalism as fabricating ideas in layers and being prone to extremise social issues such as religion or culture. Whilst Smith and Anderson advocate in favour of nationalism by connecting it with the continuity of the past and creating the idea of imagined community respectively, conversely, Hutchison argues that nationalism disintegrates ethnic and traditional

[53] Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*.
[54] Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 38.
[55] Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 6-7.

values by provoking issues related to power.[56] However, nationalism evokes passionate discourse in multidimensional ways and can be regarded as a basic element of human spirit in various disciplines of studies.

Anderson views nation as a modern construction evolved from the imagination and closely related to the psychological association of the people. For example, in 1860, after the unification of Italy and as a speaker at the first session of parliament, Massimo d'Azeglio stated, 'Italy is made, now we must make Italians' – as only 2.5% of the inhabitant spoke Italian.[57] A similar notion can be found in the creation of Pakistan as there would have been no collective force or meaning if there had not been a geographical concentration of Muslim sentiments in the subcontinent.[58] Smith states, 'Pakistan, both as name and as national state, was quite clearly invented.'[59] Jinnah succeeded in creating Pakistan by segregating the majority of the Muslim populace but not everyone spoke the proclaimed national language, Urdu. Thus, in order to create Pakistanis, the situation was contradictory for the Bengal Muslims as they were imposed to speak a language they did not recognise and to prioritise the religion by completely dismissing their rooted tradition. Consequently, these conflicts generated one of the core intentions for nationalism and nation-building. These conglomerated theories have been relatable in relation to the debates over East Pakistan's historiography which went from first being separatist to later consequently being

[56] John Hutchinson, *Nationalism and War*, First edition. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 11.
[57] Juan J. Linz, "State building and nation building," *European Review (Chichester, England)* 1, no. 4 (1993): 355-69; Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, 44, 60.
[58] Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism* (London, New York: Routledge, 1998), 130.
[59] Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism*, 130.

secularist. This thesis discerns these concepts of nationalism as discussed above and applies them in order to unravel the narrative of Bangladeshi nationalism.

2.2.2 Emergence of Bangladeshi Nationalism

The evolution of Bangladeshi nationalism is a long struggle encompassing the cultural and religious consciousness of the people of Bengal to achieve their dignity and freedom. Whilst Elie Kedourie argues that nationalism is an accidental invention of European thinkers, these concepts nevertheless assisted other scholars to scrutinise nationalism concentrating on different nations.[60] Scholars of South Asia, especially Bangladeshi academics, studied the nationalism of Bangladesh, alluding to previous analyses on nationalism and seeking a connection between social and political paradoxical concerns. However, seldom scholars attempt to connect the first and last stages, focussing rather on the period of decline and loss. This section will evaluate the critical writings related to Bengal and Bangladeshi nationalism in order to understand the importance of ethnicity, culture and religion all of which led to the construction of a complex political foreground for the nation.

The emergence of Bangladeshi nationalism is interrelated with several historical nationalist movements that occurred during Bengal's colonial and neo-colonial past. These movements were prominently formed by economic and political deprivations. In his PhD dissertation entitled 'Changing Faces of Nationalism in Bangladesh,' Muhammad Ghulam Kabir argues that in the case of Bangladesh, nationalism is

[60] Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism in Asia and Africa* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971).

subject to vicissitude as it demonstrates different grounds of identity changes.[61] Historical evidence suggests there to be mainly three phases of nationalism shaping the concept of the 'search for identity' for the Bengal Muslims: Bengal partition in 1905, Pakistan's formation in 1947 and the emergence of Bangladesh in 1971. However, in her book entitled *Bangladeshi Nationalism: History of Dialectics and Dimensions* (1992), Shireen Hasan Osmany argues, 'Bangladeshi nationalism, like all nationalism, is a product of the history of the people, their physical and cultural environment and above all of their hopes and aspirations.'[62] This dates back thousands of years to when inhabitants of the delta were unified as a tribe known as 'Vanga.' The history of Bangladeshi nationalism is intertwined with the changing authority of different rulers and their cultural influences over the years. Therefore, a historical analysis of the emergence of Bengal nationalism is necessary in order to understand the later development of nationalist movements that took place during the colonial and postcolonial periods. Although the core focus of this thesis is the nationalism during the Pakistani period, nevertheless, an analysis of the formation of nationalism in Bengal, East Bengal, East Pakistan and Bangladesh will provide a cogent theoretical framework for further studies in relation to architecture.

Willem van Schendel has provided a meticulous history of Bengal from its being a region of Hindu and Buddhist dominance, its transformation into Muslim majority, the rise of separate Hindu and Muslim consciousness, Muslim nationalism and finally into being Bangladesh.[63] The Bengal people were first associated with the Indo-Aryan and

[61] Muhammad Ghulam Kabir, "Changing Faces of Nationalism in Bangladesh" (PhD diss. University of Pittsburgh, 1984), 9.
[62] Osmany, *Bangladeshi Nationalism: History of Dialectics and Dimensions*, 1.
[63] Schendel, *A History of Bangladesh*, 128-30.

Mongol descendants who came to settle in the region. Combining their ethnicity and traditions with Bengali culture, these groups of people were later known as Pundra, Gaur, Harikela, Vanga, Rarh and Varendi. They formed and nurtured a common identity and social practice which became the precursor of Bengal nationalism.[64] However, this nationalism derived from homogeneity was transformed during the Maurya dynasty in the third century B.C. as the region became dominated by Hindus and Jains. Bengal nationalism transformed into Buddhist nationalism with the rise of Sunga and Gupta dynasty (170-510 A.D).[65] A unified Bengal nationalism flourished again under the Buddhist rulers during the Pala dynasty in the eighth century B.C. With the decline of the Palas in the thirteenth century, the legacy was carried by Brahmin Hindus and was deep rooted with their ideology. With the advent of Muslim ruler Ikhtiar Khilzi's reign in the mid fourteenth century, Bengal was again unified and nationalism was fused with Islamic enthusiasm. With the mass migration of Islamic Sufis and saints and later the Mughal rule between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries Bengali ideologies became combined with Islamic thoughts, ideas and philosophies derived from various cultures. During this period, the ethnic nationalism of Bengal transformed to social nationalism and people from different religious and cultural background co-existed with one another as a nation state.[66]

The aforementioned historical surveys demonstrate that Bengal nationalism has been always dominated by one or multiple foreign forces. The authorities ruled over the local inhabitants and transformed one nationalism to another. However, what

---

[64] Schendel, *A History of Bangladesh*, 3.
[65] Schendel, *A History of Bangladesh*, 13.
[66] Sufia M. Uddin, *Constructing Bangladesh: Religion, Ethnicity, and Language in an Islamic Nation* (New Delhi: Vistaar Publications, 2006), 65.

remained solely constant was the ethnicity, being Bengalis despite influences of different culture and religion. Nonetheless, the external social influences on the ethnic society impacted on the alteration of identity of the Bengalis for years.

During the British regime between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the identity crisis of Bengalis was integrated with two dominant religions – Hinduism and Islam. This became prominent when the Viceroy of British India (1899-1905), Lord Curzon declared the Bengal Partition in 1905, which gave the administration opportunity to control the vast area in a more organised way with its growing population. The partition scheme divided the Hindu Bengalis of West Bengal from the Muslim Bengalis of East Bengal. The new province of East Bengal consisted of the territory of present-day Bangladesh and Assam (fig. 3). Although the partition was aimed at promoting administrative efficiency, nevertheless, this was a planned strategy to control the anti-British agitation of the Bengal Hindu intellectuals.[67] Whilst the Bengal Hindus were revitalising Bengali identity inspired by the European Enlightenment, the Bengal Muslims 'found themselves engaged in a futile search for their supposed extraterritorial roots.'[68] Thus Curzon was initially successful in creating a province of Muslim majority as it was in favour of the nationalist group led by Nawab Khwaja Salimullah who perceived the partition as an escape from Hindu domination; this then generated a search for exclusive Islamic identity for the Bengal Muslims.[69] Andrew Sartori argues that for Bengal Muslims, this was a search for a shared identity

[67] For more information see, Kabir, "Changing Faces of Nationalism in Bangladesh," 13.
[68] Rafiuddin Ahmed, *Understanding the Bengal Muslims: Interpretative Essays* (New Delhi, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 17.
[69] Muslim leadership was dominated by the small but growing middle class of the eastern region of Bengal mostly by the nawabs, knights, zamindars and other feudal elements related to Islamic society.

historically caught between the politics of two opposite sides of an Islamic identity with its external territorial implications.[70] However, by separating from themselves from their hinterland of East Bengal, the Hindus of West Bengal perceived the partition as an attempt to break the community away from their central capital city of Kolkata. Whilst this incident was a unique opportunity for the Muslim elite to grow individually as a province, nonetheless, under the leadership of Surendranath Banerjee, the Hindus of West Bengal formed Bengali nationalism and held mammoth protests and boycotted foreign clothes.[71] With this vigorous and violent opposition from West Bengal, the partition scheme was annulled, and Bengal was reunited in 1912.

These two occurrences – the Bengal partition of 1905 and the Bengal unification of 1912 as Kabir observes, 'had profound consequences on the later political course of Bengal' largely determined the fate of East Bengalis in the next four decades.[72] During the Bengal partition, nationalism was divided into two parts –West Bengal continued with their literary revolution against the British as a form of Bengal nationalism and East Bengal initiated a nationalism with a Muslim consciousness that led to a separate political development in later decades. Sartori criticises the identity development of Bengal Muslim as 'selfish,' however, this identification of self-contradiction became more complex when East Bengal entered into its new phase of becoming East Pakistan.[73]

---

[70] Andrew Sartori, *Bengal in Global Concept History: Culturalism in the Age of Capital* (Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), 223.
[71] Nazimuddin Ahmed, *Buildings of the British Raj in Bangladesh* (Dhaka: The University Press Limited, 1986), 17.
[72] Kabir, "Changing Faces of Nationalism in Bangladesh," 14.
[73] Sartori, *Bengal in Global Concept History: Culturalism in the Age of Capital*, 8.

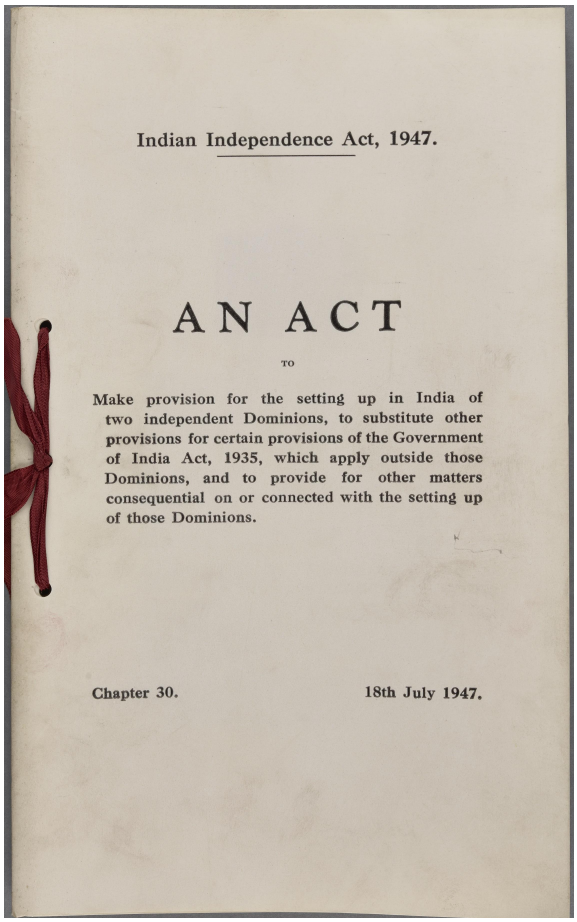


Figure 3: Map of 1905 Bengal Partition. Source: HT podcast: In Bengal, a Partition and a movement. *Hindustan Times*. Published on Aug 22, 2022. Accessed 8 Nov 2022.


Figure 4: Founders of All India Muslim League at All Muhammadan Educational Conference (AIMEC) in Dhaka, 1906. Source: *Wikipedia*. Accessed 8 Nov 2022.

Muslims had always been the majority in population, and indeed, despite economic and political disadvantages, they were able to form a separate political party consisting of Muslims of India, calling themselves the 'All India Muslim League' in 1906 (fig. 4). This political party later become the symbol of Muslims in British India and the Pakistan movement was successfully led by them. The Muslim League, formed in Dhaka were not able to achieve any success until they could secure the minimum of four per cent

of Muslim votes in the 1937 provincial assembly elections.[74] Afterwards, the Pakistan Resolution of 1940, initiated in Lahore acted as a catalyst in British India's subsequent political history. Under the leadership of the then prime minister of Bengal, A. K. Fazlul Haq, the Muslim League fully supported the resolution and strengthened the demand for an independent Muslim state formation. This time Bengal Muslims 'were driven by the powerful force of Muslim nationalism.'[75] During the elections of 1946, the Bengal Muslims fully advocated the creation of Pakistan which led to the historical partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, declared by Lord Mountbatten (fig. 5).



Indian Independence Act, 1947.

AN ACT

TO

Make provision for the setting up in India of two independent Dominions, to substitute other provisions for certain provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935, which apply outside those Dominions, and to provide for other matters consequential on or connected with the setting up of those Dominions.

Chapter 30. 18th July 1947.

Figure 5: Chapter 30 of 1947 Indian Independence Act. Source: Parliamentary Archives. Catalogue Number: HL/PO/PU/1/1947/10&11G6c30. Accessed 15 April 2019.

[74] Kabir, "Changing Faces of Nationalism in Bangladesh," 15.
[75] Kabir, "Changing Faces of Nationalism in Bangladesh," 15.

With the formation of East and West Pakistan, as a united nation, the people of East Bengal appeared to be strong Pakistani nationalists in the beginning. The nationalism was rooted in religion which seemed to be their primary identity at that moment notwithstanding it also being salient during the 1905 Bengal Partition. However, the later political developments of united Pakistan not only created turbulences for East Pakistan but also it cultivated secularist thoughts. Similarly, to when its first nationalism emerged during 1905, East Pakistan again had a populace of Muslim majority and also the foreign exchange earnings which were higher than those in West Pakistan. However, despite disparities in economy and infrastructure, the central government was dominated by the West Pakistanis.[76] The conflict of the two wings intensified when the then Governor-General of Pakistan, Jinnah attempted to impose Urdu as the official language despite only a small number of West Pakistani elites speaking this language. The Bengalis did not accept this and initiated the Bengali Language Movement which started in 1948 and achieved its aim in 1952, when Bengalis were succeeded in keeping their national language as Bangla.[77] This was first time in decades that Bengal Muslims now faced cultural discrimination from the community they had supported in its growth. Thus, the Language Movement generated the Bengali nationalist movement and during the provincial elections of 1954, the Muslim League was in strong favour of autonomy and sovereign identity for Bangladesh. Kabir argues, 'In this process, the salience of religion as the primary focus of identity and a

[76] Kabir, "Changing Faces of Nationalism in Bangladesh," 17.
[77] In West Pakistan, majority of the people were speaking in Punjabi (57%), Sindhi (13%) and Pashto (8%). Urdu was spoken by 7% of the population. In contrast, 99% population of East Pakistan were speaking in Bangla language. Thus, Jinnah's visit to the East Pakistan in 1948 and publicly announcing for mandatory speaking of Urdu for Bengalis resulted into the historical Bengali Language Movement in 1952. Later, in 1955, Bangla was declared second national language of the United Pakistan. See, Kabir, "Changing Faces of Nationalism in Bangladesh," 17.

unifying factor declined and language as a unifying factor grew ever stronger.'[78] The conflict of Pakistani nationalism against Bengali Nationalism stretched another eleven years during the regime of military dictator President Ayub Khan, as he developed political schemes in order to gain support from the majority population of East Pakistan. The Bengalis, both Muslims and remaining Hindus in East Pakistan, united against the central government of Pakistan and gave rise to a new cultural nationalism that ultimately resulted in the emergence of Bangladesh.[79]

This phase of nationalism replaced religious identity with cultural identity, however, with the independence of 1971, Bangladesh was challenged by a new political and cultural dimension. Shadowed for decades by West Bengal and West Pakistan, Bangladesh as a sovereign nation was faced with the important question of 'how to give their nation a new and distinct identity.'[80] The search for this new identity merged the issues of ethnicity and religion and Bangladesh emerged as a modern nation co-existing with its neighbouring countries. After 1971, Bangladesh underwent a new phase of nationalism generating an 'intense desire' to harmonise previous complex factors such as merging structural components religious and culture.

2.2.3 Architecture in Shaping Bangladeshi Nationalism

Nationalism as explored in terms of nation, national identity and nation building gained much attention in academic disciplines during the eighteenth century. However, it is

[78] Kabir, "Changing Faces of Nationalism in Bangladesh," 17.
[79] Over three million people were killed and ten million refugees lived in India during the nine long months of Liberation War of 1971.
[80] Kabir, "Changing Faces of Nationalism in Bangladesh," 18.

not until the present century that academic attention has been apparent in the study of the links between postcolonial architecture and nationalism. This is not only in the case of Bangladesh, but for many postcolonial countries, the architectural historiography has been a matter of research in relation to nationalism and nation building. Decolonisation initiated prominent changes to the demography of nations and their politics which helped scholars to generate research in this matter. These studies generate investigations on how does architecture – a building design or an urban planning - can be a notion of nationalism that reshapes thought and emotions. What is the role of nationalism in architecture and how does they relate to each other? Thus, this section will survey critical writings on nationalism and architecture in order to understand the connection between Bangladeshi architecture and its nationalist historiography.

As Anderson's 'imagined community' became prevalent, nationalism was not only defined in terms of politics or territory but also in terms of representation. Public structures can take many forms and can be represented as various kinds of symbols. These symbols enhance the values and significance of a nation's identity either from detailed methods of design and construction or from the whole concept that shaped the building. As Clifford Geertz states, 'The images, metaphors and rhetorical turns from which national ideologies are built are essentially devices, cultural devices designed to render one or another aspect of the broad process of collective self-redefinition explicit, to cast […] hope into specific symbolic forms' in which 'they can

be described, developed, celebrated and used.'[81] The perceptible symbols of nationalism can take in many forms. For instance, Raymond Quek implies, allegorical maps are 'accurate instruments of measure national dominion.'[82] Vale suggests that the flag of a nation is carefully designed with icons related to the issues that created the state and images on coins and currencies are associated either with the nation's leaders or are often depicted with native flora and fauna.[83] On a contrary, Paul Goldberger argues, 'Architecture is the ultimate physical representation of a culture, more so than even its flag.'[84] Lang states architecture carries symbolic meaning about a nation's identity.[85] However, not all works of architecture or urban design can be assumed to be national symbols, rather they assist the city in building its characteristics. Therefore, architecture can play an important role for nation building as Karl Deutsch states,

> Nation building […] suggests an architectural or mechanical model. As a house can be built from timber, bricks and mortar, in different pattern, quickly or slowly, through different sequences of assembly, in partial independence from its setting, and according to the choice, will, and power of its builders, so a nation can be built according to different plans, from various materials, rapidly or gradually, by different sequences of steps, an impartial independence from its environment.[86]

---

[81] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1973), 252. https://search.alexanderstreet.com/view/work/bibliographic_entity%7Cdocument%7C1667786.
[82] Raymond Quek, "Nationalism and Architecture: An Introduction," in *Nationalism and Architecture*, ed. Raymond Quek, Darren Deane, and Sarah Butler (Surrey, VT: Ashgate, 2012), 2.
[83] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 52.
[84] Paul Goldberger, *Why Architecture Matters* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 2009), 16.
[85] J. Lang, M. Desai, and M. Desai, *Architecture and Independence: the Search for Identity: India, 1880-1980* (Delhi, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).
[86] Karl W. Deutsch, "Nation-Building and National Development," in *Nation-building*, ed. Karl W. Deutsch and William J. Foltz (New York: Atherton Press, 1966), 3.

Anthony King claims that the production of buildings represents nationalism when there is a visible transformation in a nation's socio-culture, politics and economics.[87] In contrast, Mark Crinson argues that national identity conceals itself behind the notions of tradition, regionalism and history and public buildings are declared nationalist by virtue of a combination of their function and the intention behind their construction.[88] Disagreeing with Crinson, Vale disputes that some structures are constructed as 'purveyors of national identity' as they are meant to be built as a symbol of the nation-state.[89] Goldberger points out the paradoxical definition of architecture as something more or less than art.[90] Choudhury denotes, 'architecture and monuments very often [transcend their] artistic purpose.'[91] Conway and Roenisch perhaps balance the argument of Goldberger and Choudhury by stating, 'architecture is not only about the material environment, but it is a symbolic expression of aspirations, hopes for the future and beliefs.'[92] Similarly, Roth states that architecture demonstrates symbolic representation alongside providing shelter.[93] Evaluating the discourses of the scholars, it is clear that architecture offers a complex relationship to the nation. Nationalism and architecture are often validated through decolonisation;

---

87 Anthony D. King, "Architecture, Capital and Globalization of Culture," in *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity*, ed. Mike Featherstone (London: Sage Publications, 1990), 409-10.
88 Mark Crinson, "The Building Without A Shadow: National Identity and the International Style," in *Nationalism and Architecture*, ed. Raymond Quek, Darren Deane, and Sarah Butler (Surrey, Vermont: Ashgate, 2012), 115-16.
89 Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 48.
90 Goldberger, *Why Architecture Matters*, 8.
91 Bayezid Ismail Choudhury and Peter Armstrong, "Monument and Architecture in Shaping Bangladeshi National Identity," *GBER* 8, no. 3 (2013): 49.
92 Hazel Conway and Rowan Roenisch, *Understanding architecture: an Introduction to Architecture and Architectural History*, Second edition. ed. (London: Routledge, 2005).
93 Leland M. Roth, *Understanding Architecture: its Elements, History and Meaning* (London: Herbert Press, 1994).

however, this relationship can be comprehended if the traditional values and economy of a nation are considered as well.

The aforementioned concepts are popular amongst the postcolonial nations in which resulting architecture or urban planning seldom resemble a true national identity. Rather the identity of a nation is expressed through adaptation of modern ideas such as modification for the tropical context by using local materials and economic-friendly arrangements. Vale disputes, 'Architecture and planning are often used as tools for promoting something called national identity, but many dimensions of this phenomenon remain unarticulated.'[94] Reflecting on the designs of public structures in East Pakistan, there are multiple references related to Bengali identity in contrast to the West Pakistani public structures which portray strong Islamic resemblances. Similarities in both regions' architecture were largely associated with modernism which is detached from cultural and social symbolism. Thus, to assess the public buildings of East Pakistan, cultural and religious forces must be taken into account as ethnicity shaped nationalism rather than enforced identity of a non-native territory. These critical circumstances of East Pakistan can be comprehended by surveying the research of other countries' architecture with similar historical past in tandem with recent scholarship of Bangladeshi writers.

Several publications have been useful for the thesis in order to understand the complex past and political context of other countries and how the architecture contributed in shaping the nation during crucial circumstances. The literatures are

[94] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 48.

mainly focussed on African countries or any other nations who had historical past of decolonisation and who revived themselves from the cultural imperialism. Edited by Raymond Quek, Darren Deane and Sarah Butler, the book entitled *Nationalism and Architecture* (2012) demonstrate a well-structured connection between nationalism and architecture by investigating modernism from various sphere through a range of essays written by expert scholars.[95] Quek introduces nationalist architecture as a paradoxical challenge and throughout the book, all scholars examine this complex concept with various global case studies.[96] In order to promote diplomatic relations between Israel and African nations, Ayala Levin examines Arieh Sharon's Ife University Campus (1962-1976) in West-Nigeria.[97] Mark Crinson studies the concept of national identity by analysing the European transformation into the International Style.[98] Alexander Tzonis investigates local architectural traditions as a means of nationalist act within the global phenomenon of modernism.[99] Other chapters consist of case studies on Mumford and Jewish architecture, how Irish immigrant identity impacted on post-war church architecture, Louis Kahn's unbuilt public institutions in America and Alvar Aalto's works in Finland. Overall, the book manifests a rich illustration of nationalism and architecture by investigating multidimensional transformation of built forms and their context.

---

[95] Raymond Quek, Darren Deane, and Sarah Butler, eds., *Nationalism and Architecture* (Surrey, VT: Ashgate, 2012).
[96] Quek, "Nationalism and Architecture: An Introduction."
[97] Ayala Levin, "Exporting Architectural National Expertise: Arieh Sharon's Ife University Campus in West Nigeria (1962-1976)," in *Nationalism and Architecture*, ed. Raymond Quek, Darren Deane, and Sarah Butler (Surrey, VT: Ashgate, 2012).
[98] Crinson, "The Building Without A Shadow: National Identity and the International Style."
[99] Alexander Tzonis, "From Nationalist to Critical Regionalist Architecture," in *Nationalism and Architecture*, ed. Raymond Quek, Darren Deane, and Sarah Butler (Surrey, VT: Ashgate, 2012).

In his book *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire* (2003), Mark Crinson analyses Modern architecture of selected nations (e.g. India, Iran, Ghana, Hong Kong etc) 'refracted through the prism of British imperialism' and the aftermath of decolonisation.[100] Crinson studies the economic dominance and cultural power in order to understand the new hegemony of different countries between 1950s and 1960s through the critical theories of modernism. Ayala Levin explores architectural adaptations against British colonial models and the relationship of Israel and Africa between 1958 and 1973 through the buildings, complexes and urban plannings of Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Ethiopia in her very recent publication entitled *Architecture and Development : Israeli Construction in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Settler Colonial Imagination, 1958-1973* (2022).[101] Another recent publication entitled *Architecture in Global Socialism* (2020) by Łukasz Stanek demonstrates the vibrant collaboration of architectural and construction companies from socialist Eastern Europe in order to introduce Modern Architecture to the developing countries of West Africa and the Middle East during the Cold War. Stanek explores how the local authorities and expatriate architects brought Soviet prefabrication systems, planning methods of Hungary and Poland, standard design methods and constructional materials of Romania and East German to the cities of Accra, Lagos, Baghdad, Abu Dhabi and Kuwait City.[102] Stanek investigates how the socialist development scheme adapted to the tropical climate and initiated a contextual architectural solution in these developing cities.

---

[100] Mark Crinson, *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003).
[101] Ayala Levin, *Architecture and Development : Israeli Construction in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Settler Colonial Imagination, 1958-1973*
(Durham: Duke University Press, 2022).
[102] Łukasz Stanek, *Architecture in Global Socialism: Eastern Europe, West Africa, and the Middle East in the Cold War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020).

Scholars have also conducted research on nationalism and Modern architecture focussing on one nation. Sibel Bozdogan's *Modernism and Nation Building* (2001) highlights the historical parallels and spatial expressions of the early Republic period in Turkey during the 1930s.[103] By exploring the shifts that occurred between the Ottoman revivalist movement up until the 1930s nationalist style of architecture, Bozdogan demonstrates how the historical context can collectively summarise the aspirations of early republican, Turkish architectural culture. In the book, *Architecture and Nationalism in Sri Lanka: the Trouser under the Cloth* (2013), Anoma Pieris studies the twentieth century Sri Lankan domestic space, architecture and material culture during the decolonisation that witnessed significant political changes leaving 'an indelible cultural imprint and bitter residue.'[104] Hilton Judin investigates the relationship between architecture and apartheid ideology through the buildings in Pretoria during the 1960s in her recently published book *Architecture, State Modernism and Cultural Nationalism in the Apartheid Capital* (2021).[105] Judin's analysis focusses on what role architecture played within the conflicting cultural and political demands. Judin examines these issues through the study of cultural nationalism and the development of buildings constructed after the National Party came to power in 1948. Another publication entitled *Architecture and Politics in Nigeria* (2016) explores architectural endeavours of western architects, namely, Thomas Todd, Kenzo Tange, Doxiadis and Albert Speer in Nigeria between 1967 and 2016.

---

[103] Sibel Bozdogan, *Modernism and Nation Building: Turkish Architectural Culture in the Early Republic* (Seattle, Wash, London: University of Washington Press, 2001).
[104] Anoma Pieris, *Architecture and nationalism in Sri Lanka: the Trouser under the Cloth*, Routledge contemporary South Asia series ; 65, (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2013).
[105] Hilton Judin, *Architecture, State Modernism and Cultural Nationalism in the Apartheid Capital* (London: Routledge, 2021).

Throughout the book, Nnamdi Elleh investigates whether the architecture and urban designs of the aforementioned architects could provide 'centre of unity to prevent the country from disintegrating' and if the 1970s masterplan of Abuja, which was inspired from the late Enlightenment era, could represent a 'culture of social justice' in order to save the country from future political corruption and military coups.[106] This contemporary research studies reveals some parallels with the study of this thesis which analyse the architecture during the emerging nationalist movements of East Pakistan.

Comprehension of the emergence of Bangladeshi nationalism has been analysed in the previous section which focusses on the ethno-religion conundrum of the Bengalis. In later decades, critics have attempted to connect the concept of Bangladeshi nationalism to multidisciplinary subjects such as Kazi Nazrul Islam's poetry, Hamidur Rahman's sculpture and Zainul Abedin's paintings. However, this was seldom related to architecture until recently, when several Bangladeshi scholars have attempted to comprehend the architecture of pre-independent Bangladesh as a product of nationalism. To keep the theoretical review focussed, I will here discuss literatures only relevant to the segment. Further studies in relation to architecture of Bangladesh will be reviewed elaborately in Chapter 3.

Most persuasive research of Bangladeshi pre-independence architecture in relation to nationalism has been conducted by the director-general of the Bengal Institute namely

[106] Nnamdi Elleh, *Architecture and Politics in Nigeria: The Study of a Late Twentieth-Century Enlightenment-Inspired Modernism at Abuja, 1900–2016* (London: Routledge, 2016).

Kazi Khaleed Ashraf. In his doctoral dissertation 'The Hermit's Hut: A Study in Asceticism and Architecture,' Ashraf developed a unique cultural voice that formed a theoretical background for his future writings connecting architecture with Bengali culture and identity.[107] From 1992 till the present day, Ashraf frames many architectural buildings of Bengal, East Pakistan and Bangladesh and has developed research in relation to the context, politics and culture through his many books and articles.[108] Ashraf was a member of *Chetana* (awakening) – a research study group established in 1981 initiated by Muzharul Islam and his students. In order to document the architecture of Bangladesh, Chetana published a book entitled *Pundranagar to Sher-E-Bangla Nagar* in 1997.[109] Ashraf penned the introduction of the catalogue entitled 'Wind, Water and Clay: The Architecture of Bangladesh' in which he emphasised the architectural traditions adapted from different rulers in response to the geo-cultural settings of Bengal Delta.[110] This study was advanced in his later publication with James Belluardo entitled *Reincarnations and Independence: The Modern Architecture of South Asia* (1998), in which Ashraf examines Muzharul Islam's architectural building as a production of nation building that echoes Bengali traditions and cultures.[111] Alongside these publications, Ashraf's other articles assist this thesis

---

[107] Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, "The Hermit's Hut: A Study in Asceticism and Architecture" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2002).
[108] Details of Kazi Khaleed Ashraf can be found on "Kazi Khaleed Ashraf," 2022, https://kaziashraf.com/.
[109] Saiful Haque, Raziul Ahsan, and Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, eds., *Pundranagar to Sher-E-Bangla Nagar: Architecture in Bangladesh* (Dhaka: Chetana Sthapatya Unnoyon Society, 1997).
[110] Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, "Wind, Water and Clay: The Architecture of Bangladesh," in *Pundranagar to Sher-E-Bangla Nagar: Architecture in Bangladesh*, ed. Saiful Haque, Raziul Ahsan, and Kazi Khaleed Ashraf (Dhaka: Chetana Sthapatya Unnoyon Society, 1997).
[111] Kazi Khaleed Ashraf and James Belluardo, eds., *An Architecture of Independence: The Making of Modern South Asia: Charles Correa, Balkrishna Doshi, Muzharul Islam, Achyut Kanvinde* (New York: The Architecture League of New York, 1998).

and its structure in further chapters which deal with understanding the concept of nationalism in shaping the architecture of pre-independent Bangladesh.

Another article written by Bayezid Ismail Choudhury and Peter Armstrong demonstrates a direct notion of nationalism and the architecture of Bangladesh from different periods. In their article entitled 'Monument and Architecture in Shaping Bangladeshi National Identity,' the authors attempt to understand the development of Bangladeshi identity by analysing five dimensions asserted by Montserrat Guibernau in his book *The Identity of Nations* (2007).

Guibernau describes nation as a community 'sharing a common culture, attached to a clearly demarcated territory, having a common past and a common project for the future whil[st] claiming the right to self-determination.'[112] According to the statement, the five dimensions are psychological, cultural, historical, territorial and political.[113] In relation to Bangladeshi architecture, Choudhury and Armstrong have interpreted Guibernau's hypothesis with independence as psychological, language as cultural, religion as historical, the landscape of Bengal delta as territorial and legislature as political. Choudhury and Armstrong relate these elements of national identity to built forms such as the National Martyrs' Memorial representing independence, Shaheed Minar (National Monument) portraying as language, Bengal Sultanate architecture (e.g., mosques) denoting religion, Bengal rural huts depicting landscape and the National Capitol Complex as a symbol of legislature (fig. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10). Connecting

[112] Choudhury and Armstrong, "Monument and Architecture in Shaping Bangladeshi National Identity."; Montserrat Guibernau, *The Identity of Nations* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007).
[113] Guibernau, *The Identity of Nations*, 11.

with Guibernau's five elements of national identity by exemplifying built forms as symbolic expressions, Choudhury and Armstrong attempt to comprehend the multidimensional identities seized within the complex definition of Bengali or Bangladeshi ethnicity – Muslim Bengali or Bengali Muslim.[114]



Figure 6: National Martyr Memorial, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Source: *The Daily Star*. Published on 19 February 2015.



Figure 7: National Monument (Smriti Shoudho) of Bangladesh. Source: *Wikipedia.* Accessed 8 Nov 2022.

[114] Choudhury and Armstrong, "Monument and Architecture in Shaping Bangladeshi National Identity," 48.



Figure 8: Shait Gambuz Mosque, Bagerhat. Source: Abu Sayeed Ahmed, *Mosque Architecture in Bangladesh*, (Dhaka: UNESCO, 2006), 78.



Figure 9: Bengal Hut. Source: Alexander Tzonis, Liane Lefaivre, and Bruno Stagno, eds. *Tropical Architecture: Critical Regionalism in the Age of Globalization*, (Chichester: Wiley-Academy, 2001), 30.



Figure 10: National Parliament Building, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Source: Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania

The discourse of Bangladeshi nationalism and architecture has multiple layers and is juxtaposed with different narratives. The theories discussed in this section will allow this thesis to develop further critical analysis focussing on Modern architecture and Bengali culture and traditions.

2.3 Critical Resurgence of Modern Architecture in Postcolonial Context

Architectural ventures in postcolonial underdeveloped countries during the 1960s are acknowledged in several formal terminologies that sometimes confound architectural timelines. In the West, this was the period in which Postmodernism was largely exercised, whereas the East was only just beginning to adopt and get acquainted with modern design methods and construction technologies. Pakistan's architecture also belongs to the latter category. Indeed, architecture in the postcolonial countries was never directly considered as being 'Modern Architecture', rather it was categorised under various architectural styles branched with modernism, namely 'Regional architecture,' 'Tropical modernism,' 'Tropical architecture' and so on. Therefore, before diving into the investigations it is necessary to explore what architectural style East Pakistan was adopting as a means of Muslim nationalism on the one hand and secularist Bangladeshi nationalism on the other. Hence, within the discussions in relation to architecture and nationalism, terms such as 'imperialism', 'decolonisation', 'neo-colonialism', 'postcolonial' will be carefully merged or contrasted with terms such as, 'modernism', 'postmodernism', 'regionalism', 'tropicalism', 'internationalism' or 'universalism.' Consequently, analysis in this segment will outline theories and

examples related to these terms as an expression of complex and unresolved issues rather than merely polarised ones.

2.3.1 Modern Architecture

It can be argued that the origins of Modernism lie somewhere within the Renaissance whilst later the nation-state became the engine of modernity along with industrialisation and mass production. Modernism emerged as a diverse and an accessible tool for postcolonial countries in the 1950s and 1960s. In fact, Modern Architecture was a transference from the colonial infrastructure, as Prakash, Casciato and Coslett argue, and was the transfer 'in the name of science and technology' by global agencies such as United Nations during 1950s and 1960s.[115] Nevertheless, capitalism and socialism both brought divergent ideas into modern construction and postcolonial nations chose whichever suited them and developed their own 'hybridised and particularised conceptions of modernism.'[116] This applies to nations, architects, architectural organisations and other related institutions.

In a study of Modernism, Ananya Roy has defined it as a 'dualistic narrative' from tradition, arguing that some forms of modernism outline progressive changes in an aim to make it a world culture.[117] Marshall Berman has described how the 'modernism of underdevelopment is forced to build on fantasies and dreams of modernity, to

---

[115] Vikramaditya Prakash, Maristella Casciato, and Daniel E. Coslett, "Global Modernism and the Postcolonial," in *Rethinking Global Modernism: Architectural Historiography and the Postcolonial*, ed. Vikramaditya Prakash, Maristella Casciato, and Daniel E. Coslett (London, New York: Routledge, 2022), 11.
[116] Prakash, Casciato, and Coslett, "Global Modernism and the Postcolonial," 13.
[117] Ananya Roy, "Traditions of the Modern: A Corrupt View," *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review* 12, no. 11 (2001), https://www.jstor.org/stable/41757866.

nourish itself on an intimacy and a struggle with mirages and ghosts […] a desperate incandescence.'[118] However, Roy argues that this Faustian model of modernisation and its aligned notions of authenticity with traditions are marked by an ambivalent but 'desirous mimicry.'[119] If the relationship between imperialism and modernism is complex, then the same can be also said of the relationship between modernism and tradition.[120] Crinson argues that Modernism 'sought to preserve tradition, setting the distinct form of modernity apart from a distilled and sealed past.'[121] The relevance here within colonial contexts is where local and national cultures are often regarded as 'traditional' and the rejection of colonial architecture can be seen as 'a reclamation of indigenous culture.'[122] However, Crinson argues that rejecting colonialism in order to achieve modernity is an unnecessary connection demonstrated by the anti-colonialists. Therefore, from the perspectives of scholars, it can be perceived that modernism and tradition are not distinct or immutable, but they are more plural, contested and political.

Modernism in architecture can be solely focussed upon its use of new technologies or materials, such as reinforced concrete, glass, steel or particular styles of forms and rhetoric. Above all, it can be understood through its spatial form and function. Cunningham states,

> From nineteenth century utopianism and functionalism, through Le Corbusier and Mies [van der Rohe], to the likes of [Rem]

[118] Berman is describing nineteenth century St Petersburg. See, Marshall Berman, *All That is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (London: Verso, 1983), 232.
[119] Roy, "Traditions of the Modern: A Corrupt View."
[120] Crinson, *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire*, 3.
[121] Crinson, *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire*, 3.
[122] Crinson, *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire*, 3.

> Koohlas, and [Jacques] Herzog and [Pierre] de Meuron today, it is the historical increase in the urban population as opposed to the rural, one of the key social logics of capitalist modernity, and spatial conditions of this historically new metropolitan life, which is always the implicit subject of Modern Architecture, and in relation to which it must irresistibly articulate itself. Modernism is, in part, the question of what such a life might mean, and of what forms it can and should take.[123]

Similarly, Curtis argues the Modern Movement to be a revolution in social purpose as well as in architecture which tried to reconcile industry, society and projected prototypes for mass housing development and urban planning.[124] However, in a similar vein to Roy's 'desirous mimicry,' Curtis observes that although the visual sense of Modern Architecture was imitated, it nevertheless gave direction to new constructions and functional disciplines.[125] It surely has historical reminiscence; however, it implies the vision of human betterment as well as machine culture.[126]

The conceptual determination of Modernism within nation building is a 're-representation' of 'universality' which is a direct result of colonial domination.[127] Crinson argues that the advocates of Modernism were anti-imperialist because 'their architecture broke out of the convention-bound, authoritarian, national or Eurocentric hierarchies' by which other forms of architecture were compromised.[128] Modernism as a cultural form with translational specification can evolve into a problematic

---

[123] David Cunningham and Jon Goodbun, "Marx, Architecture and Modernity," *The Journal of Architecture* 11, no. 2 (2006): 177, https://doi.org/10.1080/13602360600787066.
[124] William J. R. Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, Third ed. (London: Phaidon, 1996), 15.
[125] Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, 12.
[126] Crinson, *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire*, 2.
[127] Peter Osborne, *Philosophy in Cultural Theory* (London, New York: Routledge, 2000), 10.
[128] Crinson, *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire*, 2.

nationalism, as Osborne disputes, for the problem is not how to represent the notion of Modernism but rather how the concept of 'modern' can help the national culture produce for itself a 'cultural-ideological effect of various forms of state power.'[129] This notion alters the concept of Modernism in East Pakistan's context upon its association with a radically extended range of forms of cultural experience of 'temporal difference or non-synchronicity.'[130] Thus, if the question arises as to what is actually implied by Modernism, it can be defined as Osborne describes:

> [Modernism] is in the increasingly complex exchange between West and non-West relations [that are] currently being radically transformed - that the full scope of modernism as its term of translation manifests itself, as the name for the temporal form through which the political contest between competing future continues to be played out.[131]

The regional and traditional approaches to Modern Architecture represent the image of modernity which functioned through foreign economic control, decolonised political domination and of course the involvement of architects both native and foreign. To understand these world economic forces and their effects on buildings, Anthony King questions the framework in order to grasp the technological, institutional, economic, social and cultural consequences of these developments:

> How are we to understand this process of trans-nationalisation in this process of the transformation of space and form? What difference, if any, will it make to people's social, political or cultural consciousness? What kind of symbolic investment are they to make in these new environments, what meanings will

[129] Osborne, *Philosophy in Cultural Theory*, 61.
[130] Osborne, *Philosophy in Cultural Theory*, 61.
[131] Osborne, *Philosophy in Cultural Theory*, 62.

> they have and how will they mobilise these meanings for their own social and political purposes? More significantly, what are the prisms through which we should try and understand cultural resistance to these developments and the differences which are evident from one place to another? How relevant are the categories, for this purpose, of nation, locality, region, religion, class, gender, economy?[132]

To answer these questions, in relation to these elements, it can be said that Modern Architecture offers a complex relationship to the nation. Firstly, architecture defines the built forms in which colonialism is enacted yet superseded. Secondly, architecture enables the redefinition and representation of beliefs and values, but it can only succeed with the response of communities. And finally, financial, material and intellectual production of architecture is integral to the economy. Therefore, Modern Architecture can be summarised as being a result of social production and nation-building.

2.3.2 Postmodern Architecture

In order to understand the architectural prominence of East Pakistan, it is necessary to review the aspects of Postmodernism which can accordingly reveal diverse dimensions in the periphery of this thesis' focus. For example, global politics within socialism and capitalism; and a later combined discussion of Regional and Tropical architecture. Postmodern Architecture has been largely examined by American theorist and architectural historian Charles Jencks. Jencks has analysed Postmodernism within the diverse transitions of global civilisation and mixed cultures,

[132] King, "Architecture, Capital and Globalization of Culture," 401.

and within the ideology of economic growth and rationalism. In his numerous publications of books and articles, Jencks has scrutinised Postmodernism combining the theories of Regionalism and Critical modernism and connected with national culture and inter-communication.[133] Jencks argues that Postmodernism is not anti-Modernism, nor it is the rejection of traditionalism. Rather, it rejects the arguments with 'which universal rights are often imposed by an elite on a subservient minority.'[134]

Modernism, perhaps, is the first ideological response to social crisis and formulated new roles within itself, such as for religion.[135] Jencks has coined the hybrid term 'Socitalism' which comes from fusing socialism and capitalism together in order to understand the emerging realities in the new economy and industries.[136] Cultural postmodernism was an era when the global economy doubled in size which made the rich richer and generated poverty. In the 1960s, this becomes the only pragmatic paradigm of growth in politics and the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) set out on a mission for global modernisation which focused on the shift of transitional culture into global politics. Anthony Smith argues that this focus definitively pointed to nation-state and cultural imperialism for all of these fundamental elements could be directed to 'national culture' which derived from ethnic communities.[137] Therefore, the hybrid culture of assimilative modernisation came from various

---

[133] Charles Jencks, *Critical Modernism: Where Is Post-Modernism Going?* (Chichester: John Wiley, 2007); Charles Jencks, *What Is Postmodernism?*, Third, Revised and Enlarged ed. (London: Academy Editions, 1989); Charles Jencks, *The New Paradigm in Architecture: The Language of Post-modernism* (New Haven, Conn, London: Yale University Press, 2002).
[134] Jencks, *What Is Postmodernism?*, 15.
[135] Jencks, *What Is Postmodernism?*, 24-25.
[136] Jencks, *The New Paradigm in Architecture: The Language of Post-modernism*, 11.
[137] Anthony D. Smith, "Towards a Global Culture?," in *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity*, ed. Mike Featherstone (London: Sage Publications, 1990), 180.

locations such as the United States and Europe and became a part of individual nations.

Both Smith and Jencks assert that the evidence for diagnosing Postmodernism can be found in the period of the Second World War. Jencks notes, 'The death camps of Nazis mass produced six million dead. Each number becomes the foundation stone for the death of an ideology and the birth of a Postmodernism; or perhaps, as with Israel, the emergence of a new nation-state.'[138] Accordingly, it can be said that the era of the 1960s was the birth of Postmodernism considering the critical alternatives and socio-cultural explanations. Thus, capitalist competition in the postmodern era led to a conversion to the idea of nationalism.[139] Jencks views Postmodernism as 'a slackening of modernism into eclecticism' and calls it 'double-coding.'[140] He divides Postmodernism into two kinds of narratives exemplifying the period after the tragedy of the Holocaust as one of underlying 'social cohesion, progress, belief in religious doctrine, Enlightenment' known as 'metanarratives' on the one hand, and communist countries where industrialisation was merging with traditional production as local 'micro-narratives' on the other.[141] In order to place Postmodernism in between modernism and traditionalism, Jencks observes that Postmodernism 'finds itself caricatured on one extreme side or the other, when its intention is to be pluralist and cut cross the anonymities.'[142] Whilst modernity relates to universalism, postmodernity connects with the 'agenda of multiculturism and the right of minorities.'[143] Jencks

[138] Jencks, *The New Paradigm in Architecture: The Language of Post-modernism*, 20.
[139] Smith, "Towards a Global Culture?," 180.
[140] Jencks, *The New Paradigm in Architecture: The Language of Post-modernism*, 21.
[141] Jencks, *The New Paradigm in Architecture: The Language of Post-modernism*, 20-21.
[142] Jencks, *The New Paradigm in Architecture: The Language of Post-modernism*, 28.
[143] Jencks, *The New Paradigm in Architecture: The Language of Post-modernism*, 28.

observes that the gradual death of modernism over time was due to the rise of Postmodernism and reminisces using the quote of the architectural historian John Summerson that '…this putative death was the most creative idea of Postmodernism, because it liberated everyone from the false notion that the modern was the eternal present and therefore always with us, not the historical construct that it is.'[144]

In contrast to the theories of Postmodern Architecture, Frampton argues that the International Style in architecture had spread throughout the world by the time of the Second World War.[145] Frampton argues that although the International Style was homogenous, nevertheless, it responded well to different climates and cultures. Comparing the Neo-classical architecture of the later eighteenth century, Frampton further argues that the International Style never became universal, rather it was intended to have a universal approach in its techniques and 'hypothetical flexibility' in demonstrating designs yet facilitating local or modern materials and fabrication.[146]

Both Postmodern Architecture and the International Style manifest architectural representations 'in-between' Modern Architecture. Architectural theorist Elizabeth Grosz notes, 'the space of the in-between is […] a space without boundaries of its own, which takes on and receives […] its form, from outside […] This form is the outside of the identity […] of multiple others, whose relations of positivity define, by default, the space that is constituted as in-between.'[147] In his article entitled, 'Tradition

---

[144] Jencks, *The New Paradigm in Architecture: The Language of Post-modernism*, 18-19.
[145] Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1992), 248.
[146] Frampton, *Modern Architecture*, 248.
[147] Elizabeth Grosz, *Architecture from the Outside: Essays on Virtual and Real Space* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001), 3.

and Modernity: The Feasibility of Regional Architecture in Post-Modern Society,' Juhani Pallasmaa explores the 'in-between' state of Modern and Postmodern Architecture. Pallasmaa states,

> Architecture is not an expression of knowledge and certainty, but of existence and faith and a perpetual search for reconciliation. An architecture style is defined, both on individual and collective levels, by a combination of certain mental orientations.[148]

In the exploration of the architectural style of East Pakistan, can it therefore be called another Modern Movement for the East? Or is it the climate responsive architecture acknowledged as Regional or Tropical? In this, rather than coming to a direct conclusion, Pallasmaa's analysis of Modernism in phases can be useful. For instance, Pallasmaa explores Modern Architecture as 'First' and 'Second' Modernism. On the one hand, First Modernism is 'utopian, purist and demagogic' whilst on the other Second Modernism is a 'realistic view of culture unblinded by illusions.'[149] In terms of style, the First Modernism aimed at perpetual innovation and weightless movement, whereas the Second consciously borrowed from previous styles and expressed stability and a sense of materiality.[150] Therefore, according to Pallasmaa,

> The Third World, the energy crisis, the university revolution, the development of mass-communication and data processing are all part of the mosaic of change as well as the whole Postmodern debate. But also, an awareness of the dangers implied by the technical development and a disappointment with the

[148] Juhani Pallasmaa, "Tradition and Modernity: The Feasibility of Regional Architecture in Post-Modern Society," in *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition*, ed. V. B. Canizaro (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007), 137.
[149] Pallasmaa, "Tradition and Modernity: The Feasibility of Regional Architecture in Post-Modern Society," 137.
[150] Pallasmaa, "Tradition and Modernity: The Feasibility of Regional Architecture in Post-Modern Society," 137.

> achievements of Western democracy lie behind the Second Modernity.[151]

It is not possible to separate the First and Second Modernisms; it is basically a series of transformations. These transformations are integrated phases of Modernism, such as Expressionist, Organic and Regionalist that existed within the movement.[152] Therefore, the architecture of East Pakistan as well as for other postcolonial countries, can be placed in between the Modern and Postmodern which can also be referred to using Pallasmaa's term, as the Second Modernism.

2.3.3 Regional and Tropical Architecture

Regional architecture and Tropical architecture have been topics of scholarly interest particularly from the postcolonial perspective. Numerous architectural historians and theorists have provided a considerable number of late nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth century buildings throughout the world as examples in order to resolve the concept of Regional and Tropical architecture. It is important to notice here, that theorists in some cases have divided their studies in order to establish these two architectural approaches whilst in other investigations, they overlap one another. In this segment, Regional and Tropical Architecture will be explored through theories and examples in order to understand the different layers of their origins and how these phrases intertwine with the idea of Pallasmaa's Second Modernism.

---

[151] Pallasmaa, "Tradition and Modernity: The Feasibility of Regional Architecture in Post-Modern Society," 138.

[152] The momentum of the first modernism began to run out in the 1950s and the emerging change was revealed in the discussions of CIAM. Louis Kahn an Aldo van Eyck appeared as the most outspoken heralds of change. Kahn brought back the archive and metaphysical dimensions and van Eyck introduced an anthropological and structuralist view. See, Pallasmaa, "Tradition and Modernity: The Feasibility of Regional Architecture in Post-Modern Society," 138.

Regional Architecture

The idea of Regionalism was previously addressed in France during the 1960s through an imitation or pastiche of local and native forms of colonised countries. Curtis observes that the first-generation buildings constructed in the style of Regional Architecture are evident in Jean Prouvé's Maison de Peuple (1937-39) in Clichy near Paris (fig. 11) and Le Corbusier's project for an Agricultural Estate (1942) near Cherchell, North Africa.[153] In order to comprehend Regionalism, Harwell Hamilton Harris attempted to define 'region' in an architectural context,

> A region promotes ideas. A region accepts ideas. […] To be expressed architecturally, an idea must be built; to be built, it must be particularised, localised, set within a region. And what are important are not the limitations of the region but the resources of the region. Its most important resources are its free minds, its imagination, its stake in the future, its energy and last of all, its climate, its topography and the particular kind of sticks and stones it has to build with. It is the free minds, the imagination, the stake in the future that make up the state of mind that is the condition necessary for any kind of regionalism in architecture worth preserving.[154]

[153] Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, 376-77.
[154] H. H. Harris, "Regionalism and Nationalism in Architecture," in *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition*, ed. V. B. Canizaro (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007), 55; Harris, "Regionalism," 60-61.

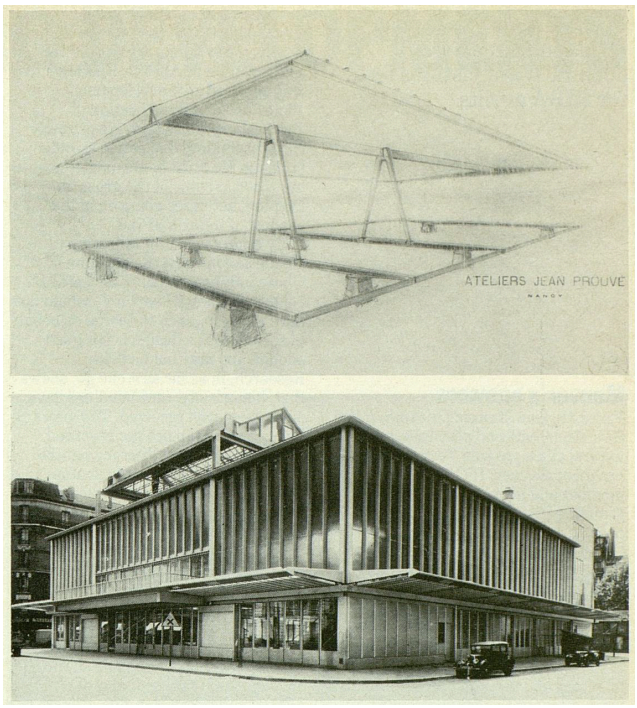


Figure 11: Jean Prouvé Maison de Peuple, Clichy, Paris (1937-39). Source: 'News: Foster, Prouvé and Loos in Paris,' *The Architects' Journal (Archive: 1929-2005)* 177, no. 10 (Mar 09, 1983): 23.

Lewis Mumford emphasised 'culture and identity' in a region's architectural expression in his book *The South in Architecture* (1941). He notes,

> Regionalism is not a matter of using the most available local material, or of copying some simple form of construction that our ancestors used, for want of anything better, a century or two ago. Regional forms are those which most closely meet the actual conditions of life and which most fully succeed in making a people feel at home in their environment: they do not merely utilize the soil but they reflect the current conditions of culture in the region.[155]

When a building is built, it needs time to create its story. Nurtured by nature, like a tree spreads its branches, the built form also remains and spreads its branches through its people and regions. Therefore, a region's most important resource is its people and

[155] Lewis Mumford, *The South in Architecture*, Dancy Foundation Lectures. Second Series ; April 1941, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1941), 7.

later it connects with its climate, topography or materials. It is perhaps the mind of the people that generates the 'intellectual ferment necessary for greatness.'[156]

Scholars of Regionalism claim that climate is one of the main converters transforming the language of international Modern Architecture to Regional architecture. In order to express Regionalism in architecture, Hamilton and Frampton both suggest that there must be lot of buildings built at the same time in order to generate a regional expression which is sufficiently general as well as diverse for social or human acceptance and which provides a climate-friendly development.[157] Many scholars and theorists have examined diverse dimensions of national and international characteristics in order to define Regionalism. These perspectives of regionalism along with other aspects can be found in the publication edited by Vincent B. Canizaro entitled *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition* (2007).[158] Canizaro compiled various essays and articles from the expertise body of scholarship in the field of regionalism and architecture providing radical analyses which establish a quintessential relationship between Modern Architecture and regionalism; and in which most arguments have one thing in common, namely the connection between universalism and tradition.

Albert Mayer defines Regionalism as 'a way of thinking and of feeling and of looking at things' which is a sense of responsibility to something much larger beyond daily life

[156] Harris, "Regionalism," 68-69.
[157] Harris, "Regionalism," 56; Frampton, *Modern Architecture*, 320.
[158] Vincent B. Canizaro, ed., *Architectural Regionalism : Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007).

and observation, attachment and creative work.[159] James Stirling observes Regionalism as a 'dynamic cellularism' that comprises architectural elements diversely and repetitively.[160] In contrast, Pallasmaa explores Regionalism in connection to his phrase 'diversification versus unification' and argues that the notion of Regionalism should connect with situational or culture-specific architecture rather than with geographic or ethnological connotations.[161] Similarly Kenza Boussora argues that Regional architecture should be built in 'harmony with social needs' which requires user participation, local materials and geographical consideration.[162] Within these requirements the concept of Regionalism can be adequately characterised. In a geopolitical context, Pallasmaa observes that Regionalism has a tendency to turn into 'sentimental provincialism'[163] which is relatable to the postcolonial instance of East Pakistan. Therefore, it can be assumed that the architecture of East Pakistan represents an open confrontation between 'the universal and the unique, the individual and the collective, the traditional and the revolutionary.'[164] Alan Colquhoun argues that universalist and regionalist tendencies were at the heart of avant-garde modernism and that it was inherited from Enlightenment rationalism and Romantic empiricism.[165]

---

[159] Albert Mayer, "Regional Development: The Architect's Role," in *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition*, ed. V. B. Canizaro (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007), 254.
[160] James Stirling, "Regionalism and Modern Architecture," in *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition*, ed. V. B. Canizaro (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007), 328-29.
[161] Pallasmaa, "Tradition and Modernity: The Feasibility of Regional Architecture in Post-Modern Society," 130.
[162] Kenza Boussora, "Regionalism: Lessons from Algeria and the Middle East," in *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition*, ed. V. B. Canizaro (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007), 121-27.
[163] Pallasmaa, "Tradition and Modernity: The Feasibility of Regional Architecture in Post-Modern Society," 133.
[164] Pallasmaa, "Tradition and Modernity: The Feasibility of Regional Architecture in Post-Modern Society," 133.
[165] Alan Colquhoun, "The Concept of Regionalism," in *Postcolonial Space(s)*, ed. G. B. Nalbantoglu and C. T. Wong (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997), 13.

For instance, Le Corbusier's work demonstrates both the vernacularism as well as industrial standardisation.[166] Furthermore, Colquhoun argues that Regionalism was formulated as a reaction against 'the problems of rationalisation of social life under industrial capitalism […] [and] precisely at the moment when the phenomena that it described seemed to be threatened and about to disappear.'[167] In architecture, Regionalism assures the irreducible aspects of a local culture, such as geography, climate and customs as these are embodied in local materials, styles, scale, and even in local technologies and encoded space. Thus, architectural Regionalism can be defined, as Colquhoun notes, as the 'correlation of cultural codes with geographical regions.'[168] Similarly, Crinson argues that Regionalism definitely works with indigenous traditions but that it fails to recognise the universal role of technological or economic structures.[169] This duality can be seen in different currents of nineteenth and twentieth century architecture in which modernist anxieties were sometimes exploited or brash attempts were even made in the process of the design and production of architectural space.

In 1985, a seminar was held in Dhaka entitled 'Regionalism in Architecture' which featured a wide range of discussions by renowned architects and scholars on regional architecture across South Asia. This conference proceeding was published under the same title representing the yearning for myriad architecture of nation-building in South Asia that shared a common desire for international prestige and recognition coming

[166] Crinson, *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire*, 41.
[167] Colquhoun, "The Concept of Regionalism," 15-17.
[168] Colquhoun, "The Concept of Regionalism," 22.
[169] Crinson, *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire*, 41.

from both the donor and receiving countries who were engaged in the development.[170] This seminar and later publication largely investigated South Asian Regional Architecture and developed a prolific discourse between vernacular and Modern Architecture. In the introductory chapter of this publication, Suha Özkan attempts to differentiate vernacularism from Regionalism by outlining the works of postcolonial native architects of the Middle East and South Asia. Özkan views the idea of vernacularism as 'bringing a new and contemporary existence to vernacular forms and spatial arrangements.'[171] Özkan argues modern Regionalism to be a 'schizophrenic mix' of materiality and abstraction in which the structural principles of modernism are established on the foundations of climate and cultural issues.[172] However one problem not mentioned in the various definitions of Regionalism is that there were no existing rules of implementation that could guarantee success.[173] Difficulties were also brought to notice when foreign technologies needed to be imported to rationalise the popular social theories of that time. For example, Hassan Fathy's concrete-frame housing schemes built by the government in the 1950s were far more expensive than the transportation and labour costs therefore not actually fulfilling the local implementations of the so-called theories of Regional Architecture. Nor was Fathy's agrarian romanticism with its bland and low-cost housing slabs much use in dealing with urban poverty and overcrowding. This kind of crisis was also felt acutely in the United Pakistan and India of the 1960s, and for East Pakistan, it was much difficult due to the raging cold war turning into a civil war ahead.

---

170 Powell, *Regionalism in Architecture*.
171 Suha Özkan, "Introduction: Regionalism within Modernism," in *Regionalism in Architecture*, ed. Robert Powell (Singapore: Concept Media, 1985), 7-9.
172 Özkan, "Introduction: Regionalism within Modernism," 8-9.
173 Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, 568.

Another important aspect of Regionalism to be discussed here is Critical Regionalism. The concept of Critical Regionalism was introduced by Alexander Tzonis twenty-five years ago to draw attention to the approach taken by a group of young German architects in Europe. This group was exploring an alternative to the Postmodernism into which Tzonis had reintroduced his historical knowledge and cultural issues in design.[174] Alongside Liane Lefaivbre, Tzonis defines Regionalism simply as the opposite to globalism which 'stands for the local and the specific to a region, that is to a unique, distinct geographical area occupied homogenously by similar objects or objects have in common characteristics.'[175] However, it was Kenneth Frampton who formally discussed Critical Regionalism in his various essays and theoretical books published between 1987 and 1992.[176] The full understanding of Critical Regionalism by Frampton is demonstrated in *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* (1992). Frampton establishes the connection between rootedness to a region and modern innovation when initiating a new work of architecture.[177] Frampton develops his argument by using the famous essay of philosopher Paul Ricoeur entitled 'Universal Civilisation and National Cultures' published in 1961. Ricoeur argues that 'universalisation of human culture' has been imposed globally and with the rise of universalism, civilisation is losing diversity and local traditional cultures are

---

[174] Alexander Tzonis, Liane Lefaivre, and Bruno Stagno, eds., *Tropical Architecture: Critical Regionalism in the Age of Globalization* (Chichester: Wiley-Academy, 2001).
[175] Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, "Tropical Critical Regionalism: Introductory Comments," in *Tropical Architecture: Critical Regionalism in the Age of Globalization*, ed. Alexander Tzonis, Liane Lefaivre, and Bruno Stagno (Chichester: Wiley-Academy, 2001), 2.
[176] Frampton, *Modern Architecture*, 327-329; Kenneth Frampton, "Ten Points on an Architecture of Regionalism: A Provisional Polemic," in *Center Vol. 3: New Regionalism*, (Austin: Center for American Architecture and Design, 1987), 375-385; Kenneth Frampton, "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance," in *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture*, ed. Hal Foster, (Seattle, Wash: Bay Press, 1983), 16-30.
[177] Frampton, *Modern Architecture*.

disappearing which are the 'creative nucleus for defining place.'[178] Ricoeur's argument is more relatable for developing countries as they required a better built environment balancing their tradition and culture to become a part of modern civilisation. Following Ricoeur's passage, Frampton defines the emergence of Critical Regionalism as a self-conscious reaction to the 'global modernisation […] with ever increasing force' in 'all forms of traditional, agrarian-based, autochthonous culture.'[179] Outlining renowned architects' work such as Jorn Utzon, Mario Botta, J. Codrech, Alvaro Siza, Tadao Ando, Luis Barragan, Oscar Niemeyer and many more, Frampton insisted that Critical Regionalism of these architectural endeavours cannot be regarded as style, rather it should be considered as a process of 'aesthetic preferences' which is applicable in various situations and can be 'independently realised in a variety of locations.'[180] Frampton further argues that Critical Regionalism 'sympathise' with universal Modernism and at the same time contradicts it.[181] Therefore, Regional and Modern architecture are involved in a delicate balance in which Critical Regionalist architecture is 'identified and abstracted' as 'local and cultural' amalgamated with 'modern practices, technologies, and economic and material conditions.'[182] Architecture, for both Ricoeur and Frampton should retain social value and settlements should not only echo the past but also fulfil the demands of the future.

---

[178] Paul Ricoeur, "Universal Civilization and National Cultures," *History and Truth* (1965).
[179] Frampton, *Modern Architecture*, 315.
[180] Frampton, *Modern Architecture*, 315; Keith L. Eggener, "Placing Resistance: A Critique of Critical Regionalism," *Journal of Architectural Education (1984)* 55, no. 4 (2002): 229, https://doi.org/10.1162/104648802753657932.
[181] Frampton, *Modern Architecture*, 315.
[182] Eggener, "Placing Resistance: A Critique of Critical Regionalism," 229.

To summarise, Critical Regionalism was envisaged during the dusk of both the International Style and Postmodern Architecture. From the aforementioned discussions, Regionalism and Postmodernism both simultaneously generate comprehensive concepts such as Jencks' 'Critical Modernism', Pallasmaa's 'Second Modernism' and Tzonis, Lefaivre and Frampton's 'Critical Regionalism.' Pallasmaa's concept of the Second Modernity can arguably be associated with both Critical Modernism and Critical Regionalism. However, both have certain distinguishable characteristics which the aforementioned theorists have repeatedly argued over. Architecturally, Critical Modernism expresses repetition, sometimes exaggeration, multivalence and surrealism, whilst Critical Regionalism emphasises the matter of place and form, site specific factors and reinterprets vernacular elements and interstices with culture.[183] In both cases, they approach universal mechanisms, but Critical Modernism points to a pragmatic rationalism whereas Critical Regionalism looks forward to a progressive change.

The study of Regionalism becomes more complex when theorists and scholars relate it to nationalism. In connection to nationalism and Regionalism, Harris observes that, 'Regionalism is a state of mind, a cosmopolitan and imaginative people, and an eye to the future.'[184] On the one hand, this state of mind can be restricted spatially and can be observed in poverty, isolation and underdevelopment, on the other hand, it can oppose the 'regionalism of liberation' of a region that tunes in with the emerging thought of the time.[185] Harris observes that regional expression is the highest

[183] Frampton, *Modern Architecture*, 327-29; Jencks, *The New Paradigm in Architecture: The Language of Post-modernism*, 184-90.
[184] Harris, "Regionalism," 67.
[185] Harris, "Regionalism and Nationalism in Architecture," 56.

expression of liberation as it represents a new diversity in a territory in every form, such as ways of living and plans of construction.[186] For example, by examining the continual transformation between modernity and tradition in the buildings of Indonesia and Thailand, Tan Hock Beng argues that Regionalism and the manifestation of identity within the force of Modern Architecture includes 'ecological consciousness as well as the ideological quest for national roots.'[187] In Bangladesh, during all the periods of political anxiety which occurred as being either Bengal or East Pakistan, the state of mind included an awareness of the underlying thought of the time.

A national architecture expresses the need of its people symbolically both spiritually and physically. Like national literature, a national architecture also provides symbolic images of the desires of the people. As a result, spiritual values in buildings often manifest themselves at an important time in the historical development of a nation.[188] Following Ricoeur's perspective, Frampton disputes that, 'The concept of a local or national culture is a paradoxical proposition not only because of the present obvious anti thesis between rooted culture and universal civilisation but also because all cultures, both ancient and modern seemed to have dependent for their intrinsic development on a certain cross-fertilisation with other cultures.'[189] Thus, the post-Second World War epoch began with the emancipation of different architectural cultures from an international idea. Conversely, Regionalism became a facile tool of religious and nationalist dogmatism, and Curtis argues that it 'left no room for the

[186] Harris, "Regionalism and Nationalism in Architecture," 61.
[187] Tan Hock Beng, "Modernizing Appropriations/Appropriating Modernity," in *Tropical Architecture: Critical Regionalism in the Age of Globalization*, ed. Alexander Tzonis, Liane Lefaivre, and Bruno Stagno (Chichester: Wiley-Academy, 2001), 93-103.
[188] Harris, "Regionalism and Nationalism in Architecture," 61.
[189] Frampton, *Modern Architecture*, 314.

universal aspects of both human condition and the language of art.'[190] Perhaps, nationalism in Regionalism might only succeed by the blending of the local with the universal and the avoidance of limitations and this can lead to a lasting symbolic resonance.[191]

Tropical Architecture

Tropical Architecture became a key design method in the developing countries when Edwin Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew started their architectural practice in post-war West Africa. Alongside practicing the methods of the tropics, these architects also wrote about their techniques, describing their outputs as a manual. Some of the important manifestations were published in the 1940s and 1950s such as Fry and Drew's V*illage Housing in the Tropics: with special reference to West Africa* (1947), *Tropical Architecture in the Humid Zones* (1956) and *Tropical Architecture in the Dry and Humid Zones* (1964).[192] Fry and Drew's published books offering techniques and theories on Tropical Architecture. These books explore the social, medical and spatial preoccupations of British administrators earlier in the century in West Africa, particularly in relation to public parks and open spaces enabling cleansing breezes and improving the contact with nature. Climate was one of the first element from which Fry and Drew abstracted modernism in order to find new characteristics in West African architecture. Similarly, Regionalism also deals with climate, but from previous

[190] Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, 587.
[191] Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, 587.
[192] Maxwell Fry, Jane Drew, and Harry Ford, *Village Housing in the Tropics: with special reference to West Africa* (London: Lund Humphries, 1947); Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew, *Tropical Architecture in the Humid Zone* (London: Batsford, 1956); Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew, *Tropical Architecture in the Dry and Humid Zones*, Second edition. ed. (Malabar, Fla: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Company, 1982).

discussions, it can be perceived that Regionalism's major emphasis is on its region and people, relating to tradition and national culture; and it advocates the need for construction which simultaneously is also a response to climate. However, Tropical Architecture generated its very existence from climate as well as from a material and constructional rationale for planning and building.

Fry and Drew's Tropical Architectural endeavours are discussed and analysed in Iain Jackson and Jessica Holland's book *The Architecture of Edwin Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew* published in 2014.[193] Fry and Drew's ideas became iconic for modernisation in postcolonial countries and many architects followed their acclaimed scientific attitude towards architectural problem-solving. Fry and Drew had visited Accra early in 1944 and both were appointed as town planning advisers.[194] They produced new prospects of town planning and housing schemes and developed a reputation as experts in what they would come to call 'Tropical Architecture' as well as designing public buildings in the modernist idiom which they had developed during the 1930s. By the early 1950s they were designing schools, colleges and universities, community centres, banks, department stores and new villages and housing, all over the Gold Coast, Togo and Nigeria. According to Crinson, what actually made the 'Tropical Architecture' concept of Fry and Drew successful was that 'they sought to transcend colonial culture with a cosmopolitan expertise grounded in the functionalist claims of modernist architecture,

[193] Iain Jackson and Jessica Holland, *The Architecture of Edwin Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew: Twentieth Century Architecture, Pioneer Modernism and the Tropics* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014).
[194] Fry was posted in Accra as an army officer and they stayed after the war. See, Crinson, *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire*, 132.

combining their claimed sympathy for the beauties of a once closely adjusted culture and their identification with the new enlightenment of emerging independence.'[195]

Jiat-Hwee Chang and Anthony King investigate Tropical Architecture not as a 'depoliticised entity' but as a powerful tool 'inextricably linked to asymmetrical colonial power relations.'[196] In fact, Crinson argues, 'the discourse about Tropical Architecture' is largely 'a metropolitan phenomenon employing an imperial model of dissemination in the sense that its key nodal point were architects, publishers, journals, conferences and architectural school based on metropolis' despite the participants were international.[197] Drawing attention to Crinson's argument, Hanna le Roux disputes Tropical Architecture as seen as something disparate from colonial architecture and that 'the influence of the metropolis on the culture of Tropical Architecture remained significant' mostly after independence.[198] Outlining a range of examples from West Africa during the early twentieth century, le Roux defines the concept of Tropical Architecture as a connection emerged from 'modern communications within the spatial systems of colonialism' specifically, through the cities with 'peripheral sites of architectural practice.'[199] Fry and Drew represented Tropical Architecture as a new innovation by arguing previous architectural buildings as being 'instinctive,' in which

[195] Crinson, *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire*, 132.
[196] Jiat-Hwee Chang and Anthony D. King, "Towards a genealogy of tropical architecture: Historical fragments of power-knowledge, built environment and climate in the British colonial territories: Towards a genealogy of tropical architecture," *Singapore journal of tropical geography* 32, no. 3 (2011), https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9493.2011.00434.x.
[197] Crinson, *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire*, 133.
[198] Hannah le Roux, "The Networks of Tropical Architecture," *Journal of Architecture* 8, no. 3 (2003), https://doi.org/10.1080/1360236032000134835.
[199] le Roux, "The Networks of Tropical Architecture."

Iain Jackson interpreted it as colonial and having little to do with climate.[200] However, Chang and King argue that this was not the real issue, for rather unlike colonial culture, Tropical Architecture is a 'two way exchange' and the architectural outcome, as they acknowledge, is 'transculturation.'[201] Furthermore Jackson explains, 'the tropics are not timeless or geographical places, rather shifting sites where European ideas, political domination, knowledge and power were imposed, created and contested, with climate nevertheless being a key influence on the architecture produced there.[202] Aforementioned theories suggest that Tropical Architecture is a concept of a sustainable society which is intertwined with the environment and its political context.

The cultural implications of Tropical Architecture were developed in tropical countries such as Africa, India, Pakistan, Middle East, Brazil, Sri Lanka and so on. For all of these countries, it acted as a tool for decolonisation combined with a quest for nation building. The architecture was not directly inspired by the past but rather it stimulated basic spatial patterns responsive to a hot climate and a beautiful landscape of individual countries. And eventually, these tropical approaches became connected through the architecture of different postcolonial countries and generated a unique style of their own. For example, Balkrishna V. Doshi's hot-dry climate courtyard designs as related to *Brahmand* (earth) echo the pensive architectural reflections of Hassan Fathy and the pavilion-in-the-garden schemes set within a hot, humid and

---

[200] Iain Jackson, "Tropical Architecture and the West Indies: from Military Advances and Tropical Medicine, to Robert Gardner-Medwin and the Networks of Tropical Modernism," *The Journal of Architecture* 22, no. 4 (June 2017), https://doi.org/10.1080/13602365.2016.1204078.
[201] Chang and King, "Towards a genealogy of tropical architecture: Historical fragments of power-knowledge, built environment and climate in the British colonial territories: Towards a genealogy of tropical architecture."
[202] Jackson, "Tropical Architecture and the West Indies: from Military Advances and Tropical Medicine, to Robert Gardner-Medwin and the Networks of Tropical Modernism," 712.

vegetal milieu of Geoffrey Bawa.[203] Another example is the combination between imported and native sources in the Gandhi Ashram Memorial Museum (1958-63) in Ahmedabad designed by Charles Correa (fig. 12). Curtis explains how the building was 'laid out as a labyrinth of courts, shaded walkways and low pavilions traversed by an ambling route. This weave of positive and negative spaces was held together by a staggered grid of plain brick Piers bearing concrete lintels, waterspouts and pyramidical tiled roofs.'[204] Needless to say the museum has its obvious debts to Corbusier's Sarabhai House and to Kahn's Trenton Bath House, but it also reflects aspects of Indian character in its network of pillars and terraces which encourages the air flow as well as allowing for easy social communication (fig 13, 14).[205] Critical Regionalism is certainly evident here as well. For South Asian cities, tropical and regional architecture was processed by synthesising multidimensional secular and religious traditions within the context of political turbulences.[206] These heterogenous complex identities expressed the changing cultural patterns through the region's radical transformation in climate friendly architecture.[207]

---

[203] Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, "Reincarnations and Independence: The Modern Architecture of South Asia," in *An Architecture of Independence: The Making of Modern South Asia: Charles Correa, Balkrishna Doshi, Muzharul Islam, Achyut Kanvinde*, ed. Kazi Khaleed Ashraf and James Belluardo (New York: The Architecture League of New York, 1998), 26.
[204] Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, 571.
[205] Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, 572.
[206] Ashraf and Belluardo, *An Architecture of Independence: The Making of Modern South Asia: Charles Correa, Balkrishna Doshi, Muzharul Islam, Achyut Kanvinde*.
[207] Farooq Ameen, "The South Asian Paradigm," in *Contemporary Architecture and City Form: The South Asian Paradigm*, ed. Farooq Ameen (Mumbai: Marg Publication, 1997), 1-12.



Figure 12: Charles Correa, Gandhi Ashram Memorial Museum, Ahmedabad, India (1958-63). Source: Robert L. Vickery. Artstor



Figure 13: Le Corbusier, Sara Bhai House, Ahmedabad, India. Source: *Architectural Digest.* Accessed April 18, 2020.



Figure 14: Louis I Kahn, Trenton Bath House, Ewing New Jersey, USA. Source: *Architects Journal.* Accessed April 18, 2020.

The examples discussed above were taken from emerging countries struggling with the quest for modern national identities in their own respective ways. Modern and Postmodern methods and mechanisms in architecture became an efficient tool to revive ethnic culture within each country's own environment. It can be said that Regional and Tropical architecture are deeply integrated within these transformations. Therefore, the concept of 'Second Modernism' is perhaps a formal translation combining all of these architectural approaches collectively.

2.3.4 Paradoxes of Architectural Genealogies in Bangladeshi Nationalist Discourse

According to the various perspectives of the scholars, it can be concluded that from Modern, Postmodern to Regional or Tropical Architecture, there lay a hope in producing buildings of a certain timeless character combining old and new as well as

local and universal. The Mexican painter Rufino Tamayo summarised this by stating, 'art is universal, the accent is local.'[208] The history of socio-culture involved a penetration of multiple layers and an ideology created by the modernising elites. Indian Historian Romila Thapar explained this process as, 'each generation chooses the past on which she wishes to draw.'[209] However, it was a different situation for East Pakistan because the emergence from the time of pre-Independence can be likened to the move from a time of schizophrenic identity to a time of solidity and reassurance. The identities developed from secular ideals for the nation-state 'sought to reconcile and integrate diverse religious and ethnic groups, regional and geographical differences, and strident contrasts between urban and rural worlds.'[210] The very notion of a national tradition tended to mean 'an edited version of the local past in which recent colonialism was seen as an alien intervention' and that became a focus point for nationalism.[211]

In all circumstances, architecture simply makes a connection between ideology and form. Nonetheless, it is rooted in the 'processes and paradoxes of society' and within these it also creates its own terminology in which it works collaterally but according to different rules.[212] In relation to this Curtis states, 'The trick is to find the right balance between the internal logic of the discipline and the influence of cultural forces, between these social and personal dimensions, between the unique order of the individual invention and that which is normative or typical.'[213] These expressions are neither

[208] Quoted in, Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, 647.
[209] Romila Thapar, *Historical Interpretations and the Secularising of Indian Society* (Bangalore: Bangalore : Visthar, 1999), 56.
[210] Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, 579.
[211] Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, 579.
[212] Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, 13.
[213] Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, 13.

directly political nor purely functional, but are mostly a rich mixture of ideas and forms, thoughts derived from emblems, microcosms or the combined vision of society which turn into 'three-dimensional interpretations of the human condition.'[214] Therefore, it can be said that Regional and Tropical architecture in the industrial world cannot be isolated, as it is the 'most meaningful form of cultural survival that remains in the mind, the strategy of resistance, the subculture that believes in searches for authenticity.'[215] The mission of creating Bangladeshi architecture with its own identity lies in the continuous development of the tradition of a socially concerned, responsive and assimilative modernity.

2.4 Search for Identity: Dilemma between Culture and Religion

The history of postcolonial societies in a larger part of the world unfolds an obsessive state known as the 'search for identity.' The previous section entitled 'Emergence of Bangladeshi Nationalism' demonstrated a glimpse of the ambiguities between culture and religion that appeared obtrusive when the social and political aspects are investigated. The role of culture and religion became an important component of the historiography of Bangladesh when Bengalis found themselves in dilemma of their own ethnicity. The paradox focuses mainly on tradition or religion. More precisely, the question is do they consider themselves Muslim or Bengali or Bangladeshi? Whilst the idea of having a secular nation of Bangladesh came into existence after Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's famous speech on 7 March 1971, it is convenient to focus on the

[214] Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, 13-14.
[215] Pallasmaa, "Tradition and Modernity: The Feasibility of Regional Architecture in Post-Modern Society," 139.

dilemma of being either Muslim or Bengali for the purpose of this thesis.[216] This short section will survey critical writings on the relationship between culture and religion and how it impacted Bengal's search for identity.

Pakistan came into being as a Muslim nation and the country's first governor-general, Muhammad Ali Jinnah's role was to continue to lead Islamic monotheism throughout the country. Only six months after Pakistan gained independence, Jinnah visited the province of East Bengal in March 1948.[217] Attending Dhaka University's convocation, the *Qaid-e-Azam* (Great Leader) addressed the students and faculties and gave his speech on the question of national language which was already a matter of discussion amongst citizen as it was being processed as a policy on governance. Jinnah stated that there should be one state language for Pakistan and 'that language should be Urdu and cannot be any other (fig. 15).'[218] Although Jinnah was ready to accept any other language of the country (e.g. Bangla or Punjabi) as a provincial language, stating, 'the people can choose any language they wish' nevertheless, he enforced, 'there can be only one lingua franca […] for intercommunication between the various provinces of the state.'[219] However, the inhabitants of Bangla speakers outnumbered speakers of any other language and Bengalis immediately claimed that 'an obvious choice for state language is the language spoken by the majority of the nation's

[216] Sheikh Mujibur Rahman delivered a historical speech during the escalating turbulence between East and West Pakistan addressing to over two million Bengalis at the Race Course Ground in Dhaka. Rahman declared, 'The struggle of this hour, is the struggle for independence. The struggle of this time, is the struggle for freedom.' He further calls out all the citizens proclaiming, 'Turn every home into a fortress, and fight for liberation with whatever you have.' See, Lawrence Ziring, *Bangladesh: From Mujib to Ershad. An Interpretive Study* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).
[217] East Bengal was known as East Pakistan from 1955.
[218] Ratan L. Chakrabarti, *Bhasha Andoloner Dalilpatra* (Dhaka: Bangla Academy, 2000).
[219] Chakrabarti, *Bhasha Andoloner Dalilpatra*.

inhabitants.'[220] Yet Jinnah, the nation's leader demanded Urdu be accepted as the national language. When the majority of the people spoke Bangla, why did Jinnah consider Urdu more appropriate as a national language? Jinnah responded that Urdu was understood in the majority of provinces in Pakistan and above all, that this was a language which embodied 'Islamic culture and Muslim countries and [was] nearest to the languages used in other Islamic countries.'[221]



Figure 15: Muhammad Ali Jinnah's Speech at public meeting at Dhaka on March 21, 1948. Source: *Wikimedia*. Accessed 8 Nov 2022.

Jinnah's belief of promoting and nurturing one identical language would not only improve communications but would also represent every citizen as a national of an Islamic nation. Although the majority of the population spoke Bangla, nonetheless, Jinnah and other elite Muslims of West Pakistan proclaimed that Bangla did not represent any characteristics of Muslim culture. Thus, for this particular reason, Bangla was never accepted as the national language. In contrast, Urdu was practised only amongst the educated elites as a South Asian Muslim language because of scriptures, even though linguistically it was connected with Hindi. However, most

[220] Uddin, *Constructing Bangladesh: Religion, Ethnicity, and Language in an Islamic Nation*, 2.
[221] Chakrabarti, *Bhasha Andoloner Dalilpatra*.

people of the Indian subcontinent would associate Urdu as a language related to the Quran. This rhetoric was very powerful in Jinnah's speech. Pakistan's Muslim identity, as Uddin argues, was directly connected 'not only to religious tradition but also to select languages and north-western regional customs of the Muslims.'[222] As a result, the Bengali language and regional customs were criticised and became a topic of debate over the issues of national language and culture. West Pakistanis kept criticising the customs and traditions of Bengali Muslims which were common to Bengali Hindus such as practicing Rabindranath Tagore's songs, wearing *bindis* and having children studying the fine arts.[223] Bengalis gradually realised these criticisms as an inconspicuous assault on their culture and they reacted to the condemnation. Less than three decades later, this discourse and conflict eventually broke the Muslim nation of United Pakistan.

Partha Chatterjee, Neliesh Bose, Peter van der Veer and other scholars have discovered that colonial experience instigated modern ways of thinking which led to struggles and extreme protestations about religion, nation and community.[224] Most of this research often addressed the difficulties in interpreting religious tradition as legitimate and authoritative over regional tradition. For example, India's community focuses on many groups, however the dominant group remains the Bharat Janata Party (BJP), whose motive is to employ only Indic cultural roots such as Hinduism and

---

[222] Uddin, *Constructing Bangladesh: Religion, Ethnicity, and Language in an Islamic Nation*, 4.
[223] The middle class custom of having their children studying into the fine arts and creative areas was an act of cultural resistance.
[224] Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993); Peter van der Veer, *Religious Nationalism : Hindus and Muslims in India* (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 1994); Neilesh Bose, *Recasting the Region Language, Culture and Islam in Colonial Bengal* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014), https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198097280.003.0001.

which largely excludes Islamic contributions. In Afghanistan, the Taliban destroyed the Bamiyan Buddhist statues to remove the memory of historical and cultural artefacts not connected to Islam. In the name of rebuilding and reviving the proper 'way of life,' these examples demonstrate a religious community envisioned from forceful actions. Such enforcement was occurring in East Bengal, however, as Nurul Absar disputes, the act of denying such actions was not the first time for the inhabitants as religious discrimination had already prevailed during the 1905 Bengal Partition.[225]

Returning to the matter of language, Bangla is generally considered as the oldest language closely related to *Sanskrit*. Through the eras of the Sultans and Mughals, Islam began to appear in Bengal and in order to educate the peasant class, Muslim rulers promoted literature in Bangla. Therefore, the combination of Islam and Bangla generated a new custom, which as Uddin states, 'appeared not just as the religion practised by conquerors but as a tradition becoming influential' amongst the people of Bengal.[226] Although the content of Bangla literature was transmitted, nonetheless, a great extent of Bengali culture remains oral and relies on being transmitted orally. Such examples are demonstrated by Zillur Khan who examines how literature became a method of movement during the colonial state of the Indian subcontinent and how a larger part of religious and cultural complexity occurred because of Bengal's undocumented past.[227]

---

[225] A. B. M. Nurul Absar, "Muslim Identity, Bengali Nationalism: An Analysis on Nationalism in Bangladesh," *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 3, no. 1 (March 2014), https://doi.org/10.5901/ajis.2014.v3n1p439.
[226] Uddin, *Constructing Bangladesh: Religion, Ethnicity, and Language in an Islamic Nation*, 7.
[227] Zillur R. Khan, "Islam and Bengali Nationalism," *Asian Survey* 25, no. 8 (August 1985), https://www.jstor.org/stable/2644113.

In promoting Muslim nationhood, Jinnah's statement of 1948 became the main source of religious conflict generating what Uddin calls 'identity politics.'[228] Although generating a discussion can be problematic here, however, to define identity politics, referring to Anderson's 'imagined communities' might be helpful.[229] Identity is an investigation of an individual self. But here I am referring to identity as a psychological aspect of a community. Partha Chatterjee observes that the years 1905, 1947 and 1971 have been major turning points as Bengali Muslims had consecutive rises and falls in their ideologies, ones which might direct them to imagine a community with new ways associated with their morals and values.[230] The changes in a nation's identity demonstrate what Chatterjee insightfully recognises as the fragility of nationalism, which lies in the fact that a community can be imagined in a number of ways by the very nature of being imagined.[231] Shireen Osmany exemplifies nationalism in this case as Bengalis having imagined a concept of a nation that would share history and culture; and nationhood that would be determined by the common bonds of language, ethnicity and religion.[232] Uddin argues, Muslim nations are motivated to promote Islamic consciousness, however, 'understanding the nature of who articulates orthodoxy and how it gets articulated are also paramount to this task.'[233] West Pakistan's orthodoxically concerned policies were able to come in light because they held the authority and power over East. Thus, as Veer observes, the centralising force of nationalism and nation building 'sprouts centrifugal forces' and

---

[228] Uddin, *Constructing Bangladesh: Religion, Ethnicity, and Language in an Islamic Nation*.
[229] Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*.
[230] Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*.
[231] Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, 238.
[232] Osmany, *Bangladeshi Nationalism: History of Dialectics and Dimensions*.
[233] Uddin, *Constructing Bangladesh: Religion, Ethnicity, and Language in an Islamic Nation*, 9.

crystallises other 'dreams of nationhood.'[234] The nationalism generated in East Pakistan through religion, ethnicity, language was a counterreaction to the forging of identity. West Pakistani leaders presumed that the partition of 1947 would solve the problem of having a secular Muslim nation. However, this Muslim nation of United Pakistan gave rise to frustration and dissension that ultimately led to another partition and civil war in 1971.

When the nineteenth century Muslim elites and reformers evoked the concept of an imagined 'Muslim' community suggesting several states of Muslim majority to be a part of Pakistan, did they consider the social and economic disparities amongst the states? For East Bengal, did they consider how to politically authorise a fragmentary nation from this far away? The religious interest was so strong amongst these elites and reformers that they silenced all other real political aspects such as gender, class and race. These conflicts were visible later and produced internal paradoxes that recall Bengal's several partitions and precipitate secular visions of community. Uddin argues, 'the result is not just an opportunistic exploitation of religious commitments but rather particular public representations of religion that engage religious commitments, giving them priority over other factors.'[235] The religious nationalism on which Pakistan is truly based eventually had an ethnic division of Bengali and Urdu speakers and Bengali Muslims united as a community primarily identifying with their ethno-linguistic identity. Thus the utility of a common religious country generated by the Pakistani leaders was fading as 'Bengaliness' became prominent. This instability between

[234] Veer, *Religious Nationalism : Hindus and Muslims in India*, 14-15.
[235] Uddin, *Constructing Bangladesh: Religion, Ethnicity, and Language in an Islamic Nation*, 14.

religious and ethnolinguistic nationalisms resulted in a nation-state that demonstrates transnational influences.

In the beginning, the people of Bengal had less to do with independence or nation-building. However, as the religio-lingual conflict predominantly took over the political debates, East Pakistan reshaped its interest by demanding secularism to place both religion and ethnicity in an equal sphere. The study of Bengal Muslims' vision for an imagined community of becoming Bangladesh indicates a complex politics of religious and regional identity. The diverse rulers who had power over Bengal were not only Muslims, but they were also Turks, Afghan and Persian. When British rulers arrived, they did not ignore the religion and regional values, rather they simply wanted to establish their authority over them. However, despite Muslim rule in India for more than five hundred years, the British perceived the Muslim religion as foreign and considered the Hindu community as the indigenous people of the subcontinent. Thus the decision of partition in 1947 was based on separating two religious groups despite the similarities in the culture and language of particular communities. Therefore, ethno-linguistic nationalism became dominant over religious nationalism in East Pakistan because of how the Awami League rationally connected their native language with the rich literary heritage of Bengal and presented it to the Bengali people. The Awami League prospered through their powerful protests in 1952 against the Urdu language policy that remains a powerful symbol of the Bangla language.

Bengali Muslims found themselves in a cultural conflict that was parallel and intersected with religious conflict. Uddin argues that Bengalis are largely not

acknowledged as a part of the larger Islamic world.[236] However, there is no debate if one chooses to be Muslim and reside in Bangladesh. Irrevocably, there is no such thing as being truly Islamic or truly Bengali. People can be nationals of one country and can be of any religion. The division between religion and tradition interpret only one constant tension that is related to power, authority and economy. The nationalist history of Bangladesh begins with establishing itself themselves through ethnic identity, then through religious identity, later through lingual identity and lastly, through the 'imagined' identity that combined all the identities in order to construct secularism. Ranabir Samaddar argues, 'it helps in defining the nationalism of the self, though this act of defining is not through pure reflection, but through refraction.'[237] If one connects from the first nationalism to the last, it is evident that 'Bengaliness' and 'Muslimness'; are not antagonistic. Rather, Islam provided Bengalis with a religious ideal and being Bengali provided a cultural pride.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter traced the concepts of nationalism and architecture within the dogma of cultural and religious conflicts. The thematic analysis has served as a productive lens in order to navigate how to perceive these interpretations. The study not only reveals the relationship between the multidisciplinary subjects, but also highlights ambiguities which prevent this thesis from comprehensively assessing the ideological and historical disputes. The critical dialogues investigated in this chapter produce an immediate setting to evaluate architectural production during the era of conflicts and

[236] Uddin, *Constructing Bangladesh: Religion, Ethnicity, and Language in an Islamic Nation*, 184.
[237] Ranabir Samddar, *Paradoxes of the Nationalist Time: Political Essays on Bangladesh* (Dhaka: University Press Limited, 2002), 2.

emergence. The architectural reading of the case studies in relation to these categories will form the further chapters of the research.

Chapter 3: Architecture of Bengali Identity

The formation of Pakistan was mainly based on one element – Islam as the religion. Forming an Islamic state of Pakistan with two separate wings required regional governing bodies, additional administration and most importantly infrastructures such as offices and institutions to facilitate and train employees. Despite initial political instability, the Government of Pakistan opted for various developments in the major cities such as Lahore, Karachi and Islamabad in West Pakistan and Dhaka in East Pakistan. These cities needed immediate attention for urban planning, housing policies and governmental and institutional buildings. Similar to many decolonised countries, Pakistan's conception was to build a modern nation focussing on its identity. This identity was principally based on religion. As a result, most of these development projects strictly required the manifestation of Islamic expression within the modern approach of designing the buildings. Initially both provinces of Pakistan followed the required conceptual procedure in design and construction, however, as the political conflict grew between the two wings, East Pakistan began to focus on its regional identity (Bengali) more than its religious identity (Islam). Economic and political disparities also played important roles in distinguishing the architecture of East and West Pakistan. In East Pakistan these development projects were simultaneously exercised by foreign, West Pakistani and East Bengali architects, however, there remained major differences in their architectural manifestations due to their different academic and training backgrounds. This chapter, therefore, will focus on the differences and transformations in architectural expression which were implemented after 1947 and onwards. The architectural analysis is divided into two sections. The

first section will examine selected administrative and institutional buildings designed by both governmental and private sectors in East Pakistan. The governmental sector consisted of works by two British architects namely, Edward Coleman Hicks and Ronald McConnel who continued their practice from the colonial regime in the Communications and Buildings Department (C&B); and private sectors consisting of works by West Pakistani architect Abdul Hussain Thariani's private firm which was managed by his son. This analysis will assist to set a clear backdrop for the second section in which I will focus on the architecture of the first native architect of Bangladesh namely Muzharul Islam. In order to avoid confusion, it is important to note that the term 'Islam' here refers to Muzharul's last name and not the official religion. In any part of the text in which confusion between the expression of the word 'Islam' might arise, I will include the architect's first name. This section will analyse Islam's attempt to create an architectural identity by combining Bengali traditional aspects with characteristics of Western modernism. Through selected case studies, I will explore Islam's diverse transition in his architectural career (academic and professional) and his philosophies related to architecture and politics. For both sections, the architectural readings will continue to relate to the surrounding political turbulences in order to reflect on the trajectories of Bengali's secularist perspective for a new identity.

3.1 Introduction

The prominent buildings designed by Muzharul Islam are acknowledged as either 'architecture for resistance' or 'architecture that helped shape the nation' by many

scholars.[238] The inclusion of these eminent buildings is one of the vital factors to structure this thesis, however, validating the argument of nationalism through architecture cannot be done by solely studying the significance of Islam's architectural endeavours. Therefore, it is necessary to observe examples of other simultaneous architectural praxis also being undertaken to create an Islamic United Pakistan. These studies will be conducted by analysing the dual notions of nationalism – Pakistan's Islamic nationalism and East Pakistan's Bengali nationalism. Through the lens of the ambivalent nation building of Pakistan, this chapter will first explore the public and institutional buildings designed by Hicks and McConnel, then Thariani's firm and subsequently the extensive analysis of Islam's architectural works. The study is organised in this way to understand not only the gradual transformation in architecture but also to comprehend the political uncertainties in which these buildings were constructed. There are a few scholarly writings published on Islam's architecture, however, apart from mere descriptions on the buildings designed by Hicks and McConnel and Thariani's firm, no evident scholarly analysis has been found. Thus, in order to generate an analysis of architectural transition, my study will be focussed on the method of observation from images and architectural drawings, interviews conducted for this thesis and various online conferences and discussions I attended which were organised by Bangladeshi scholars and architects during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Rather than just describing the case studies, this chapter will attempt to

[238] The terms 'architecture for resistance' or 'architecture that helped shape the nation' have been taken from various articles written by Kazi Khaleed Ashraf. Many peers and associates have agreed with him. See, Ashraf, "Reincarnations and Independence: The Modern Architecture of South Asia."; Saiful Haque, "Ouponibeshik Amole Dhakar Sthapottya (Architecture of Dhaka in Colonial Period)," in *400 Years of Capital Dhaka and Beyond*, ed. Abdul Momen Chowdhury and Sharif Uddin Ahmed (Dhaka: Bangladesh Asiatic Society, 2012); Adnan Morshed, "Modernism as Postnationalist Politics: Muzharul Islam's Faculty of Fine Arts (1953–56)," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 76, no. 4 (2017).

examine the buildings to understand the role of both government and private sectors employed under an unstable governing system distressed by ambivalent national identity/identities. This study will help to develop a backdrop for investigating the latter section of this chapter in which Islam's architecture will be explored from the sphere of Modernism and Regionalism that attempted to answer the long-lost quest for Bengali identity.

3.1.1 Existing Literature

The buildings of the Islamic phase in East Pakistan have always been referred to as examples in scholarly literature, interviews and lectures. Nonetheless, in all cases, the discussions have failed to demonstrate a critical analysis of these built forms. Additionally, this was the era of introducing architecture as a profession to the natives. However, the initiation of this architectural profession tends to lose limelight for discourse in these scholarly writings. A few publications and some recent initiatives in exploring Modern Architecture of East Pakistan, as well as interviews and field studies conducted for this thesis, summarise an idea of the historical and cultural background of these buildings.

Bangladeshi scholars and architects became aware of archiving their heritage and cultural buildings in literature during the 1980s. One of the earliest books published in relation to analysing the history of Bangladeshi architecture was written by renowned architect and poet namely, Rabiul Hussain. Graduated from EPUET (now BUET), Hussain started his architectural practice in the mid 1970s and almost one decade later he published a book on the culture of architecture in Bangladesh entitled

Bangladesher Sthapatya Sanskriti (Architecture Culture of Bangladesh) (1985).[239] Written in the Bengali language, this book is one of the first compilations and critical analyses of buildings from the ancient period up until the independence of Bangladesh. The former president of the Institute of Architects Bangladesh (IAB), Hussain not only provides mere descriptions of the buildings, but his writing also demonstrates the connection between Bengal's rich culture and tradition. Through the study of ancient structures, Dhaka's urban planning, Islam's architectural works and Kahn's National Capitol Complex in Dhaka, Hussain identifies various complex issues related to the construction culture of Bangladesh. Referring to the changes in authority over the centuries and political instabilities in the region, Hussain argues that Bangladeshi architectural language can be only achieved if the designers understand the cultural background of the nation.

A more focussed and comprehensive compilation of Bangladeshi architecture between 1947 and 1980 is edited by another former president of IAB, namely Shah Alam Zahiruddin alongside Abu H. Imamuddin and M. Mohiuddin Khan, entitled *Contemporary Architecture Bangladesh* (1990). Similar to Hussain's book, this publication also illustrates chronological details from the ancient structures of the third century to modern buildings up until the 1980s. However, whilst Hussain criticises the architecture of Bangladesh from a postcolonial perspective, Zahiruddin, Imamuddin and Khan demonstrate a more organised analysis of these buildings. The editors first examine the political, cultural and Western influences in the country in order to explain various types of buildings such as commercial, institutional, religious, public housing,

[239] Rabiul Hussain, *Bangladesher Sthapatya Sanskriti* (Dhaka: Sahitya Samabaya, 1987).

private residences, hospitals and recreational buildings. Throughout the study, the development of the buildings is broadly discussed in relation to planning and organisation of function, spatial details – forms and massing, understanding of the new technology and materials and expression of socio-cultural and regional aspects.[240]

Alongside the two previous publications, an article written by the former Dean of the Department of Architecture (BUET) (2017-19), namely Farida Nilufar provides some insight into Bangladeshi architecture during the Pakistani era. In her article entitled 'Architecture of Pakistan Time in Bangladesh since 1947 to 1971' published in the *Asiatic Society of Bangladesh* (2007), Nilufar identifies that there was a 'professional vacuum' for architects in the beginning of Pakistan's formation.[241] Similar to Hussain and Zahiruddin, by manifesting chronological details of buildings between 1947 and 1971, Nilufar focusses on the influence of the British style on the politically unstable East Pakistan and explores the latter phase of the Bengali Modern Architecture by exemplifying Islam's architectural projects. To support Nilufar's argument on the professional void, an unpublished study on the overview of how the architectural profession was introduced into East Pakistan was provided by the Chairperson of the Department of Architecture (BRAC University), namely Zainab F. Ali, during an interview conducted for this thesis.[242] Furthermore, a recent publication by Adnan Morshed and Nefsun Nahar entitled *Dhaka in 25 Buildings* (2017) provides an

[240] Shah Alam Zahiruddin, Abu H. Imamuddin, and M. Mohiuddin Khan, eds., *Contemporary Architecture Bangladesh* (Dhaka: Institute of Architects Bangladesh, 1990), 7.
[241] Farida Nilufar, "Architecture of Pakistan Time in Bangladesh since 1947 to 1971," *Asiatic Society of Bangladesh* (2007): 67-85.
[242] Zainab Ali and Fuad H. Mallick, interview by Author, Tape Recording, August 18, 2018.

overview of important architectural buildings of Dhaka.[243] Despite delineating similar case studies, these scholars perceive the pre-independent architecture of Bangladesh from different perspectives. However, one argument remains the same: the fact that there was a national crisis in the field of architecture in the beginning of 1947 and that cultural discontinuity and political restlessness made it even harder. As a consequence, buildings designed by Islam in the similar period became key components for the scholars to analyse Modern Architecture which was not only responsive to local climate but also manifested Bengali identity.

There are very few well-documented sources on the analysis of Muzharul Islam's architectural endeavours. In 1960, one of Islam's first architectural projects (the Public Library in Dhaka University) received international recognition in a special issue of *The Architectural Review* which featured various modern architectural buildings from the Commonwealth countries. In this issue, O. H. Koenigsberger wrote about India, Pakistan and Ceylon's architectural practice after independence (fig. 16).[244] Whilst the network of architectural practice rapidly expanded in India, the other two countries were mentioned as developing regions for architectural profession. Therefore, the article largely focussed on decolonised India's Modern Architecture by demonstrating Le Corbusier, Fry and Drew, Doshi and Correa's works in Chandigarh and Ahmedabad. The information on Pakistan and Ceylon's architecture was minimal in the article with examples of merely one project of Islam and two projects of Minnette de Silva. Although the material was insufficient for latter countries, nevertheless, in the

[243] Adnan Morshed and Nefsun Nahar, *Dhaka in 25 Buildings* (Barcelona, India: Altrim Publishers, Thomson Press India, 2017).
[244] Koenigsberger, "India, Pakistan and Ceylon," 53-58.

case of Pakistan, the first architectural project after partition that was mentioned internationally was the Public Library Building designed by Islam in East Pakistan. Despite there being a rapid professional growth in architecture in Pakistan, this recognition shows that how Islam was one of the very first architects to introduce Modernism to the country (fig. 17). In 1968, a more elaborate study of Islam's design – a collaboration with Stanley Tigerman - was later published in the *Architectural Record*.[245] Written by Raymond Lifchez, this article provided studies of masterplans of the Five Polytechnic Institutes constructed in five towns in East Pakistan (fig. 18). Drawing attention to Islam and Tigerman's research on tropical design and methods, Lifchez demonstrates a meticulous study of the masterplans, main institutional buildings and adjacent accommodations (fig. 19). The study illustrates architecture as a rational tool conceived from congruous forms and providing an appropriate solution for a humid climate.

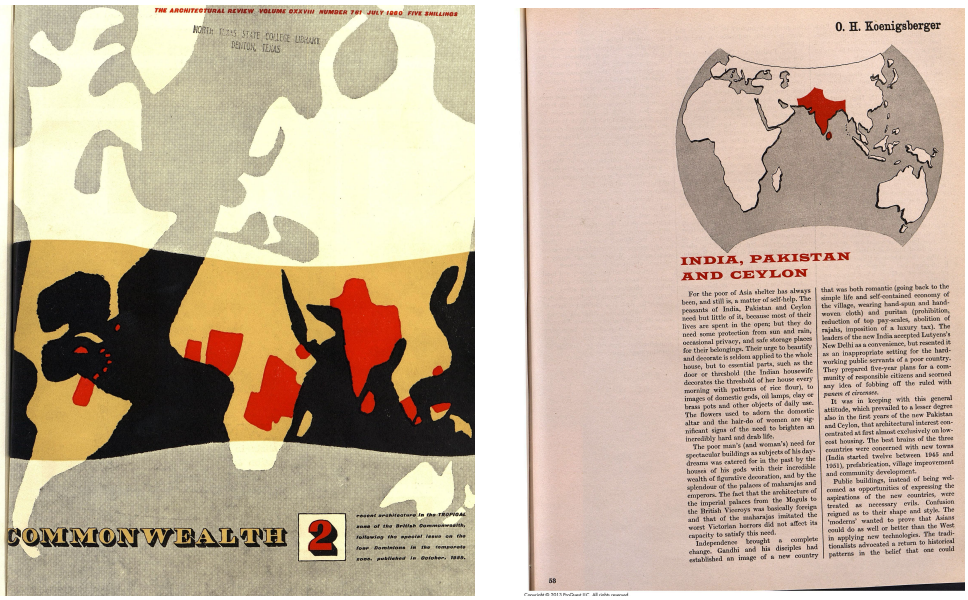
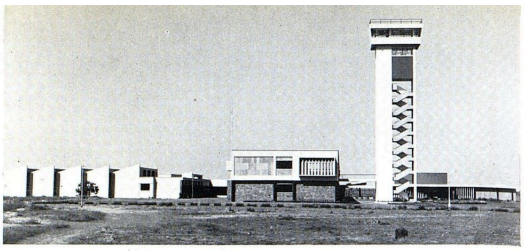


Figure 16: A Special Issue of The Architectural Review and O. H. Koenigsberger's Article. Source: O. H. Koenigsberger, "India, Pakistan and Ceylon,' *The Architectural Review* 128, no. 761 (July 1960): 53-58.

[245] Lifchez, "Masterplan Study gives East Pakistan New Approaches for Tropical Architecture," 153-60.

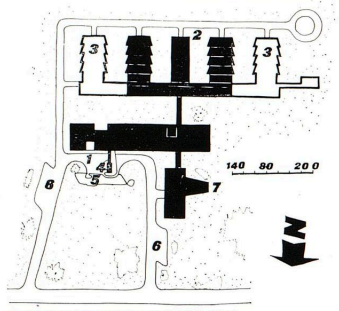
INDIA



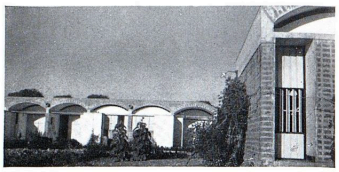
10

key
1, entrance to main block.
2, technological block.
3, future extensions.
4, tower.
5, cooling pond.
6, car park.
7, auditorium.

10 *(far right), Central Electronics Research Institute, Pilani, Rajasthan province (architects, Kanvinde and Rai) : one of a chain of national research laboratories. The buildings, on a flat site, are in three groups—see plan on right : the main group, housing the quieter activities (centre of photograph), including offices, research laboratories, museum and library ; a lecture theatre and cafeteria group (on the right behind the tower), and a technological group containing workshops, etc. (on the left). The tower, which is linked to the main buildings by a bridge, is for cosmic ray research. The structure is a reinforced concrete frame with brick infill walls, faced with stone on the main buildings which also have a system of vertical adjustable asbestos louvres for sun-protection.*



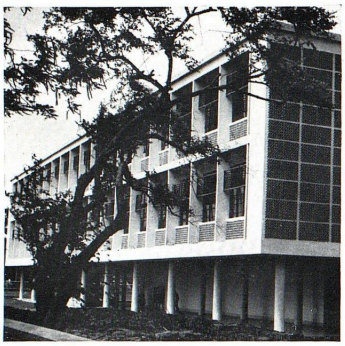
site plan, Central Electronic Research Institute, Pilani.



11

11 *(above), staff houses for the Physical Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad (architects, Vastu-Shilpa ; partner in charge, Balkrishna V. Doshi) : one of a series of dwelling types evolved for research organizations. Construction is wholly brick, including the vaulted roofs. Windows are unglazed, and have either wooden shutters or metal louvres. The 4in. slit under the vault has only flywire.*

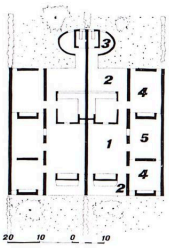
PAKISTAN



12

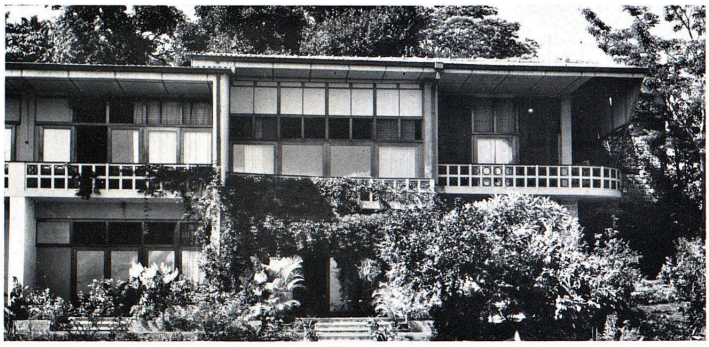
12, *public library, Dacca (architect, Muzharul Islam). It is of reinforced concrete construction and the reading-room wing on the far side has a vaulted roof of shell concrete. Also in Dacca (capital of East Pakistan) is a Government institute of arts by the same architect.*

key
1, living room.
2, verandahs.
3, lavatory.
4, bedrooms.
5, courtyard.



plan, staff houses at Ahmedabad.

CEYLON



13

13, *house at Kandy (architect, Minnette de Silva). The photograph shows the garden front. The different sections of the house change level to follow the slope of the ground. Construction is reinforced concrete and timber.*

14 *and* 15, *house at Colombo (architect, Minnette de Silva) : a reinforced concrete structure planned round a garden court.* 14, *looking from the entrance through the living-room into the garden. On the left is a wooden trellis between living-room and courtyard.* 15, *shows the car-port beneath the overhanging first floor, with the courtyard to the left. The triangular vents in the gable are traditional in shape and also serve as niches for oil-lamps during festivals.*



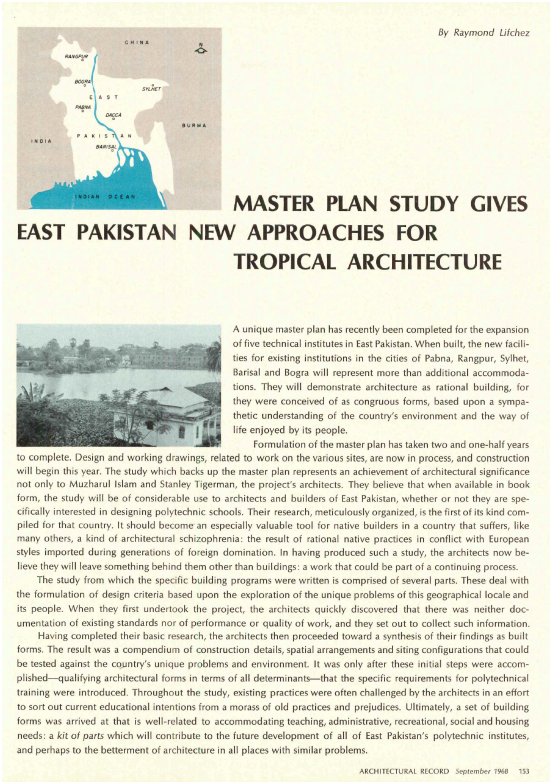
14



15

Copyright © 2013 ProQuest LLC. All rights reserved.

Figure 17: O. H. Koenigsberger's Article showing the Public Library by Muzharul Islam as Pakistan's architecture. Source: O. H. Koenigsberger, "India, Pakistan and Ceylon,' *The Architectural Review* 128, no. 761 (July 1960): 53-58.



By Raymond Lifchez

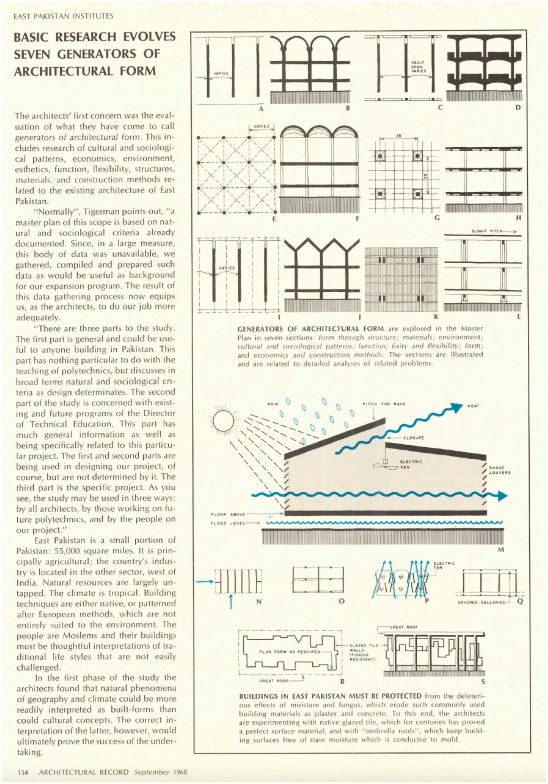
MASTER PLAN STUDY GIVES EAST PAKISTAN NEW APPROACHES FOR TROPICAL ARCHITECTURE

A unique master plan has recently been completed for the expansion of five technical institutes in East Pakistan. When built, the new facilities for existing institutions in the cities of Pabna, Rangpur, Sylhet, Barisal and Bogra will represent more than additional accommodations. They will demonstrate architecture as rational building, for they were conceived of as congruous forms, based upon a sympathetic understanding of the country's environment and the way of life enjoyed by its people.

Formulation of the master plan has taken two and one-half years to complete. Design and working drawings, related to work on the various sites, are now in process, and construction will begin this year. The study which backs up the master plan represents an achievement of architectural significance not only to Muzharul Islam and Stanley Tigerman, the project's architects. They believe that when available in book form, the study will be of considerable use to architects and builders of East Pakistan, whether or not they are specifically interested in designing polytechnic schools. Their research, meticulously organized, is the first of its kind compiled for that country. It should become an especially valuable tool for native builders in a country that suffers, like many others, a kind of architectural schizophrenia: the result of rational native practices in conflict with European styles imported during generations of foreign domination. In having produced such a study, the architects now believe they will leave something behind them other than buildings: a work that could be part of a continuing process.

The study from which the specific building programs were written is comprised of several parts. These deal with the formulation of design criteria based upon the exploration of the unique problems of this geographical locale and its people. When they first undertook the project, the architects quickly discovered that there was neither documentation of existing standards nor of performance or quality of work, and they set out to collect such information.

Having completed their basic research, the architects then proceeded toward a synthesis of their findings as built forms. The result was a compendium of construction details, spatial arrangements and siting configurations that could be tested against the country's unique problems and environment. It was only after these initial steps were accomplished—qualifying architectural forms in terms of all determinants—that the specific requirements for polytechnical training were introduced. Throughout the study, existing practices were often challenged by the architects in an effort to sort out current educational intentions from a morass of old practices and prejudices. Ultimately, a set of building forms was arrived at that is well-related to accommodating teaching, administrative, recreational, social and housing needs: a *kit of parts* which will contribute to the future development of all of East Pakistan's polytechnic institutes, and perhaps to the betterment of architecture in all places with similar problems.



BASIC RESEARCH EVOLVES SEVEN GENERATORS OF ARCHITECTURAL FORM

The architects' first concern was the evaluation of what they have come to call *generators of architectural form*. This includes research of cultural and sociological patterns, economics, environment, esthetics, function, flexibility, structures, materials, and construction methods related to the existing architecture of East Pakistan.

"Normally", Tigerman points out, "a master plan of this scope is based on natural and sociological criteria already documented. Since, in a large measure, this body of data was unavailable, we gathered, compiled and prepared such data as would be useful as background for our expansion program. The result of this data gathering process now equips us, as the architects, to do our job more adequately.

"There are three parts to the study. The first part is general and could be useful to anyone building in Pakistan. This part has nothing particular to do with the teaching of polytechnics, but discusses in broad terms natural and sociological criteria as design determinates. The second part of the study is concerned with existing and future programs of the Director of Technical Education. This part has much general information as well as being specifically related to this particular project. The first and second parts are being used in designing our project, of course, but are not determined by it. The third part is the specific project. As you see, the study may be used in three ways: by all architects, by those working on future polytechnics, and by the people on our project."

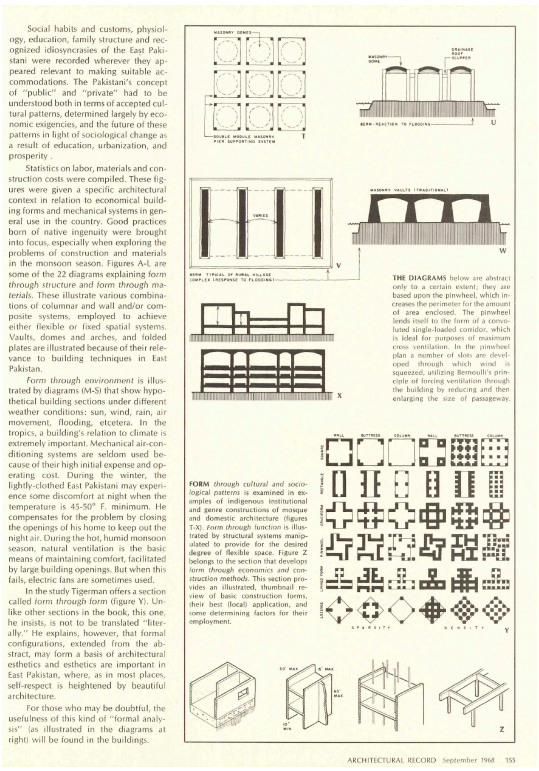
East Pakistan is a small portion of Pakistan: 55,000 square miles. It is principally agricultural; the country's industry is located in the other sector, west of India. Natural resources are largely untapped. The climate is tropical. Building techniques are either native, or patterned after European methods, which are not entirely suited to the environment. The people are Moslems and their buildings must be thoughtful interpretations of traditional life styles that are not easily challenged.

In the first phase of the study the architects found that natural phenomena of geography and climate could be more readily interpreted as built-forms than could cultural concepts. The correct interpretation of the latter, however, would ultimately prove the success of the undertaking.

GENERATORS OF ARCHITECTURAL FORM are explored in the Master Plan in seven sections: *form through structure; materials; environment; cultural and sociological patterns; function, fixity and flexibility; form; and economics and construction methods.* The sections are illustrated and are related to detailed analyses of related problems.

BUILDINGS IN EAST PAKISTAN MUST BE PROTECTED from the deleterious effects of moisture and fungus, which erode such commonly used building materials as plaster and concrete. To this end, the architects are experimenting with native glazed tile, which for centuries has proved a perfect surface material, and with "umbrella roofs", which keep building surfaces free of stain moisture which is conducive to mold.

Figure 18: Raymond Lifchez's Article in the Architectural Record, 1968. Source: Raymond Lifchez, "Masterplan Study gives East Pakistan New Approaches for Tropical Architecture," *Architectural Record*, no. 9 (September 1968): 153-60.



Social habits and customs, physiology, education, family structure and recognized idiosyncrasies of the East Pakistani were recorded wherever they appeared relevant to making suitable accommodations. The Pakistani's concept of "public" and "private" had to be understood both in terms of accepted cultural patterns, determined largely by economic exigencies, and the future of these patterns in light of sociological change as a result of education, urbanization, and prosperity.

Statistics on labor, materials and construction costs were compiled. These figures were given a specific architectural context in relation to economical building forms and mechanical systems in general use in the country. Good practices born of native ingenuity were brought into focus, especially when exploring the problems of construction and materials in the monsoon season. Figures A-L are some of the 22 diagrams explaining *form through structure* and *form through materials*. These illustrate various combinations of columnar and wall and/or composite systems, employed to achieve either flexible or fixed spatial systems. Vaults, domes and arches, and folded plates are illustrated because of their relevance to building techniques in East Pakistan.

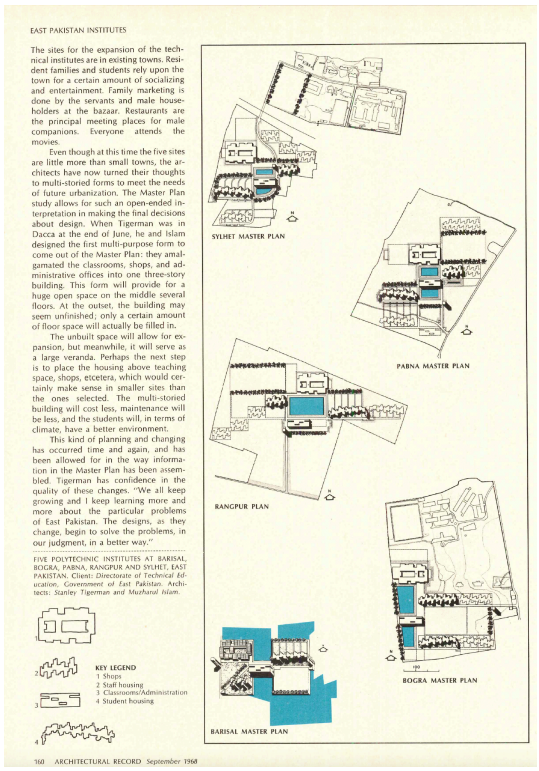
Form through environment is illustrated by diagrams (M-S) that show hypothetical building sections under different weather conditions: sun, wind, rain, air movement, flooding, etcetera. In the tropics, a building's relation to climate is extremely important. Mechanical air-conditioning systems are seldom used because of their high initial expense and operating cost. During the winter, the lightly-clothed East Pakistani may experience some discomfort at night when the temperature is 45-50° F. minimum. He compensates for the problem by closing the openings of his home to keep out the night air. During the hot, humid monsoon season, natural ventilation is the basic means of maintaining comfort, facilitated by large building openings. But when this fails, electric fans are sometimes used.

In the study Tigerman offers a section called *form through form* (figure Y). Unlike other sections in the book, this one, he insists, is not to be translated "literally." He explains, however, that formal configurations, extended from the abstract, may form a basis of architectural esthetics and esthetics are important in East Pakistan, where, as in most places, self-respect is heightened by beautiful architecture.

For those who may be doubtful, the usefulness of this kind of "formal analysis" (as illustrated in the diagrams at right) will be found in the buildings.

THE DIAGRAMS below are abstract only to a certain extent; they are based upon the pinwheel, which increases the perimeter for the amount of area enclosed. The pinwheel lends itself to the form of a convoluted single-loaded corridor, which is ideal for purposes of maximum cross ventilation. In the *pinwheel* plan a number of slots are developed through which wind is squeezed, utilizing Bernoulli's principle of forcing ventilation through the building by reducing and then enlarging the size of passageway.

FORM *through cultural and sociological patterns* is examined in examples of indigenous institutional and genre constructions of mosque and domestic architecture (figures T-X). *Form through function* is illustrated by structural systems manipulated to provide for the desired degree of flexible space. Figure Z belongs to the section that develops *form through economics and construction methods*. This section provides an illustrated, thumbnail review of basic construction forms, their best (local) application, and some determining factors for their employment.



The sites for the expansion of the technical institutes are in existing towns. Resident families and students rely upon the town for a certain amount of socializing and entertainment. Family marketing is done by the servants and male householders at the bazaar. Restaurants are the principal meeting places for male companions. Everyone attends the movies.

Even though at this time the five sites are little more than small towns, the architects have now turned their thoughts to multi-storied forms to meet the needs of future urbanization. The Master Plan study allows for such an open-ended interpretation in making the final decisions about design. When Tigerman was in Dacca at the end of June, he and Islam designed the first multi-purpose form to come out of the Master Plan: they amalgamated the classrooms, shops, and administrative offices into one three-story building. This form will provide for a huge open space on the middle several floors. At the outset, the building may seem unfinished; only a certain amount of floor space will actually be filled in.

The unbuilt space will allow for expansion, but meanwhile, it will serve as a large veranda. Perhaps the next step is to place the housing above teaching space, shops, etcetera, which would certainly make sense in smaller sites than the ones selected. The multi-storied building will cost less, maintenance will be less, and the students will, in terms of climate, have a better environment.

This kind of planning and changing has occurred time and again, and has been allowed for in the way information in the Master Plan has been assembled. Tigerman has confidence in the quality of these changes. "We all keep growing and I keep learning more and more about the particular problems of East Pakistan. The designs, as they change, begin to solve the problems, in our judgment, in a better way."

FIVE POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTES AT BARISAL, BOGRA, PABNA, RANGPUR AND SYLHET, EAST PAKISTAN. Client: *Directorate of Technical Education, Government of East Pakistan.* Architects: *Stanley Tigerman and Muzharul Islam.*

KEY LEGEND
1 Shops
2 Staff housing
3 Classrooms/Administration
4 Student housing

SYLHET MASTER PLAN

PABNA MASTER PLAN

RANGPUR PLAN

BOGRA MASTER PLAN

BARISAL MASTER PLAN

Figure 19: Raymond Lifchez's Article in the Architectural Record, 1968. Source: Raymond Lifchez, "Masterplan Study gives East Pakistan New Approaches for Tropical Architecture," *Architectural Record*, no. 9 (September 1968): 153-60.

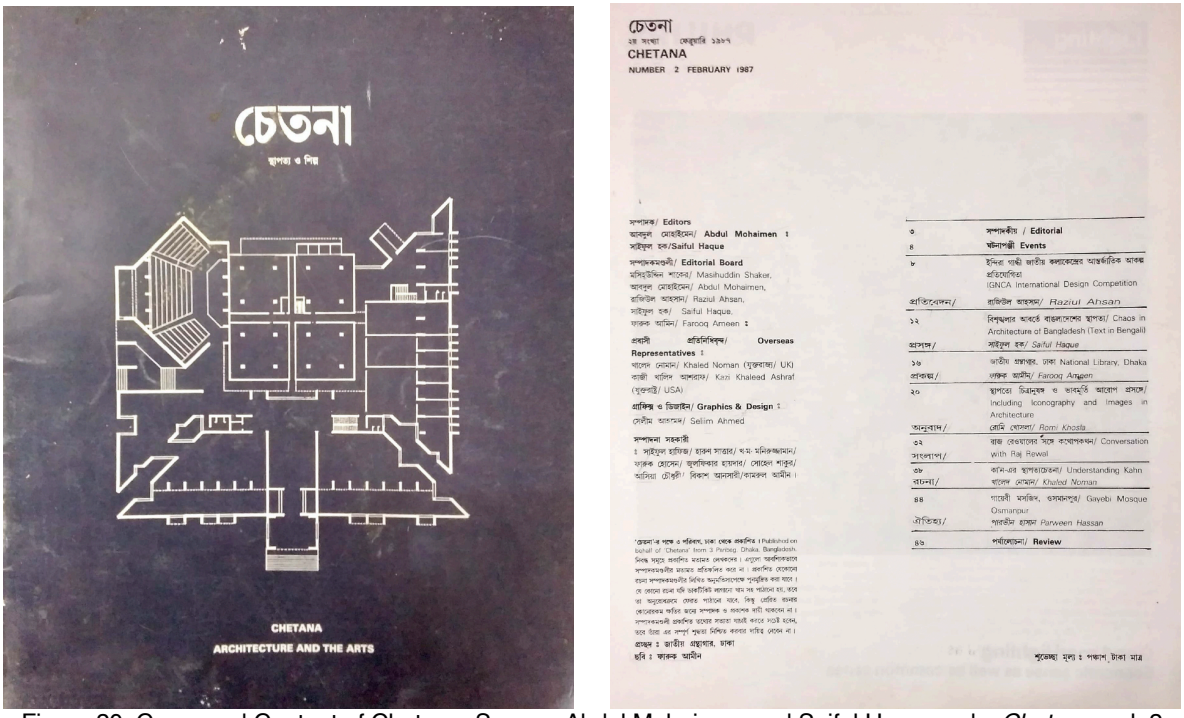


Figure 20: Cover and Content of Chetana. Source: Abdul Mohaimen and Saiful Haque, eds. *Chetana*, vol. 2 (Dhaka: Khansons PTE Ltd, February 1987).

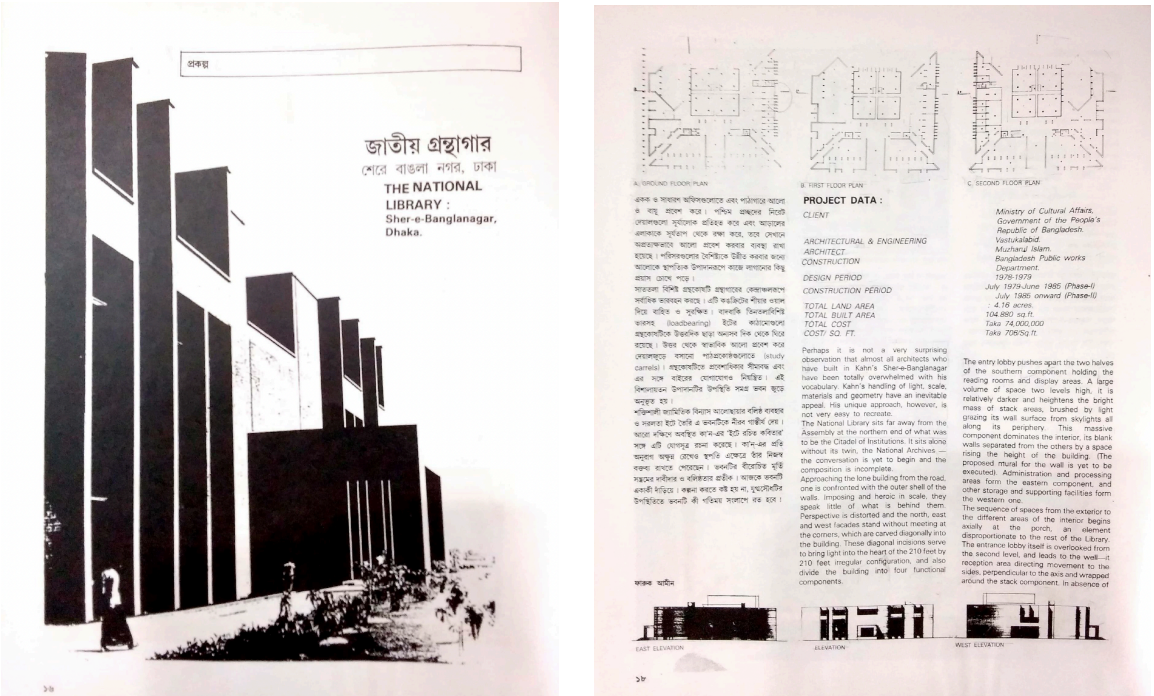


Figure 21: Muzharul Islam's National Library featured in Chetana and Article written by Farooq Ameen. Source: Abdul Mohaimen and Saiful Haque, eds. *Chetana*, vol. 2 (Dhaka: Khansons PTE Ltd, February 1987).

The aforementioned two articles of the 1960s were based on studies related to how western influences had been shaping the decolonised regions and how tropical approaches introduced a new modernism. However, scholarly analysis of Islam's philosophy and architecture received more attention in the later stage of his career during the late 1980s and onwards. Alongside other postcolonial architecture of South Asia, Islam's designs were frequently reported in the Bangladeshi architectural journal entitled *Chetana* which was published in the 1980s and 1990s. Islam was the founder of *Chetana,* and this journal was edited and written by Bangladesh architectural scholars namely Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, Saiful Haque, Raziul Ahsan, Rabiul Hussain, Shamsul Wares, Abdul Mohaimen, Jalal Ahmed and so on (fig. 20). Several issues of *Chetana* documented Islam's architectural projects from various years featuring the drawings and photographs (fig. 21).[246] However, although these articles provided individual analysis of several of Islam's architectural works along with some historical background, they failed to include the deeper meaning of the concepts.[247]

One of the first notions of the ideologies behind Islam's designs are manifested in the interview conducted by Anupam Banerji published in *Environments* in 1988.[248] This article provided first-hand documentation of the architect by illustrating his academic experience in the West, architectural practice during political and cultural paradoxes and his own views as an activist about Bangladesh before independence. The interview with Banerji became one of the authentic sources to study Islam's designs

[246] Abdul Mohaimen and Saiful Haque, eds., *Chetana*, vol. 2 (Dhaka: Khansons PTE Ltd, February 1987).
[247] Farooq Ameen, "National Library, Dhaka," *Chetana* 2 (1987).
[248] Anupam Banerji, "A Recent Conversation with Architect Muzharul Islam in Dhaka, Bangladesh," *Environments* 19, no. 2 (1988).

as related to his philosophies and was later expanded in the book, edited by Ashraf and James Belluardo in which the building designs of Correa, Doshi, Islam and Kanvinde were provided as examples of architecture of independence of in modern South Asia.[249] The introduction to this book was penned by Kenneth Frampton who argued that despite the political process of upheaval, these architects 'bound up with [the] project of the Enlightenment' in a territory which was unfamiliar with Modern architectural production.[250] However, a more detailed analysis of Islam's rationalism through his designs is illustrated in Ashraf's chapter entitled 'Reincarnations and Independence: The Modern Architecture of South Asia.' Exemplifying all four architects, Ashraf claims Islam and Kanvinde's architecture to be 'real' as they both prioritised technology and construction techniques over symbolism and metaphors.[251] Over the years, Ashraf became one of the main Bangladeshi scholars to not only vastly researching on Islam's architecture but also other important structures in Bangladesh (e.g., the National Assembly Building discussed in Chapter 5) in his various articles and books.[252] One of Ashraf's most important edited books features interview compilations between Islam and other architectural scholars, namely Ashraf himself, Wares and Haque, published recently in 2014. Similar to Banerji's interview article,

[249] Ashraf and Belluardo, *An Architecture of Independence: The Making of Modern South Asia: Charles Correa, Balkrishna Doshi, Muzharul Islam, Achyut Kanvinde*.
[250] Kenneth Frampton, "Introduction: South Asian Architecture: In Search of a Future Origin," in *An Architecture of Independence: The Making of Modern South Asia: Charles Correa, Balkrishna Doshi, Muzharul Islam, Achyut Kanvinde*, ed. Kazi Khaleed Ashraf and James Belluardo (New York: The Architecture League of New York, 1998), 10.
[251] Ashraf, "Reincarnations and Independence: The Modern Architecture of South Asia," 28.
[252] Kazi Khaleed Ashraf and James Belluardo, "Building the Nation: The Architecture of Achyut Kanvinde and Muzharul Islam," *India International Centre Quarterly* 24, no. 2/3 (1997), http://www.jstor.org/stable/23005446; Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, "Muzharul Islam, Kahn and Architecture in Bangladesh," *Mimar 31: Architecture in Development* (1989).

this book represents a more elaborated version of Islam's political views, upheaval in his architectural career and design philosophies.[253]

Whilst Ashraf, Banerji and other scholars were publishing various traces of Islam's architectural works in the 1990s, simultaneously one of the leading architects in Bangladesh namely Mohammad Foyez Ullah, was writing his masters dissertation on Islam's architectural works. Completed in 1997, Foyez's unpublished thesis focusses on an analytical method to study the conceptual frameworks of Islam's designs.[254] The study highlights the rise and fall of Islam's professional career in order to relate the consistencies and dilemmas during his design process. Drawing attention to selected buildings as case studies, Foyez's thesis continues to interpret the underlying meaning of Islam's design by analysing the formal elements and architectural features. With his elaborate study, Foyez renders a coherent depiction of Islam's expressive architectural vocabularies and compares the influences between his Western academic knowledge and Eastern architectural practice. Rather than celebrating Islam's architecture as in previous resources, Foyez's study provides a critical synthesisation of the architect's work through dialectic interpretations in the contemporary paradigms.

Analysis of Islam's architectural endeavours has become a more popular subject in the present century. The University of Asia Pacific in Dhaka hosts the archive of Islam

253 Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, ed., *An Architect in Bangladesh: Conversation with Muzharul Islam* (Dhaka: Loka Press, 2014).
254 Author is known by his middle name Foyez. Mohammad Foyez Ullah, "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam" (M. Arch Masters, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, 1997).

with a small collection of architectural drawings and photographs. In 2007, a short study of Islam's projects was hailed as voice of Modern Bengali architecture in an article of Rumy Nasheet and Mohammed Saadullah.[255] Simultaneously in 2010 and 2011, two books were published by two major Bangladeshi institutions that included a large compilation of Islam's architectural projects consisting of drawings, photographs, interviews and essays. The first book, edited by Nurur R. Khan focusses more on Islam's interviews, whilst the second book, published by BRAC University and edited by Ali and Fuad Mallick provides essays written by Stanley Tigerman and Ashraf highlighting Islam's contribution to present architectural education and the influences of Islam's concept in the contemporary architecture of Bangladesh.[256] A further, more critical analysis of Islam's first architectural project of the Fine Arts Institute in Dhaka University has been written by Adnan Morshed which was published in the *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* in 2017. Morshed investigates the institute as a critical instance of Islam's career as well as a turning point of Modern Architecture in South Asia.[257]

Established in 2015, the Bengal Institute became one of the leading advocates in publishing literature related to Islam's contribution to his country in the field of architecture and philosophy. Upon Islam's death, a publication consisting of memoirs written by several peers, apprentices, friends and family was published by Bengal Publications in 2015. Edited by Abul Hasnat, Hussain and Tarik Sujat, this book

[255] Nasheet Rumy and Mohammed A. Saadullah, "The Voice of the Modern Bengali: Architect Muzharul Islam," *Docomomo*, no. 37 (September 2007): 40-46.
[256] Zainab F. Ali and Fuad H. Mallick, eds., *Muzharul Islam Architect* (Dhaka: BRAC University, 2011); Nurur R. Khan, *Muzharul Islam* (Dhaka: Sthapattya O Nirman, 2010).
[257] Morshed, "Modernism as Postnationalist Politics: Muzharul Islam's Faculty of Fine Arts (1953–56)," 532-49.

includes many essays expressing regret over Islam's lack of accreditation for architectural contributions to his country.[258] Although Islam was not credited well during his active years of profession nonetheless his projects are now largely considered as the initiation of nationalist architecture in Bangladesh. Additionally, numerous classes, events and conferences about Islam and South Asian architecture have been organised by the institute on many occasions. One of the sessions worth mentioning which was held in February 2020 and was entitled 'Muzharul Islam and Bengali Modernism.' Considering both historical and cultural settings, the session investigated and discussed Islam's works in detail to produce materials for an upcoming publication.[259] This session featured various scholars namely, Ashraf, Sonia Amin, Farhan Karim, Wares, Tafique Rahman Khan, Nurur Khan, Haque, Rezaul Karim Sumon and Niklaus Graber (fig. 22).



Figure 22: Mentors and Students discussing Muzharul Islam's drawings in the session of February 2020, Bengal Institute, Dhaka. Source: Bengal Institute Website. Accessed 19 November 2021

[258] Abul Hasnat, Rabiul Hussain, and Tarik Sujat, eds., *Sthapati Muzharul Islam* (Dhaka: Bengal Publications, 2015).
[259] For more details see, "February 2020 Session: Muzharul Islam and Bengali Modernism," Bengal Institute, 2020, https://bengal.institute/academic-program/february-2020-session-muzharul-islam-beginnings-in-bangladesh/. Accessed 18 November 2022.

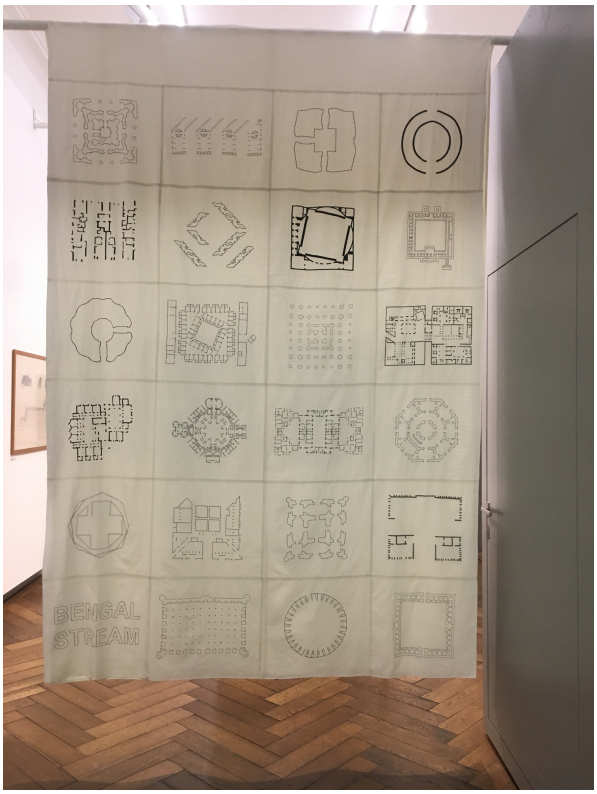


Figure 23: Entrance of the Bengal Stream Exhibition, Basel, Switzerland. Source: Author



Figure 24: Display showing Chetana's contribution to promote Bangladeshi Architecture, Bengal Stream, Basel, Switzerland. Source: Author



Figure 25: Muzharul Islam's projects on display at 'The Project of Independence,' Exhibition at MoMA. Source: Author.

Apart from sessions organised in Islam's homeland, his works have also been exhibited internationally in recent times. An exhibition entitled 'Bengal Stream: the Vibrant Architecture Scene of Bangladesh' was curated by one of the international enthusiasts of Bangladeshi architecture, Swiss architect Niklaus Graber, alongside Andreas Ruby and Viviane Ehrensberger at the Swiss Architecture Museum in Basel (fig. 23).[260] In cooperation with the Bengal Institute, this exhibition largely focussed on

[260] "Bengal Stream: the Vibrant Architecture Scene of Bangladesh," https://www.sam-basel.org/en/exhibitions/bengal-stream-vibrant-architecture-scene-bangladesh. Accessed 18 November 2022.

the contemporary position of Bangladeshi architecture by displaying over sixty projects by established and emerging architects. Alongside architectural models, drawings and photographs of Islam's architecture the exhibition displayed his contribution as a member of *Chetana* and his role as the president of IAB in 1960s with various handwritten notes, drawings and sketches (fig. 24). An exhibition catalogue of the same name was published covering all of the projects exhibited and the essays contributed by the curators and scholars from Bengal Institute.[261]

The most recent display of Islam's architectural projects was exhibited at the Museum of Modern Arts (MoMA) curated by Phillip Johnson, Chief Curator of Architecture and Design, Martino Stierli, architectural historian Anoma Pieris and former associate curator of the museum Sean Anderson.[262] The exhibition covered the countries of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka featuring more than two hundred modern architectural projects of the key architects namely, Doshi, Silva, Islam, Daniel Dunham, Yasmeen Lari, Correa, Le Corbusier, Raj Rewal and so on. The architectural model and drawings of the Fine Arts Institute alongside other drawings of Islam were displayed at the beginning of the exhibition (fig. 25). The exhibition also displayed Dunham and Boughey's Kamalapur Railway Station (discussed in Chapter 4). With the same name as the exhibition, a book was published entitled *The Project of Independence: Architectures of Decolonization in South Asia, 1947–1985*; this was not a catalogue of the displays as such but rather it consisted of critical studies of

[261] Niklaus Graber, *Bengal Stream: the Vibrant Architecture Scene of Bangladesh*, ed. Andreas Ruby and Niklaus Graber (Basel: Christoph Merian Verlag, 2018).
[262] "The Project of Independence: Architectures of Decolonization in South Asia, 1947–1985," MoMA, 2022, https://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/5439. Accessed 18 November 2022. A review of this exhibition was written by Adnan Morshed. See, Adnan Morshed, "Mysteriously Handcuffed to History," *Places Journal* (May 2022), https://doi.org/10.22269/220524. Accessed 20 June 2022.

focussed political and cultural issues related to the architecture of these postcolonial countries.[263]

The aforementioned resources mostly provide an overview of the Islamic phase of architecture in East Pakistan and Muzharul Islam's studies are largely based on his architectural significance. Therefore, to understand the deeper meaning of architectural transition this analysis will also rely on interviews conducted with architects and architectural theorists who knew and worked with Islam and some anecdotal histories provided by his family and friends.

3.1.2 Chapter Argument

Muzharul Islam's architecture is celebrated in the present century and his projects are vastly considered as a resistance to the 'domination of Western ideas and culture.'[264] Nonetheless, Islam remains less recognised and less accredited for his creations during his forty years of architectural career. Furthermore, Islam was trained as an architect in the US and the UK and associated with many Western architects. As a result, a lot of Western influences in Modern Architecture can be found in Islam's designs notwithstanding there also being evidence of Bengali architectural characteristics too. Modern Architecture provides a link set between the past and the future of the nation; however did Islam's architectural vocabulary of combining Modern and Bengali features really play any role in East Pakistan's cultural nationalism? Was

[263] Martino Stierli, Anoma Pieris, and Sean Anderson, eds., *The Project of Independence: Architectures of Decolonization in South Asia, 1947–1985* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2022).
[264] Foyez Ullah, "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam," 8.

the initial Islamic phase of East Pakistan so ineffectual to hold the nation's identity? Did Islam's architecture really resist the religious nation building of East Pakistan? These questions might not have any specific answers. However, by analysing the gradual architecture transition between public buildings of modern Islamic architecture and Islam's architecture which was simultaneously practiced during the same period, I will attempt to provide a better understanding of the Bengali's choice to 'accept' or 'reject' what kind of nation building East Pakistan should have in order to answer their search for identity in the inconsistent and contradictory paradoxical situation of decolonisation.

3.2 The Islamic Nation: Dualism in Nationalism

When Pakistan was created with two wings, the vision was to establish a 'unified subcontinental Muslim culture and community.'[265] For the newly built nation, therefore, the role of religion remained a key component. This was stressed repeatedly by the then Governor-General of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who argued that Islamic consciousness could only hold the nation together through his Two Nations Theory.[266] The development task of Pakistan was to 'achieve a new Islamic tradition blended with international culture whilst avoiding spiritual and ideological errors.'[267] This view was shared multiple times in the cabinet meetings held in 1948. In one of the cabinet meetings, consulting engineer Merz Rendel Vatten stated,

---

[265] Uddin, *Constructing Bangladesh: Religion, Ethnicity, and Language in an Islamic Nation*, 117.
[266] Muhammad Ali Jinnah's Two Nations Theory represented the view that Hindus and Muslims in India constitute distinct communities having different philosophies, social customs, religious traditions, political heroes, literature and even food and dress. See, Raja M. Ali Saleem, *State, Nationalism, and Islamization* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2017), 34.
[267] Markus Daechsel, "Islam and development in urban space: planning 'official' Karachi in the 1950s," in *Cities in South Asia*, ed. Crispin Bates and Mio Minrou (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2015), 67.

> Pakistan stands at the entrance to its life as a free independent nation. Economic, cultural and political conditions will differ markedly from those of the past. These new conditions must constitute the background for planning the capital of Pakistan. […] Faithful to the Islamic tradition, Pakistan will remain a Democratic state, the country will be open to international intercourse in all fields, economic, cultural and political, while at the same time asserting its own individuality and that of Islam.[268]

In a global perspective, the 1950s and 1960s were eras in which for various postcolonial nations Modern architecture rose in consciousness as a means of nation-building. Similarly, Pakistan as an independent state was following in the footsteps of decolonisation. The only addition Pakistan wanted in establishing a new nation state was to ensure that religious culture would have the utmost priority. However, in the case of East Pakistan, the region entered into a domestic 'colonialism' without in fact realising it. The postcolonial domestic 'colonialism' not only created ambivalences in the geopolitics but also complicated the aims and ambitions of entire Pakistan. With serious economic disparities, Pakistan's attempt to construct an Islamic nation-state witnessed an amplified cultural tension from the East Pakistanis which generated the dilemma of either being a Muslim or being a Bengali. This segment intends to discuss the ambiguities of religious and regional nationalism through the architectural practices that were ongoing in East Pakistan. The section will seldom refer to West Pakistani architectural practices as the political leaders kept the constructional authority separate after 1959.

[268] Records of Cabinet Meeting, Document 72/48, File 3A, National Archive of Bangladesh.

3.2.1 Islamic East Pakistan: Development or Conflict?

Immediately after Independence in 1947, Pakistan was faced with immense pressures of resettlement that required integrated and large-scale national planning. The challenges of resettlement accelerated as there were millions of Muslims who had migrated from India in both wings of Pakistan. In such a context, governing two provinces separated thousands of miles away from each other became very difficult for the Government of Pakistan. One of the serious problems was to establish a new executive administration as there were a very limited number of senior and experienced officers in the central and provincial services. In 1949, the government focussed on the resettlement problem of refugees in West Pakistan by setting up the Thal Development Authority.[269] However, East Pakistan remained largely ignored and was treated as a rural part of the country. This planning became critical to the overall economic development of Pakistan. The country was not fully aligned with aspects of the new global relationship, however, the international context was favourable for the new nations as the post-World War II situation brought 'urban reconstruction to the forefront of international development discourse' and included many funding organisations such as the United Nations (UN) and the Colombo Plan.[270] These international organisations operated rapid urbanisation in developing countries around the world and Pakistan became one of their progressive projects. A central government organisation known as The Planning Board which was established in 1948 consisted of both officials and non-officials as advisors. The Planning Board was assisted by the Colombo Plan organisation and by 1950 they produced a six-year

[269] For more information see, Wesley E. Bjur, *Final Report of the USAID/USC Pakistan contract (ICAc1690-AIDc1690) AID/nesa-225. 1960-65; Institution Building in an Emerging Nation: Pakistan*, University of Southern California (California, 1968), 16.
[270] Daechsel, "Islam and development in urban space: planning 'official' Karachi in the 1950s," 64.

development program. This program was gradually merged with the First Five-Year Plan for the period between 1955 and 1960. The First Five-Year Plan was approved by the then Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan whose vision was to produce rapid industrialisation and financial and banking expansion. In relation to administrative capacity, a statement was included in the First Five-Year Plan,

> […] in the period immediately ahead the inadequacy of Pakistan's administrative machinery will operate as the most serious single impediment to the maximum economic use of the country's financial and material resources.[271]

Therefore, it was assumed that the training of public servants would bring special significance as major designs were given priority for the improvement of public service. This was recognised as an important part of the goal of national development.

Unfortunately, the lack of an adequate mechanism for the implementation of the First Five-Year Plan and the ongoing political instability prevented the achievement of the objectives and targets of the scheme. Additionally, despite being a part of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the Planning Board functioned as an independent unit. The chairman was supposed to be the Prime Minister of Pakistan, however, within the span of five-years, the seat of succession changed two times after the assassination of Ali Khan.[272] As a result, the Planning Board did not get much support from the larger unit of advisors and the Prime Minister was occupied with developing a constitution. The First Five-Year Plan scheme stretched till 1959 during which five more Prime Ministers

---

[271] Muzaffar Qadir and Iftikhar Ahmad, eds., *Introducing Pakistan* (Lahore: National Institute of Public Administration, 1966).

[272] The First Five-Year Plan was effective between 1950 and 1955 and was approved by Liaquat Ali Khan. After his assassination in 1951, two Prime Ministers were appointed till 1955. The name of the Prime Ministers were Khawaja Nazimuddin (1951-1953) and Mohammad Ali Bogra (1953-1955).

came into power between 1956 and 1958.[273] Throughout the change in authority, Iskandar Ali Mirza remained the President of Pakistan (1956-1958) until Ayub Khan forcefully seized power on 27 October 1958 declaring himself as the President of Pakistan (1959-1969).

In the meantime, the cultural confrontations amplified amongst the East Pakistanis. These conflicts were associated with intellectual ideologies such as the continuous criticism from West Pakistanis about the customs and traditions of Bengali Muslims as this was also common to Bengali Hindus.[274] The Bengalis of East Pakistan gradually realised these criticisms as an inconspicuous assault on their culture and they reacted to the condemnation. As a result, the people revolted against West Pakistan by having a strong hold on Bengali literature. In a similar way to the *Vangiya Sahitya Parishad* of Kolkata's initiation of cultural nationalism against the colonial rulers, Dhaka also took an initiative to produce a history of the liberal nationalist ethos which was conducted by the Bangla Academy.[275] The Bangla Academy also played a vital role in the celebration of *Pahela Baishakh* (Bengali New Year) which is 'a secular holiday that became increasingly popular during the United Pakistan period as a symbol of resistance to what Bengalis regarded as a form of cultural imperialism.'[276] Additionally, the school curriculum declared the mandatory study of the ancient, middle and modern periods of Bengali history, language and literature.

---

[273] In the span between 1956 and 1958, the Prime Ministers were Muhammad Ali (1956), H. S. Suhrawardy (1956-1957), I. I. Chundrigar (1957) and Feroz Khan (1957-1958).
[274] Chapter 2.4 discusses these criticisms in detail.
[275] Samddar, *Paradoxes of the Nationalist Time: Political Essays on Bangladesh*, 6.
[276] The Bengali New Year is based on agriculture calendar. Uddin, *Constructing Bangladesh: Religion, Ethnicity, and Language in an Islamic Nation*, 134.

When President Khan came to power, he put a ban on the singing of Tagore songs at festivals in an effort to integrate Bengali Muslim culture with West Pakistani Muslim culture.[277] Bengali people did not take Khan's cultural imperialism diverted to religious fundamentalism too well. Many poets, activists and organisations took the initiative to protest symbolically in response to 'what secularists perceive[d] as religious fundamentalism.'[278] With the growing rage of the 1952 Language Movement, these restrictions seriously challenged the Bengalis into having a secular nationalist identity. However, similar to Jinnah's conception, Khan felt that 'only an enemy would want to see the separation of the United Pakistan.'[279] Thus to neutralise the growing political pressure from the East, Khan proposed strong policies of social and economic development and announced that citizens would be able to participate in the decision-making process.[280] On 1 May 1959, Khan issued a Basic Democracies Order in which the local provincial governments were divided into four tiers: Union Council, Tehsil Council, District Council and Divisional Council.[281] The Basic Democracies was the first ever reformation in Pakistani political history that attempted to build a local administration which would involve the citizens in territorial policy-making and would supervise the development of the industry, railways, water and power.[282] However, the system of the Basic Democracies was highly bureaucratic as the final decision would be always made by the President and by giving control to the locals as Basic

---

[277] Uddin, *Constructing Bangladesh: Religion, Ethnicity, and Language in an Islamic Nation*, 134-35.
[278] Uddin, *Constructing Bangladesh: Religion, Ethnicity, and Language in an Islamic Nation*, 135.
[279] Ziring, *The Ayub Khan Era: Politics in Pakistan, 1958-1969*, 27.
[280] Bjur, *Final Report of the USAID/USC Pakistan contract (ICAc1690-AIDc1690) AID/nesa-225. 1960-65; Institution Building in an Emerging Nation: Pakistan*, 14.
[281] Ayub's development plans were proposed at the same time as the Awami League were preparing to propose the Six Point Movement and the uprising led to the withdrawal of the Agartala Conspiracy Case. See, Ziring, *The Ayub Khan Era: Politics in Pakistan, 1958-1969*.
[282] Zaheer, *The Separation of East Pakistan: The Rise and Realization of Bengali Muslim Nationalism*, 93.

Democrats, the government expected voting support during the elections. This is how Khan conspire to win the election of 1965.



Figure 26: American President John F. Kennedy receiving President of Pakistan Ayub Khan at the White House in Washington D.C., 11 July 1961. Source: Bridgeman Art Gallery

Drawing attention to the failure of the First Five-Year Plan, Khan decided to revive and restate the program by creating independent branches of planning department in both wings. These departments would not only plan and coordinate agencies but also would provide liaison between the provincial governments.[283] President Khan became the chairperson and named these agencies the 'Planning Commission.' This bureaucratic office recruited experienced advisors and officials who led to the success of the Second Five-Year Plan which began in 1960. The objective of the Second Five-Year Plan was 'to advance the country as far as possible within the next five years.'[284] This

[283] Bjur, *Final Report of the USAID/USC Pakistan contract (ICAc1690-AIDc1690) AID/nesa-225. 1960-65; Institution Building in an Emerging Nation: Pakistan*, 16.
[284] Government of Pakistan, *Second Five-Year Plans (1960-1965)*, Government of Pakistan (Karachi, 1960). Data collected from British Library.

scheme gave highest priority to industrial development and advancement in the education of science, technology and literature. Consequently, rapid developments in constructing governmental and institutional buildings were initiated and people were encouraged to pursue education and training in architecture, engineering and technology. Within a few years, the Second Five-Year Plan succeeded in its major goals. It would have not been possible without the political alliances with the United States of America who built up a strategic relationship with Pakistan through Khan's effort (fig. 26). Alongside international funding organisations, a vast amount of aid was offered by many associations from the US. These organisations were the United Nations (UN), the Ford Foundation, UNESCO, US Technical Assistance and Productivity Program (TAP) and the Harvard Advisory Group (HAG).[285] In order to train people in architecture and engineering, the Technical Education and Expertise Enhance Programs were aided by the foreign organisations.[286] Additionally, a strategy was placed by the UN consultants, the Ford Foundation and the Pakistani government to create prototypical models for schools, institutions and rural agricultural systems. With colossal development projects and an unprecedented amount of aid from the USA, the Second Five-Year Plan assisted Khan in establishing an international reputation for Pakistan. From a political perspective, by offering tremendous support for the development of Pakistan, the USA deployed a 'soft power' tactic which could be beneficial for them in the cold war with Russia. However, major governmental and industrial construction was implemented mostly in West Pakistan than in East Pakistan. By taking into account of these ample fundings from foreign organisations

[285] Karim, "Between Self and Citizenship: Doxiadis Associates in Postcolonial Pakistan, 1958-1968," 135-61.
[286] Karim, "Between Self and Citizenship: Doxiadis Associates in Postcolonial Pakistan, 1958-1968," 137.

and President Khan's ambition of developing a modern nation of Pakistan with religious nationalism, the next segment will explore the constructional narrative of Modern and Islamic architectural implementation in East Pakistan.

3.2.2 The Islamic Phase of Modernism

Initially, the design concepts for buildings in the new nation state of Pakistan almost all followed a similar style. To a large extent, this style was a poor adaptation and combination between European Modern Architecture and the British Empire's Indo-Saracenic ventures. As these architectural applications had proven to be suited to the climate as well as providing moderate identity for the country, the designs were modified by combining these with Islamic features. These patterns of buildings became predominant in the early era of East Pakistan and were practiced by a group of architects and engineers. This development idea resembled the British Colonial regime's scheme to establish power in the Indian subcontinent by amalgamating religious elements with Euro-centric architectural features. Similar to the colonial power formation, the strategy of the governmental supremacies was to adhere their goals to growing tensions in East Pakistan by constructing buildings with Islamic features.

At the beginning of Pakistan's independence, the buildings were still constructed according to the architectural style that the British had introduced to the region via surveyors and engineers (discussed in Chapter 4).[287] Some draftsmen who had trained from the J. J. School of Art in Mumbai and other institutes of Kolkata supervised

[287] Nilufar, "Architecture of Pakistan Time in Bangladesh since 1947 to 1971," 67.

most of designs and drawings. The J. J. School of Art was also actively training the West Pakistanis, however, training architects for the Eastern wing was not yet taken into account. Scholarships under the Post-War development were introduced and several engineers from West Pakistan were sent to receive further education abroad whilst East Pakistan's situation remained in despair.[288] At this point, the nation of Pakistan emerged as the main client, however, its Eastern province remained largely neglected and, as Karim argues, that the absence of local architects created an 'intellectual blind spot.'[289]

Alongside the supervisors and draftsmen trained from Mumbai, there were two active departments involved in the construction - the Public Works Department (PWD) and Communications and Buildings (C&B). Whilst the PWD undertook the civil engineering tasks mostly for roads and railways, the architectural practice was under C&B. Thus, the responsibility of developing the new second capital of Pakistan was given to the department of architecture at C&B. In 1948, C&B appointed its first chief architect, a British national who was transferred from Delhi, namely Edward Coleman Hicks. When Hicks was appointed as chief, another British architect Ronald McConnel was already working as the assistant government architect in the office. Hicks focused on the urban planning of Dhaka by designating future land use in different areas. In his masterplan 'Dhaka Re-planning,' he distinguished Motijheel as the commercial area, Nawabpur as the shopping area, and Azimpore and Dhanmondi as the residential areas.[290] Hicks's masterplan provided some of the initial opportunities for constructing individual

[288] Kamil Khan Mumtaz, *Architecture in Pakistan* (Singapore: Concept Media, 1985), 164.
[289] Farhan S. Karim, "Muzharul Islam and Bengali Modernism," (Dhaka: Bengal Institute, February 10-20 2020), Lecture; Nilufar, "Architecture of Pakistan Time in Bangladesh since 1947 to 1971," 69.
[290] Nilufar, "Architecture of Pakistan Time in Bangladesh since 1947 to 1971."

buildings, such as Hotel Shahbag, New Market, Azimpore Housing and Rajarbagh Police barracks etc. After working in East Pakistan for twelve years, Hicks left his job in 1959. Consequently, McConnel was promoted successively to the posts of consulting architect and town planner, government architect and finally chief architect. McConnel served nineteen years in East Pakistan in which he designed many important buildings for the city such as the Holy Family Hospital, Viqarunnesa Girls School and the Nine-storied Secretariat Building etc (fig. 27). Alongside these two British architects, another associate's name can be found from the unpublished document provided by Ali.[291] A Pakistani architect, S. A. Asghar who had graduated from Glasgow University, associated with Hicks and Coleman for two years in the architectural planning and designs. However, apart from this information, no specific official documentation has been found about Asghar's involvement in the C&B. Following the works of Hicks and McConnell, the government architectural offices started to expand into the major cities of East Pakistan. In February 1949, Zaheer Uddin Khaja joined as a junior assistant architect in the Chittagong Department of architecture.[292] This brought opportunities for city planning in Chittagong and Cox's Bazaar.

[291] Ali and Mallick, interview.
[292] Ali and Mallick, interview.



Figure 27: Holy Family Hospital by Coleman Hicks, Dhaka. Source: Farida Nilufar. “Architecture of Pakistan time in Bangladesh since 1947 to 1971,” *Asiatic Society of Bangladesh*, (2007): 67-85.

In 1950, an article written by Hicks for the journal *Building* demonstrated some of the challenges he faced in C&B during the designing of the dwellings in East Pakistan. Hicks mentions how the houses of ‘Muhamedan civil servants’ were constructed by elevating the plinth of the house to prevent the dwellers from the heavy monsoon rain and flood (fig. 28).[293] He also discloses how difficult it was to find suitable materials,

> East Bengal from a geographical point of view is poorly situated; and Radcliffe Award excluded areas where limestone, sand, ballast and cement are available. […] Bengal has no coal for brick manufacturing and all the timber was cut down the last season and it will be generations before the next supply.[294]

[293] Coleman Hicks, "Flats at Dacca," *Building* (November 1950): 420.
[294] Hicks, "Flats at Dacca," 420.

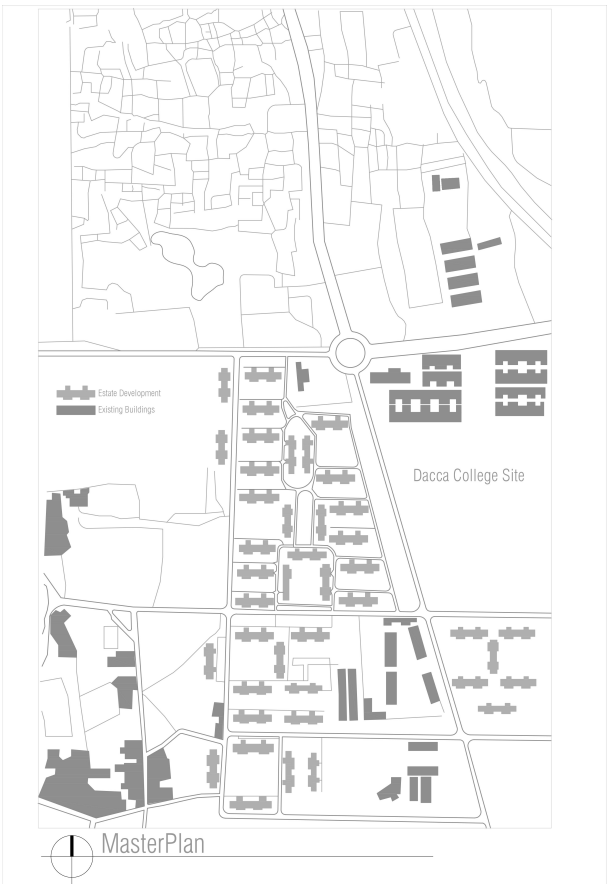


Figure 28: A Plan of Estate Development for 504 Flats Coleman Hicks, CB&I. Source: Redrawing by Sanjida Kazal Trina, from Coleman Hicks, “Flats at Dacca,” *Building* (November 1950): 421.

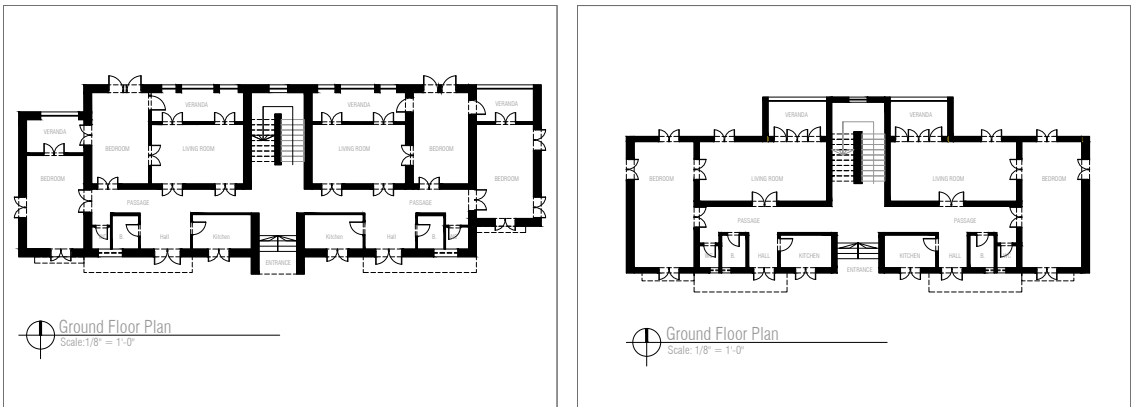


Figure 29: Residential Layout for Housing by Coleman Hicks. Source: Redrawing by Sanjida Kazal Trina, from Coleman Hicks, “Flats at Dacca,” *Building* (November 1950): 421.

The difficulties in the distribution of materials were also referred to by architect Mubassher Hussain who mentions that it was a huge challenge to bring iron rods and

other materials from the border of Kolkata for construction in East Pakistan.[295] Hussain also acknowledges that government assistance for construction purposes and material supplies was often overlooked due to other political matters. In terms of infusing religious aspects into the construction, Hicks writes that requirements for designing an Islamic household were 'peculiar' in East Bengal as,

> *Purda* (curtain) is strictly observed. A kitchen must not be planned next to the bathroom or w.c. The bedrooms must have a verandah where the women folk can sit unobserved, if possible. The kitchen must be segregated from the dining room. A visitor when he calls must be able to enter a living room which should provide a graceful retreat unobserved by the women folk. […] The meals are often taken in a squatting position […] The lavatory receptacle must not be face west or Mecca (fig. 29).[296]

These requirements were different from the European standards of household design. However, Hicks managed to ensure cross-ventilations through windows, doors and balconies despite the challenges of organising the functions in a religious way and the unavailability of material supply. Due to the various constraints faced by Hicks, these designs resulted in a 'monotonous array of rooms along corridors with no reflection of modern architecture of the west.'[297] Nilufar criticises the works accomplished by C&B as a 'spate of Islamic Revival' buildings which had neither spatial harmony nor innovation.[298] Nonetheless, comparing Nilufar's criticisms with Hicks's article which expressed multiple obstacles, it is clear that even with the effort of the British

[295] Mubassher Hussain, interview by Author, Tape Recording, July 6, 2018.
[296] *Purda* means face-covering for Muslim Women. See, Hicks, "Flats at Dacca," 421.
[297] Nilufar, "Architecture of Pakistan Time in Bangladesh since 1947 to 1971," 69.
[298] Nilufar, "Architecture of Pakistan Time in Bangladesh since 1947 to 1971," 69.

architects, the constructional history in the beginning of East Pakistan was a result of severe mismanagement from the government and the offices.



Figure 30: Gulistan Cinema Hall, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Source: Source: Archives of Architecture (Bangladesh)



Figure 31: Dhaka Improvement Trust Building (DIT), Dhaka, Bangladesh. Source: Source: Archives of Architecture (Bangladesh)



Figure 32: Supreme Court, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Source: *The Daily Star*, 10 October 2018



Figure 33: Baitul Mukarram Mosque, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Source: Archives of Architecture (Bangladesh)

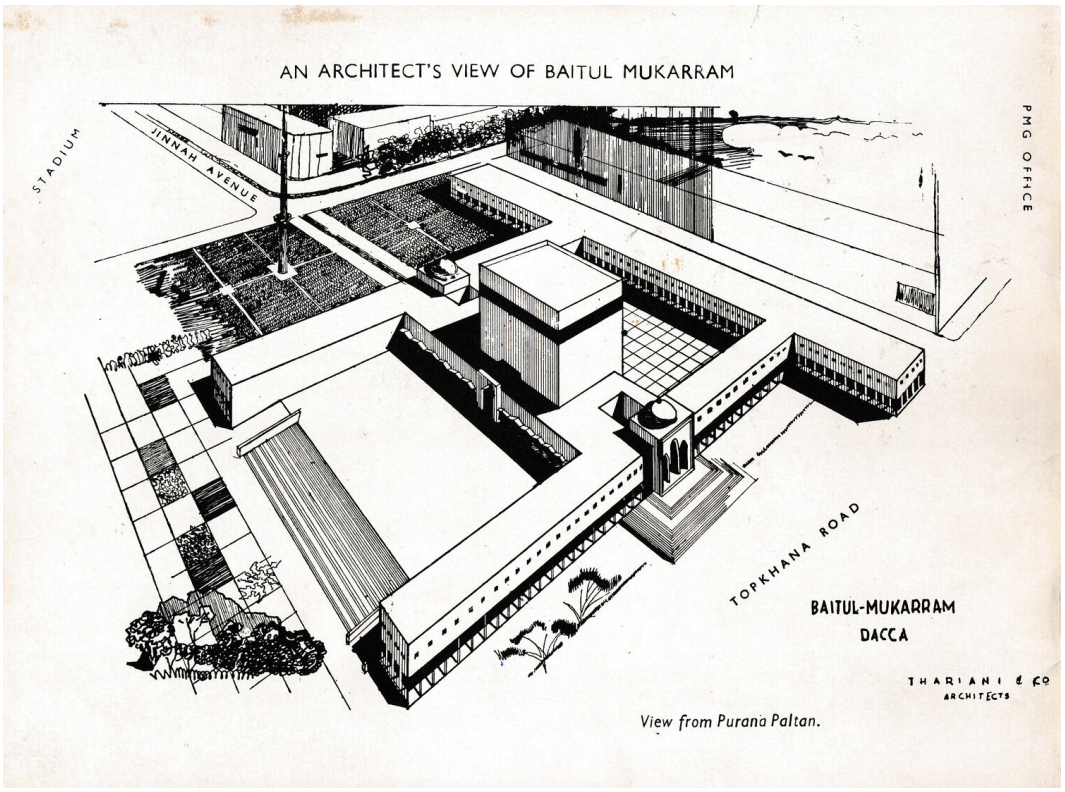


Figure 34: Axonometric Drawing of Baitul Mukurram Mosque. Source: Archives of Architecture (Bangladesh)

The development picked up momentum during the Ayub Regime and the new state of East Pakistan continued to be ornamented by the Islamic Revivalism that followed a less modern architectural vocabulary. Nilufar argues that this was an era in which buildings were 'bland, faceless, impersonalised, institutionalised and no attempt was made to relate them to the context.'[299] The Gulistan Cinema Hall, for example, demonstrated 'architectural mediocrity' in the city by flaunting flat repetitive windows with incoherent ornamentation (fig. 30).[300] The Dhaka Improvement Trust (DIT) building designed by the architectural firm of Pakistani architect Abdulhussein Thariani also failed in climatic significance despite the built form being considered as the city's landmark during this period (fig. 31). Thariani's firm was run by his son in East Pakistan

[299] Nilufar, "Architecture of Pakistan Time in Bangladesh since 1947 to 1971," 70.
[300] Nilufar, "Architecture of Pakistan Time in Bangladesh since 1947 to 1971," 70.

and was eventually commissioned with many other big projects such as the Supreme Court, Shilpakala Academy (1963) and Baitul Mukarram mosque (1960-65). Additionally, Dhaka was blooming with opportunities and many industrial projects were commissioned to the firm of Thariani by numerous non-Bengali businessmen and industrialists. Within the span between 1963 and 1969, Thariani's firm designed about thirty industries all over East Pakistan, such as Bengal Steel Works (1963, 1965), Bangladesh Oxygen (1965), Phyzer Pharmaceuticals Laboratory (1967-69, ICI (1967-69), Aero Tea factory (1967), Ordinance factory (1967-70), Alpha Tobacco (1968), Jul Ahmed Jute Mill (1968- 70) are famous. Indeed, in the last decade prior to Pakistan's independence Thariani was the busiest architectural consulting firm designing industries and multi-storied buildings in the Motijheel area. The office buildings include the BIDC building (1963-64), Amin Court (1964-65), Bawani Chamber (1963-65), Adamjee Court (1964-67) the Spenser Building (1966-67), the Head Office of Bangladesh Bank (1966-69), the Head office of Sonali Bank (1968-69), the Sadharan Bima building (1966-69) and Elaco building (1969-79). The firm also designed many other varieties of buildings including more than fifty residences.[301] Nonetheless, none of the buildings represented any specific architectural significance except for the Supreme Court and the Baitul Mukarram Mosque which was also designed by Thariani's firm. The Supreme Court was centred with an Islamic dome and expensive surface ornamentation, and the Baitul Mukarram mosque was influenced by the shape of *Kaaba Sharif* of Mecca. Both the court and the mosque demonstrated Islamic connotations and initially the general populace started to accept these designs for their newly built capital city (fig. 33, 34).

[301] Nilufar, "Architecture of Pakistan Time in Bangladesh since 1947 to 1971," 71.

These diverse projects undertaken by the aforementioned architects were some of the first Modern buildings built in Dhaka. Despite being modern in concepts in including exposed materials and plain orthogonal blocks in their design, Nilufar argues that the buildings did not really express 'a socially, culturally, politically and economically congruent and place-sensitive architecture.'[302] Most of the scholars criticised that the works of Hicks and McConnel represented a less creative and unimaginative architecture.[303] These criticisms are based on either the present situation of the structures dispersed around Dhaka or the debates conducted by the scholars. Nilufar notes, 'this phase of architecture can be marked as the reflection of the formation of Pakistan statehood.'[304] Zahiruddin, Imamuddin and Khan observe that this 'pseudo-Islamic architecture' represent a weak 'political concept of unification of two province with different cultural identities.'[305] Nonetheless, the buildings provided some sense of early postcolonial modernity which gradually established Dhaka as a capital city rather than a rural province of Pakistan.

3.2.3 The Islamic Debate for a United Pakistan

With growing political tensions, the imposition of religion in construction can be assumed as the Government of Pakistan's tool to suppress the emergence of Bengali nationalism. The attempt to re-establish the Mughal tradition after a break of two-hundred years gave rise to many challenges in defining an architectural identity. The

[302] Nilufar, "Architecture of Pakistan Time in Bangladesh since 1947 to 1971," 69.
[303] Nilufar, "Architecture of Pakistan Time in Bangladesh since 1947 to 1971," 69.
[304] Nilufar, "Architecture of Pakistan Time in Bangladesh since 1947 to 1971," 70.
[305] Zahiruddin, Imamuddin, and Khan, *Contemporary Architecture Bangladesh*, 21.

basic question was, which style was needed to follow in this region for a Bengali architectural identity? In relation to this, Kamil Khan Mumtaz's discourse on Islamic architecture in Pakistan can shed some light. Although Mumtaz's perception of the Islamic debate focusses on the architecture of West Pakistan, nonetheless, hierarchic issues of designing in both wings can be seen as similar in Pakistan's context.[306] The first issue that the East faced from West Pakistan was dominance, which reflected patronage in social, political and economic values. The second issue was the intellectual confidence which East Bengal gained from West Bengal after the partition of 1905 provided a new perspective of values such as Islamic consciousness. And the third and last issue focusses on the construction activity that was employed to build a new tradition by completely overlooking the traditional one. These issues fundamentally formed a different basis of identity for East Pakistan. One was secular, physical and materialistic; the other was religious, metaphysical and spiritual.[307] These layers cannot be separated from each other, however, they can be juxtaposed as there remains a continuous cross-fertilisation between the secular and religious aspects. Before the language and cultural confrontations between the two provinces of Pakistan commenced, the East had seemed quite consenting with the West for a nation merged with an Islamic ethos. Thus, even the most secularist designed buildings were seldom without the features that inspired the mainstream religious nation building. Therefore, these buildings can be acknowledged as the architecture of transformation that influenced Modern architects to design buildings in a secular style.

[306] Mumtaz, *Architecture in Pakistan*, 192.
[307] Mumtaz, *Architecture in Pakistan*, 192-93.

3.3 The Beginning of Resistance

Much has been said about the economic disparities and development negligence of West Pakistan over the East. Nevertheless, these brought advantages to experiment in new ways of design styles and construction methods. Therefore, in the wake of Modern Architecture, the postcolonial period in East Pakistan engendered diversity and creativity. This was initiated with Muzharul Islam, who started an honourable architectural practice amongst the natives in East Pakistan. Islam progressively enlightened architectural endeavours against all the odds which he faced from government bureaucracy, political domination and academic sterility. Many scholars acknowledge him as the 'father of Modern Architecture in the Indian subcontinent' or the 'Grand Master of Regional Modernism.'[308] Undoubtedly, Islam's architectural production engaged with climatic context and his designs indicated new ways of creating built forms through rational concepts and using local methods in construction. However, what has not been explored is if the buildings expressed the ethos of nation building during the political instability and emergence of Bangladeshi nationalism. Did Islam's approach really represent a redemption from the ongoing architectural practice? Did his works inspire other designers to implement new methods of design and construction? In order to investigate these questions, this segment will examine Islam's architectural vocabulary that creatively synthesised Modernism with Regionalism. The section will first overview Islam's academic and professional career which will provide a backdrop setting to understand his philosophies and process of

[308] Rumy and Saadullah, "The Voice of the Modern Bengali: Architect Muzharul Islam," 40; Sumantra Misra, Manjari Chakraborty, and N. R. Mandal, "Critical Regionalism in the Post-colonial Architecture of the Indian Subcontinent," *Journal of Architecture and Urbanism* 42, no. 2 (2018): 105, https://doi.org/10.3846/jau.2018.6140.

approaching architectural designs. The section will later evaluate his concepts and methods by examining his first two designs – The Fine Arts Institute and the Public Library built in the Dhaka University (1953-55).

3.3.1 The First Bangladeshi Architect

Muzharul Islam fought a lonely yet committed struggle during his architectural career for over six decades. Through his works, it is evident that he distinctly acknowledged the need for synthesising sensibilities of tradition and culture to be included in buildings. In the Bangladeshi architectural community, Islam is recognised as one of the most important figures, however, scholar's observation and scrutiny of Islam's architectural perspectives which can be divided into two different perceptions. On the one hand, one group of scholars criticise Islam as being a modernist, controversial and romantic. On the other hand, another group of scholars have praised him for his contextual approach that has promoted both humanism and individualism. Despite these criticisms and praises, the fact still remains, as Foyez, argues that Islam has created a nascent architectural culture in Bangladesh in spite of struggles against political domination and academic sterility.[309] Through establishing the architectural practice amongst the natives, Islam has always been consistent in formulating a 'Bengaliness' in architecture.[310] Islam himself stated in an interview with Ashraf that if an architect cannot interpret tradition through his designs, it can never be a progressive architecture.[311]

[309] Foyez Ullah, "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam," 8.
[310] Stanley Tigerman, *Versus, an American Architect's Alternatives* (New York: Rizzoli, 1982), 59-65.
[311] Ashraf, *An Architect in Bangladesh: Conversation with Muzharul Islam*, 13.

Islam was well aware of the political past and present during his praxis. He perceived British colonisation much as a 'cultural holocaust in the continuity of historical development' of this region.[312] Islam was not emotional about the dominance, rather he rationally and categorically attempted to portray how the culture and tradition had been ignored and neglected over the centuries. In his interviews, Islam acknowledges that Bengal has faced cultural and religious conundrums due to different periods of rulers and expresses his concerns that this issue may never create a real sense of identity from the Sultanate period till the present-day Bangladesh.[313] Furthermore, Islam was an activist and a thinker, who always expressed his concerns regarding the current architectural educational system which was modelled on Western curricula rather than having modifications for context. Perceiving the conflicting social and political dilemmas, Islam turned himself to the regional manifestation of architecture and stated,

> […] without deep roots in one's own culture and the heritage of the people it is not probably possible to sustain a creative life. In this context, the regional manifestation of architecture and other art forms is inevitable. Regionalism can only enrich the idea of world culture – without it the world becomes very drab indeed.[314]

[312] Foyez Ullah, "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam," 9.
[313] Banerji, "A Recent Conversation with Architect Muzharul Islam in Dhaka, Bangladesh."
[314] Muzharul Islam, Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, and Saiful Haque, "Introducing Bangladesh - a case for Regionalism," in *Participants' Paper of 2nd Regional Seminar on Architecure and the Role of Architects in Southern Asia*, ed. Iftekhar Khan et al. (Dhaka: The Aga Khan Award for Architecture, 1985), 9-10.

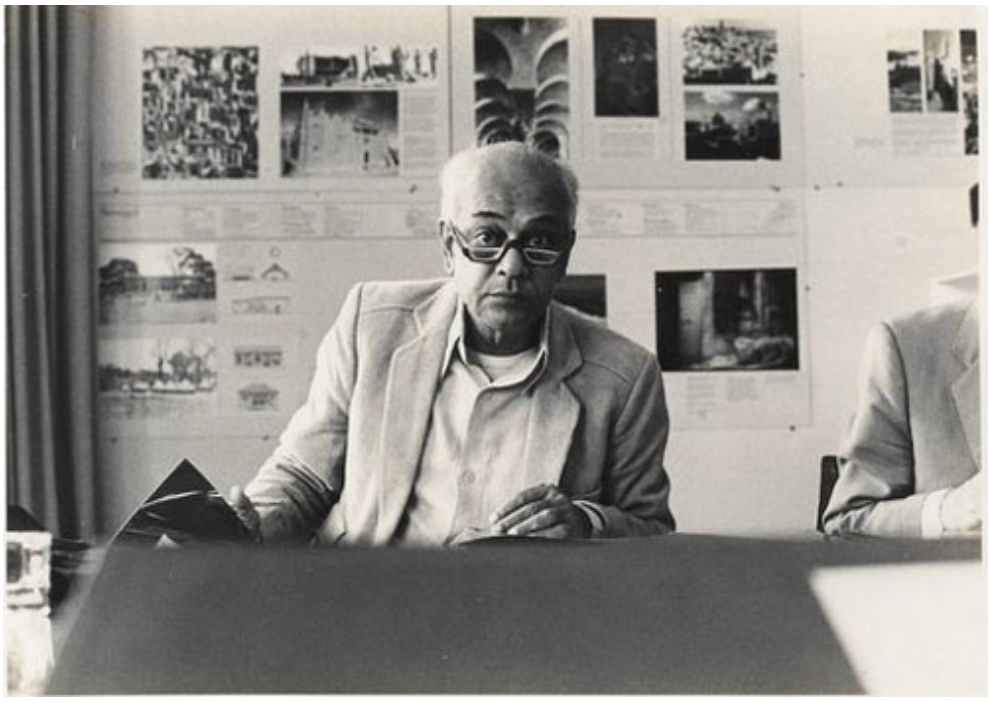


Figure 35: Muzharul Islam (1923-2012). Source: Zainab F. Ali, and Fuad H. Mallick, eds. *Muzharul Islam Architect*, (Dhaka: BRAC University Press, 2011).

Muzharul Islam was born on the 25th of December 1923 in a village called Shundorpur in the Murshidabad district of West Bengal (fig. 35).[315] His father was a professor of mathematics who worked throughout his career in different government colleges – which meant that Islam's childhood and school life were mostly spent both in West and East Bengal. An important part of his childhood memories centred around the *Jamindarbari* (the landlord's bungalow) of his maternal grandparents in which he 'used to circle the bungalow and its courtyard, examining the thick walls, deep-set windows and wooden stairs.' It can be assumed that from childhood he developed his interests for buildings and materiality. Overall, it can be said that his family belonged to the financially solvent and elite class of educated Bengalis. Islam completed his middle and high school studies in the Rajshahi district of East Bengal in 1932 and returned to

[315] Morshed, "Modernism as Postnationalist Politics: Muzharul Islam's Faculty of Fine Arts (1953–56)," 532-49.

West Bengal in 1940 where he received his Bachelor of Science degree (1942). Afterwards, he was awarded his Bachelor of Civil Engineering degree from Bengal Engineering College within Calcutta University in 1946. In 1950, he received his Bachelor of Architecture degree from Oregon University in the USA with the scholarship granted under Post-War development. His journey to pursue a career in architecture in the USA provided him with exposure to the International Style and Modernism. For his advancement in the civil engineering degree, Islam completed his architectural degree in two years. Upon returning in 1952, he began his early architectural career in C&B under Ronald McConnel in East Pakistan. Around this time Islam designed two of his most acknowledged buildings, the Fine Arts Institute and the Public Library at Dhaka University (1953-54).

After his completion of the constructions of the Fine Arts Institute and Public Library of Dhaka, Islam received a British Council scholarship in 1956 to study tropical architecture at the Architectural Association (AA) in London. Afterwards, between 1958 and 1964, he was appointed as a senior architect in the government of East Pakistan. In 1961, Islam completed his master's degree at Yale University under the mentorship of Paul Rudolph. Thereafter, he was awarded with the Rockefeller Fellowship for studying the state of Contemporary Architecture in Europe and returned to his home country in 1962 to continue his architectural practice in the government office. Islam was amongst the first generation of native-born architects as well as being the first to open a private architectural practice. Established in 1964, his architectural firm was known as *Vastukalabid* which had a studio atmosphere as Ashraf described in which 'the office was the springboard for passionate movements by committed

young architects.'[316] Islam was the President of the Institute of Architects, firstly in Pakistan (1967-69), and then twice more in Bangladesh (1972-75 and 1975-80). Additionally, he was a member of the first Master Jury for the Aga Khan Award for Architecture in 1980.[317]

3.3.2 Searching for Bengali Identity through Architecture

After Oregon, Islam had returned to a home immersed in Bengali agitation for political and economic emancipation. Given his own upbringing in West Bengal, Islam developed an active fascination for politics and found himself concerned with the problematic question of Bengali soul-searching. Islam's academic training at Oregon was mainly based on modern-classical architectural education which is copiously demonstrated in his early practice. Upon returning to Dhaka as a freshly graduated architect, Islam's major ideas stemmed from the International Style practiced in the West. Although his first two projects of the Fine Arts Institute and Public Library demonstrate the contemporary Western trends, nonetheless, these designs were also contextually appropriate with climate-friendly features and usage of materials resulting in an explicit shift in the architecture of East Pakistan.

316 Ashraf, "Muzharul Islam, Kahn and Architecture in Bangladesh," 55-63.
317 Ashraf and Belluardo, *An Architecture of Independence: The Making of Modern South Asia: Charles Correa, Balkrishna Doshi, Muzharul Islam, Achyut Kanvinde*, 57.

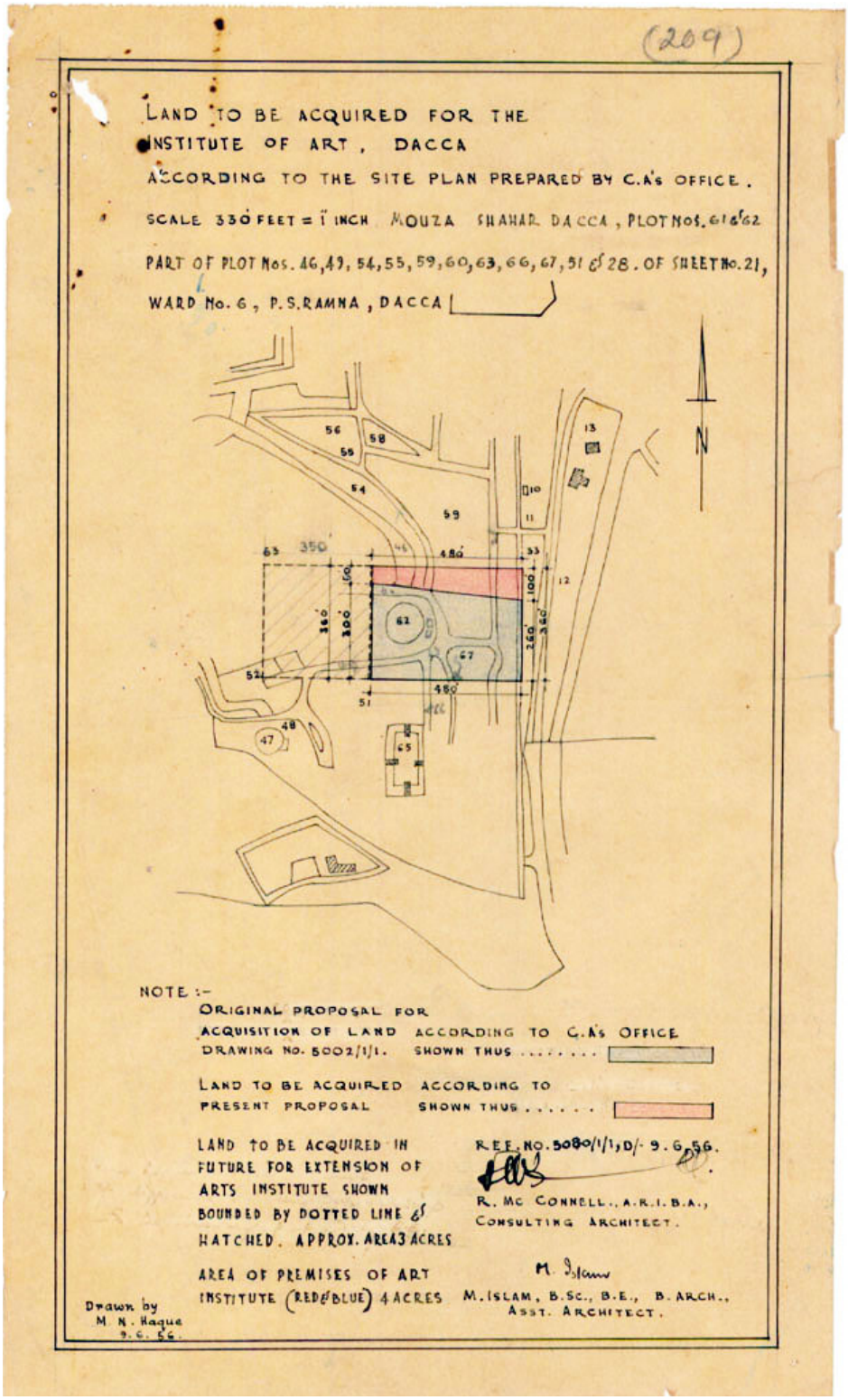


Figure 36: Site Allocation for the Fine Arts Institute. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive

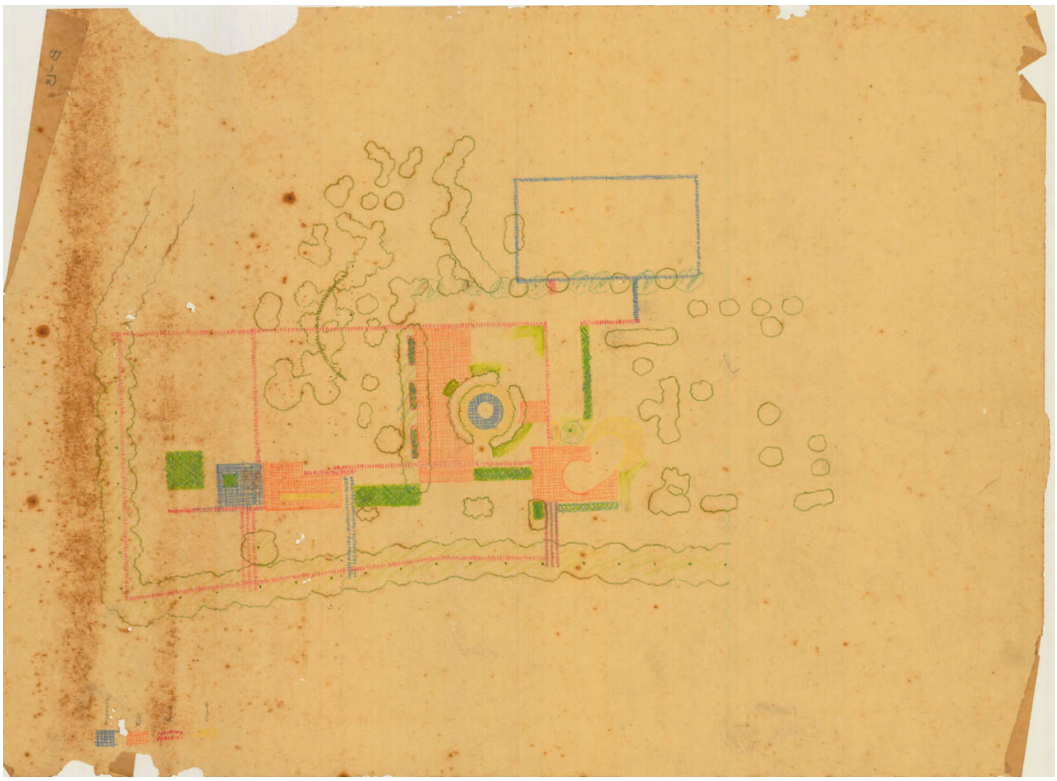


Figure 37: Muzharul Islam's Site Sketch for the Fine Arts Institute. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive

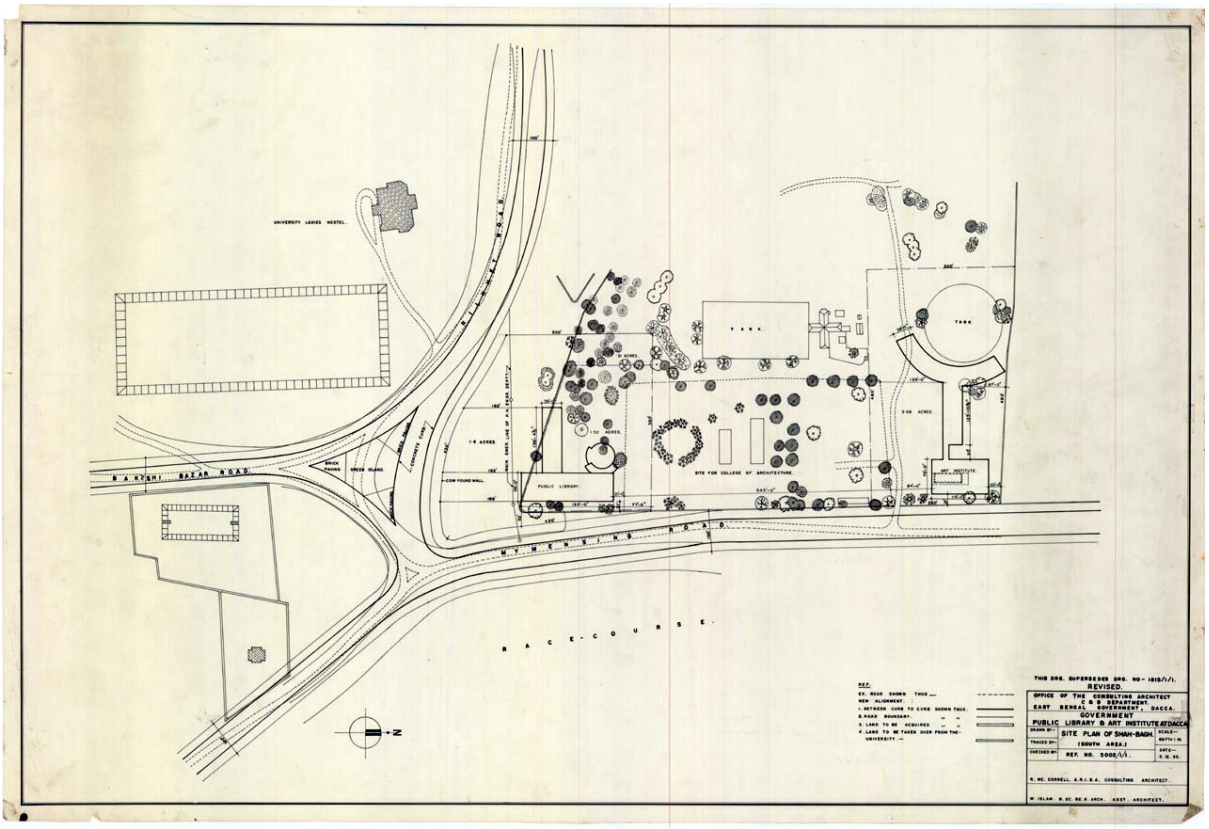


Figure 38: Site Plan, Fine Arts Institute (1952-1953), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive

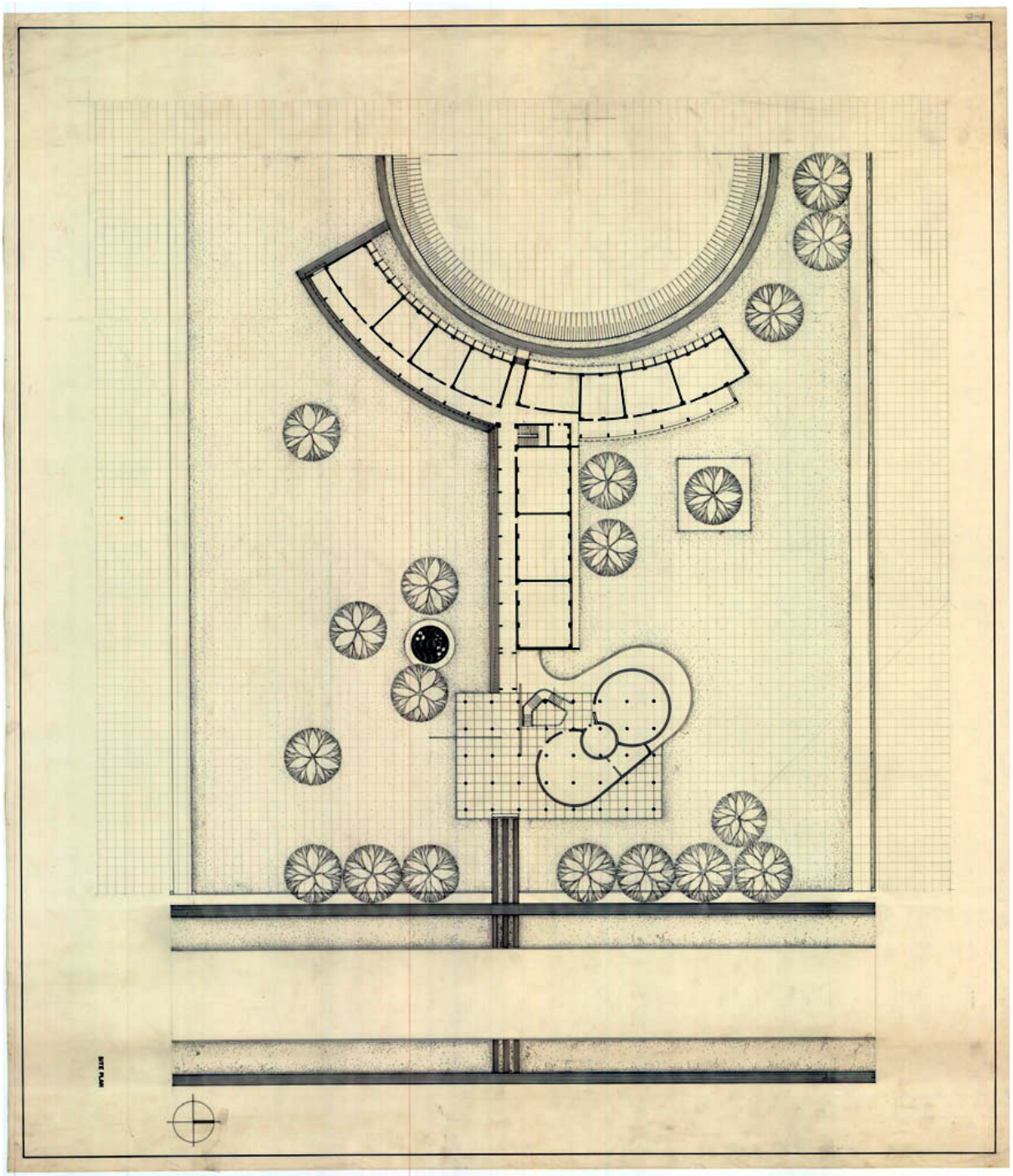


Figure 39: Plan, Fine Arts Institute (1952-1953), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive



Figure 40: Fine Arts Institute (1952-1953), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive



Figure 41: Courtyard of the Fine Arts Institute (1952-1953), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive

Islam was given responsibility to design the Fine Arts Institute on the very first day he joined the architectural department at C&B.[318] Separation from West Bengal left the East with a void in the sectors of the arts and literature. In the wake of Partition, to initiate a formal education in the arts with the involvement of acclaimed Bengali artist Zainul Abedin (1914-76), the government allotted a small plot of land in the Shahbagh area near Dhaka University and gave the design responsibility to C&B (fig. 36).[319] Then chief architect of the C&B, McConnel recruited Islam to design the building collaborating with Abedin and another famous artist Quamrul Hassan. The site was in the surroundings of Curzon Hall (1904-08) marking the colonial footprint and Hicks and McConnel's Holy Family Hospital (1950) marking initial modern Islamic architecture. Haque writes,

> The area allotted for the project was a very beautiful, wooded tract of land with a large open *maidan* (field) on the east, which was used as a horse-racing course. The access road to the site is one of the main roads of central Dhaka connecting the University campus with the city. It also physically separates the college site from the racing-course *maidan*.[320]

Islam started to work on the design concept for the Faculty from June to December 1953 and some of the foundation stones were laid for construction in the beginning of 1954. In order to adopt ecologically-friendly surroundings, Islam decided to keep the existing trees on the site and placed the building by the existing vegetation in such a

---

[318] Shamsul Wares, interview by Author, Tape Recording, May 24, 2018.
[319] Morshed, "Modernism as Postnationalist Politics: Muzharul Islam's Faculty of Fine Arts (1953–56)," 544.
[320] Saiful Haque, "Towards a Regional Identity: the Evolution of Contemporary Architecture in Bangladesh," *Architecture+Design* iv, no. 4 (May-June 1988).

way that would exclude the busy city environment and recall the rurality of Bengal. The entrance of the building was radical echoing freedom in contrast to the highly secured access to typical East Pakistani institutional buildings. Upon entering, the front block consisted of a curvilinear gallery on the ground floor and atop is the administrative offices. From the gallery space overlooking the courtyard, a free-standing staircase gently spirals upward to the faculty offices and common rooms (fig. 42). The rear block of classrooms is adjacent in a linear block stretched to the arc-shaped craft rooms (fig. 39).



Figure 42: Free-flowing Staircase of the Fine Arts Institute (1952-1953), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive

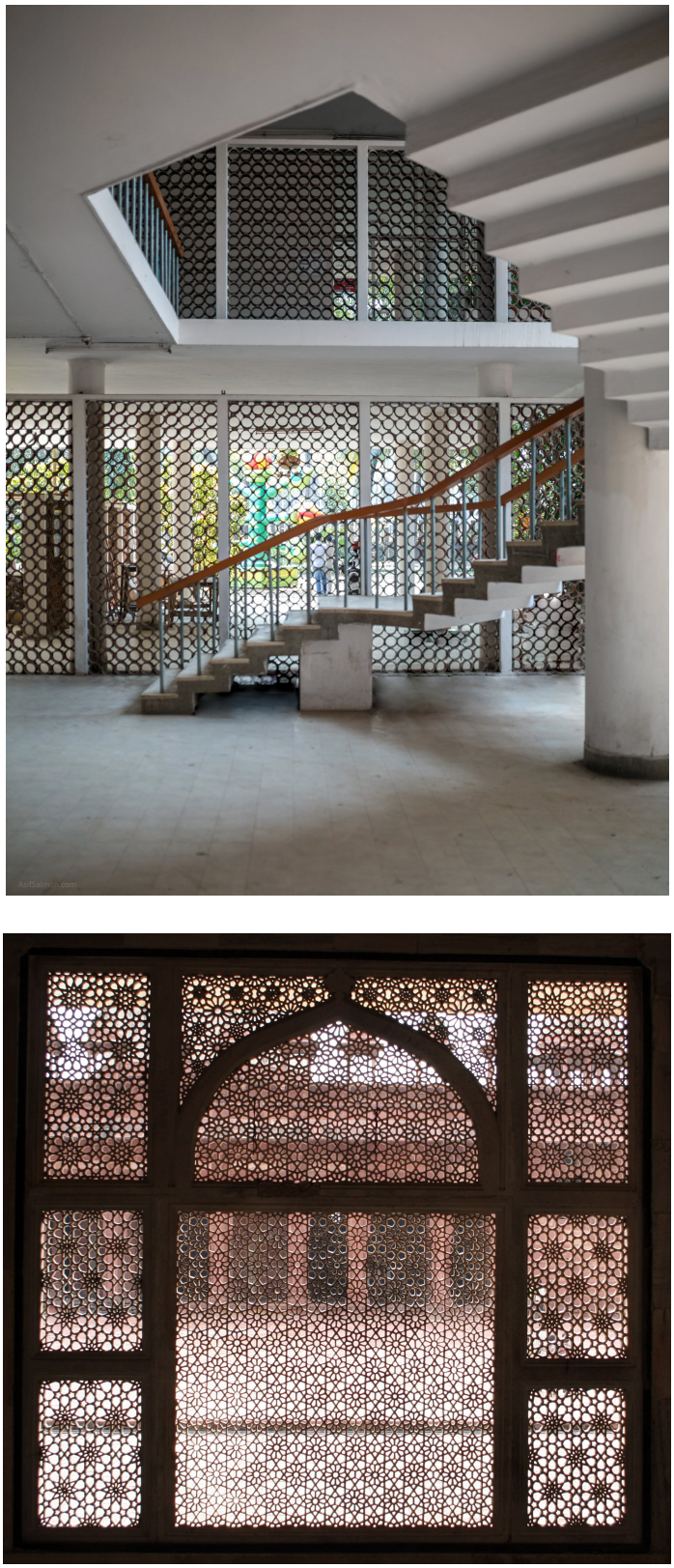


Figure 43: Comparison between Jali Treatment of the Fine Arts Institute and the Tomb of Salim Chishti, Fatehpur Sikri, Agra, India. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive, Artstor.

Although the front block of administrative offices stands on round columns similar to the Corbusian *pilotis*, nonetheless, it was amalgamated with flexibility and softness by using curvilinear walls enclosing the gallery. The upper balcony adjacent to the administrative offices is arranged with two sleek flat slabs connected by vertical wooden louvers representing a 'tropical *piano nobile* overlooking the busy streets to the east and green space' on the other side (fig. 40, 44).[321] Using the reinforced concrete columns to support the slabs was a pioneering move in the history of the construction industry of East Pakistan. Morshed observes that unlike Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye, the elevated open balcony – a ribbon windowed white-box and the *pilotis* of the Fine Arts Institute are a 'modern abstraction of a Mughal pavilion (fig. 45).'[322] The rear blocks of classrooms and craft rooms are structured with load-bearing walls. Setting the classrooms and craft rooms within the linear and curved shape and facing the corridors to the west was a strategy for cross-ventilation and seeking sunlight from the north. The curved wing was designed parallel with the existing circular pond of seventy-five-foot radius, reminiscing the *pukur* (pond) around which the rural settlements of Bengal are situated (fig. 46, 47).

[321] Morshed, "Modernism as Postnationalist Politics: Muzharul Islam's Faculty of Fine Arts (1953–56)," 535.
[322] Morshed, "Modernism as Postnationalist Politics: Muzharul Islam's Faculty of Fine Arts (1953–56)," 535.



Figure 44: Wooden Louvre of the First Floor, Fine Arts Institute (1952-1953), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive





Figure 45: Comparison of Pavilions between the Fine Arts Institute and Fatehpur Sikri, Agra, India. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive, Artstor.

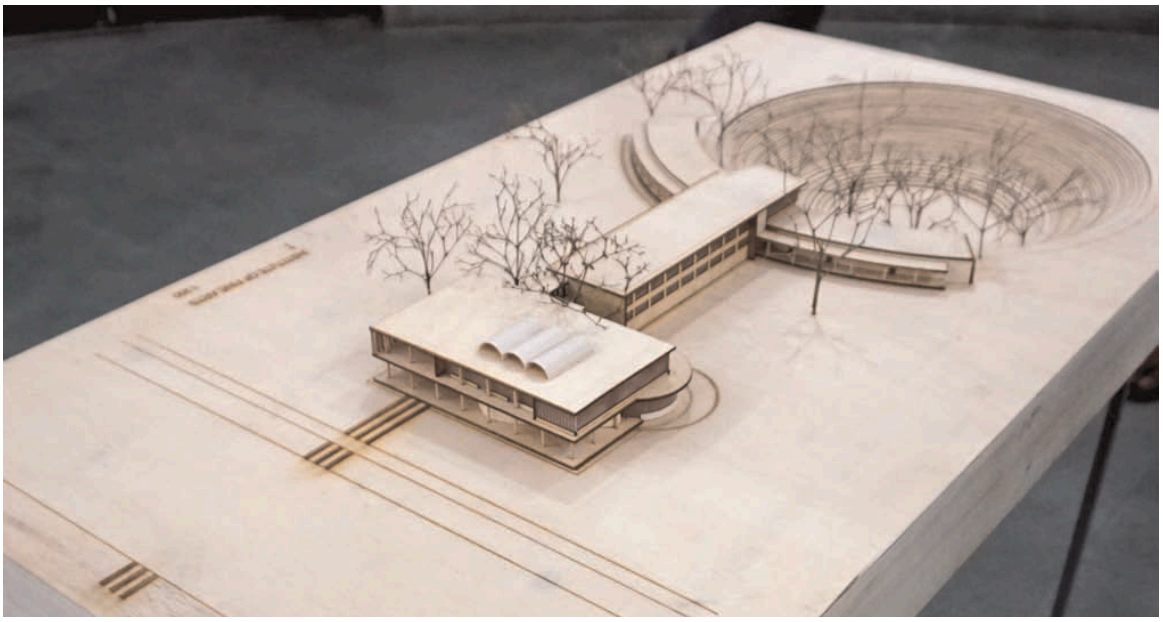


Figure 46: Model Showing the Existing Waterbody at the Fine Arts Institute (1952-1953), Muzharul Islam. Source: Adnan Morshed, “Modernism as Postnationalist Politics: Muzharul Islam's Faculty of Fine Arts (1953–56),” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 76, no. 4 (2017): 532-49.



Figure 47: Image of the Pond recalling the existing Waterbody of the Fine Arts Institute (1952-1953), Muzharul Islam. Source: Artstor, Sanjana Islam

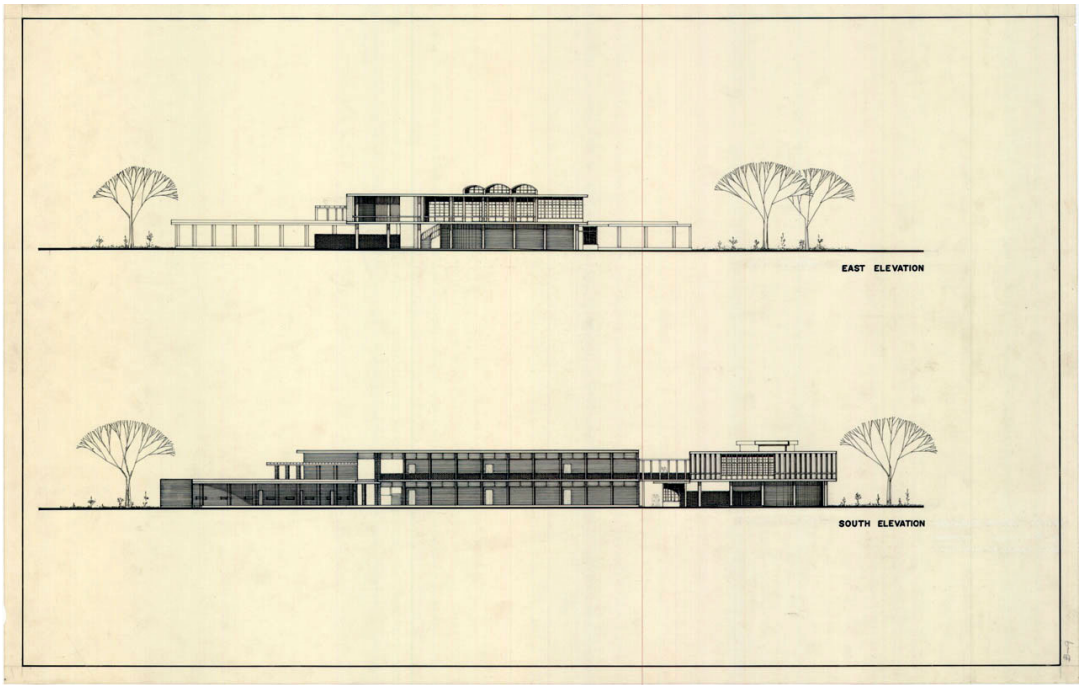


Figure 48: Elevation, Fine Arts Institute (1952-1953), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive

The front and rear blocks demonstrate rhythmic contrast through their plan (fig. 39). On the one hand, the front block is a free plan, on the other, the rear block is a circular plan. The contrast created by Islam hints at 'the genesis of a new vocabulary of his own' which was conceived from a concern for traditional values nevertheless delivered as a modern expression.[323] The fluid relationship of indoor and outdoor is defined by the exposed bricks of the facades and white-coloured walls that provide an honesty to the materials and an ambience in which to study the arts. Islam positioned his edifice so as to be surrounded by and local landscape elements reminiscent of Corbusier's concept of 'building in the park.'[324] Additionally, the combination of a rectangular plinth

[323] Foyez Ullah, "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam," 23.
[324] Morshed, "Modernism as Postnationalist Politics: Muzharul Islam's Faculty of Fine Arts (1953–56)," 539.

and curvilinear mass provide ‘a fluid gateway to an oasis-like urban complex’ – a rare scenario in the populous city of Dhaka (fig. 48).[325]

Islam correspondingly designed the Public Library of Dhaka University around the same time which is situated within walking distance of the Fine Arts Institute. The Public Library was distinctly organised according to a Corbusian model with a cubic massing completed with ramps, *brise soleil* and white-coloured facades. Ashraf suggests that this building is one of the great examples for ‘renaissance in contemporary architecture’ for East Pakistan.[326] The dominant features in the Public Library are the flat-roofed rectangular volumes elevated with *pilotis*, masses with simpler arrangement and free-flowing spaces (fig. 49). With brick-louvered openings, concrete frames and shell roofs, the western block of the library was designed in contrast to the Corbusian genre of the main block (fig. 50). Foyez argues that this contrasting element recalls the dramatic juxtaposition of two projects designed by Corbusier – Maison Jaoul in Neuilly-sur-Seine and Petite Maison de Weekend (Villa Felix) (fig. 52, 53).[327] Furthermore, the west block’s elevation also resembles the facades of Maison Jaoul. It can be speculated that these two projects of Corbusier may have influenced Islam, however, the material treatment of brick walls supporting concrete lintels and brick and concrete vaults reflected Islam’s own ‘intrinsic value for materials’ and own choice of ventilation and structural system (fig. 51).[328]

---

[325] Morshed, "Modernism as Postnationalist Politics: Muzharul Islam's Faculty of Fine Arts (1953–56)," 536.
[326] Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, interview by Author, Tape Recording, July 3, 2018.
[327] Foyez Ullah, "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam," 20.
[328] Foyez Ullah, "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam," 21.

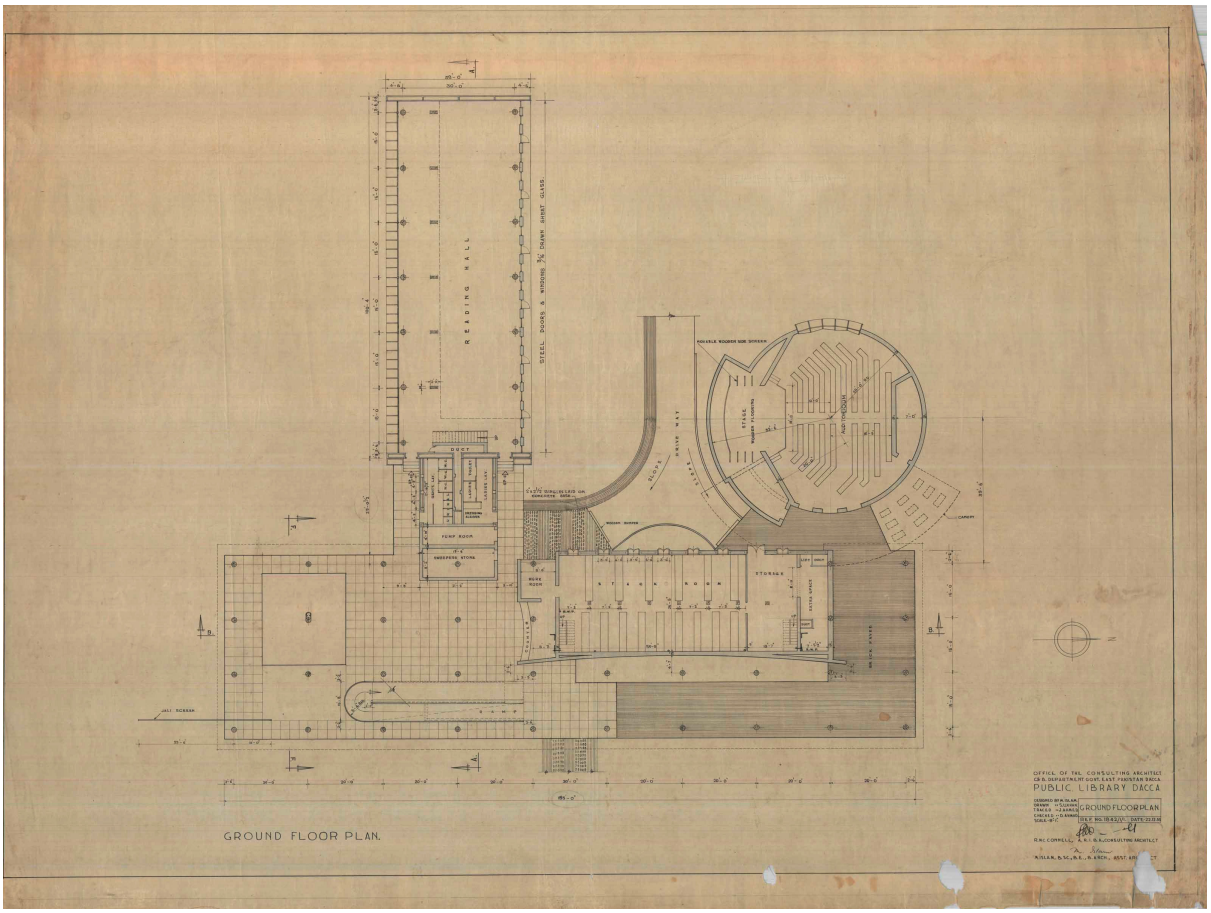


Figure 49: Ground Floor Plan, Public Library (1952-53), Muzhural Islam. Source: Nurur. R. Khan

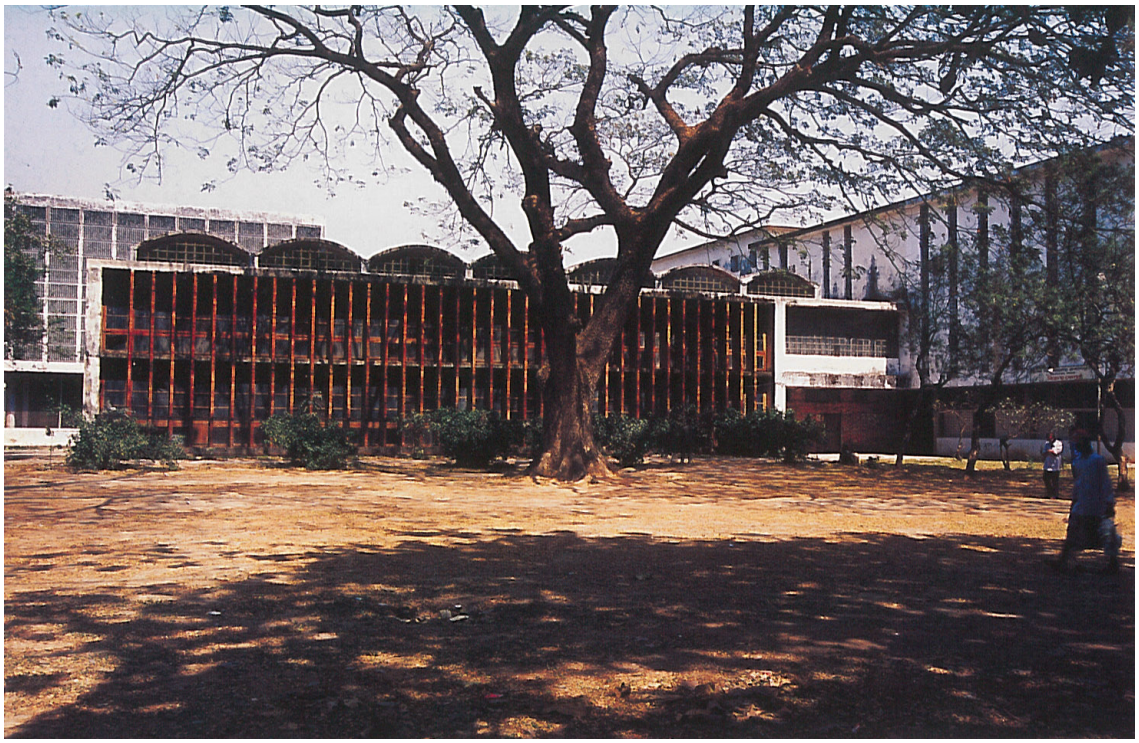


Figure 50: Public Library (1952-53), Muzhural Islam. Source: Zainab F. Ali, and Fuad H. Mallick, eds. *Muzharul Islam Architect*, (Dhaka: BRAC University Press, 2011).

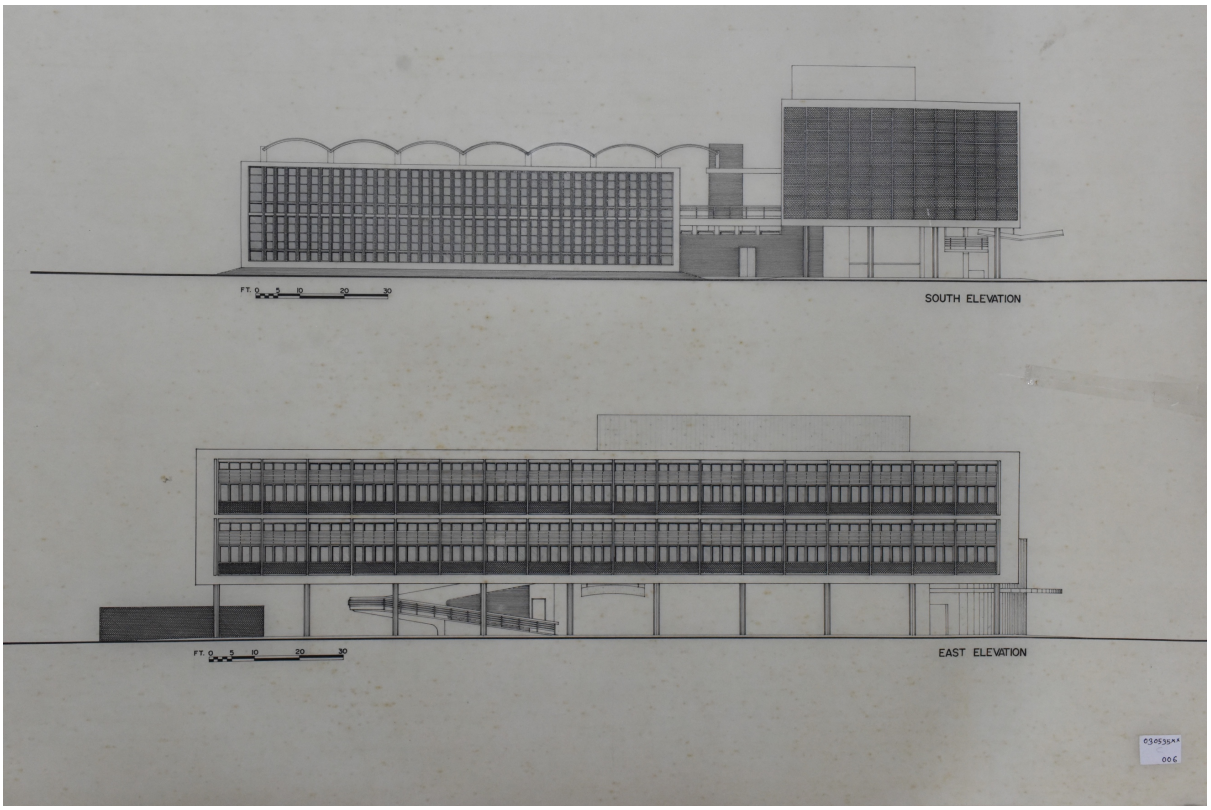


Figure 51: Elevation, Public Library (1952-53), Muzhural Islam. Source:Nurur R. Khan


Figure 52: Maison Jaoul's section drawing by Le Corbusier showing the interior, 16 April 1952. Source: Artstor.



Figure 53: Petite Maison de Weekend's Axonometric Drawings showing the curved roof. Source: Fondation Corbusier Archive.

With the Eurocentric tendency and careful attention to the environment, Islam's Fine Arts Institute and Public Library 'cross-pollinates a humanising, modernist architectural language with conscious considerations of climatic needs and local building materials.'[329] Islam's design principle demonstrates 'a concern for exploration of both the aesthetic possibilities of indigenous building materials and for means to ensure protection from the climate.'[330] In South Asian Modern architectural literature, the Fine Arts Institute is recognised as 'the harbinger of Bengali modernism' that synthesised 'modern architectural vocabulary with climate-responsive and site-conscious' programmes of design.[331] Morshed argues that the building brings art, context and architectural 'elements into a self-critical but mutually beneficial dialogue.'[332] At first

[329] Morshed, "Modernism as Postnationalist Politics: Muzharul Islam's Faculty of Fine Arts (1953–56)," 535.
[330] Foyez Ullah, "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam," 23; Haque, "Towards a Regional Identity: the Evolution of Contemporary Architecture in Bangladesh."
[331] Foyez Ullah, "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam," 532.
[332] Foyez Ullah, "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam," 533.

the Fine Arts Institute and the Public Library represent an image of the International Style with dignified attention to the architectural elements of Bengal. The modernist minimalism of these two projects rejected all ornamental references to the Muslim consciousness of postcolonial Pakistan and demonstrated a sharp critique of Islam's politicised philosophy. Thus, the designs indicated 'a radical break from the country's prevailing architectural language' for public buildings.[333] The modernism of the institute and the library express the dual commitment of Islam to a secular Bengali identity and universal humanity.

Was Islam searching for Bengali roots through his architectural endeavours? Undoubtedly, yes. Islam's search for a unique architectural identity for Bengal was initiated through these two projects during the complex era of the Language Movement in 1952. However, did Islam really achieve his motive of finding an architectural vocabulary that resisted the great visions of Islamic Pakistan? Or was Islam engaging himself in the architectural dialogue of popular Modernism with a passion for his homeland? These questions can be explored by analysing Islam's later projects in his second phase of architectural practice in the next section.

3.4 The Construction of Bengali Identity

In an interview with one of the leading Bangladeshi architects, namely Ehsan Khan, stated that Islam's architectural career can be evaluated in three phases.[334] In his master's thesis, Foyez also investigated Islam's career in three distinctive periods.[335]

[333] Foyez Ullah, "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam," 533.
[334] Ehsan Khan, interview by Author, Tape Recording, July 2, 2018.
[335] Foyez Ullah, "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam," 11.

The first phase has been discussed in the previous segment and comprised Islam's first two designs after completing his Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Oregon between 1952 and 1954. The most successful time in Islam's career was the second phase between 1963 and 1971 in which he returned from pursuing his higher studies (from the AA School of Architecture and Yale University) and constructed and completed his major projects amidst the ongoing crucial, political period of uncertainty and raging civil war. Islam himself characterised the second phase as 'interesting years' as he completed his prominent designs in this period. Furthermore, Dhaka was changing due to political outrages and as an activist, Islam participated in intense discussions during various meetings for resistance.[336] The third and last phase of Islam's career received less recognition and accreditation and began after the independence of Bangladesh in 1971 continuing till his demise in 2012. He repeatedly rejected projects and provided incomplete designs. Although during this period, he designed the Housing for Jaipurhat Limestone and Cement Factory and the National Library and Archives (both between 1980 and 1984) nevertheless, this phase led him to isolation resulting in almost end of his career.

This thesis examines architectural buildings of East Pakistan which were built between 1947 and 1971. Therefore, Islam's second phase of architectural career will be investigated in this section. In this phase, Islam not only accomplished various projects, but this was also an era in which he engaged himself professionally with three prominent American architects, namely Louis I. Kahn, Paul Rudolf and Stanley

[336] This is stated by Islam in an interview conducted by Foyez for his master's dissertation. See, Foyez Ullah, "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam," 13.

Tigerman who designed some of the most important buildings in Bangladesh. The surrounding international atmosphere influenced Islam in many ways. As a consequence, Islam's designs shifted in a more international direction, however, his own architectural expression with Bengali characteristics remained constant which was a 'distinct departure from accepted norms.'[337] Islam experimented with materials, construction and architectural elements such as planes, mass, geometry, volume and shape in this phase all of which finally presented a notable and definitive statement contributing to the architecture of Bangladesh. I will study selected buildings from Islam's second career phase in order to understand the transitions in his design concepts and how these related to the broader analysis of Bengali Modernism and Bangladeshi nationalism.

3.4.1 Western Influences and 'Bengaliness'

Upon returning from abroad after completing his Yale Master's degree, Islam's early projects such as the Bangladesh Council for Scientific and Industrial Research Laboratories (BCSIR) (1963-65), the National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA) (1964) and his own residence (1969) reflected the influence of certain Corbusian and Rudolphian elements. These inspirations manifest the maturity of his design approach through his recent exposure to the Modern Architecture of the West. The development of a scientific and industrial research centre was high on the agenda of the Pakistani Government which led to the commissioning of several laboratory buildings for the Council for Scientific and Research (CSIR) all over the country.[338] Islam was appointed

[337] Foyez Ullah, "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam," 13.
[338] Ali and Mallick, *Muzharul Islam Architect*, 64.

to design one of these major laboratories in Dhaka which was later renamed as the Bangladesh Council for Scientific and Industrial Research Laboratories (BCSIR) (fig. 55). The design was a four-storied rectangular form hollowed by an internal courtyard and laid out with grass and plants which echoed the traditional orientation of Bengal houses with *uthan* (courtyard). (fig. 54)[339] The problem of ventilation was carefully solved by designing *verandahs* facing the internal courtyard. Also, the building's orientation ensured that the longer sides faced a north-south direction for cross-ventilation from any prevailing breeze. The east-west facades above the ground floor were treated with perforated concrete that presented both a visual texture and worked as a sun break-shield. The shading elements in the BCSIR building recalled Islam's first two projects completed ten years earlier and discussed above, namely the Fine Arts Institute and the Public Library. The design also included an extensive landscape most of which was never implemented during the actual construction.[340]

The entrance of the NIPA building was designed with repetitive columns guarding the peripheral corridors (fig. 56). The ground floor was dedicated to administrative offices, the first floor was facilitated with classrooms arranged by corridors on both sides whilst the second floor consisted of larger classrooms and meeting rooms. The flat roof is extended in all directions of the building in order to protect the interior spaces from sunlight and heavy monsoons. The rectangular building was oriented in the direction of east and west in order to receive more air and minimum solar heat. Foyez argues that the climatic consideration ideas are similar to the principle of Corbusier's 'concrete

[339] *Uthan* is a courtyard in between the housing masses of Bengal rural settlements which is used as a gathering space for the dwellers.
[340] Ali and Mallick, *Muzharul Islam Architect*, 64.

parasol' in Shodhan Villa (fig. 57).[341] However, Islam blended the Corbusian influence with his own concepts such as the corridors and classrooms of first floor which acted as 'inside cantilevers' over the walkways on the ground floor.

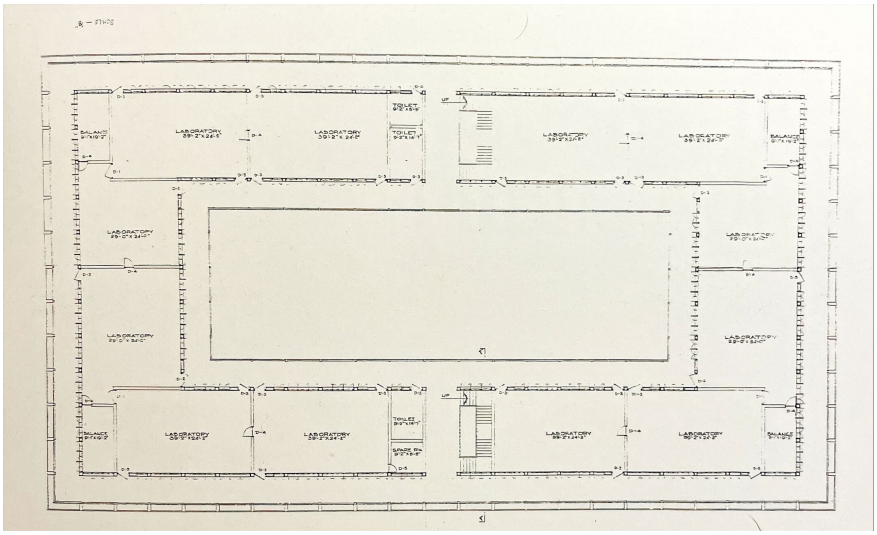


Figure 54: Plan, Bangladesh Council for Scientific and Industrial Research Laboratories, Dhaka (1963-65), Muzharul Islam. Source: Zainab F. Ali, and Fuad H. Mallick, eds. *Muzharul Islam Architect*, (Dhaka: BRAC University Press, 2011).



Figure 55: Bangladesh Council for Scientific and Industrial Research Laboratories, Dhaka (1963-65), Muzharul Islam. Source: Zainab F. Ali, and Fuad H. Mallick, eds. *Muzharul Islam Architect*, (Dhaka: BRAC University Press, 2011)

[341] Foyez Ullah, "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam," 27.



Figure 56: National Institute of Public Administration, Dhaka, Bangladesh (1964), Muzharul Islam. Source: Zainab F. Ali, and Fuad H. Mallick, eds. *Muzharul Islam Architect*, (Dhaka: BRAC University Press, 2011)



Figure 57: Shodhan Villa, Le Corbusier, Ahmedabad, India. Source: Artstor

Apart from governmental and institutional buildings, Islam designed several residences in the 1960s which explicitly expressed elements of the International Style. Most of these residences were built in the Dhanmondi and Gulshan areas of Dhaka. All these residences have either been renovated or since demolished in the present day. Unfortunately, apart from the documentation of his own residence, there is no information on the other residences. Foyez's thesis mentioned two residences designed by Islam – the Ispahani House in Gulshan and the Houses for Executive Engineers of the Roads and Highways Department. Foyez's research remains largely based on comparisons with Frank Lloyd Wright's prairie houses. However, a number of analyses exist on the design of Islam's own residence which was built in 1969.

Islam designed his own residence as a playful intervention of shade and shadow and the juxtaposition of materials (fig. 58, 59). Ashraf claims the umbrella roof of Islam's residence as recalling Corbusier's Shodhan Villa and Kanvinde's Harivallabhdas House (fig. 57, 60).[342] Moreover, Islam first proposed the idea of a 'pavilion' in a tropical climate with the design for his residence. Geoffrey Bawa did the same with the design for his own studio (1963) in Colombo which transposed common functions into a unique poetic statement organised around a promenade through a sequence of courts and enclosures protected by overhanging roofs. Curtis viewed Bawa's Studio as 'a microcosm of an island's architectural culture which fused together influences from East and West whilst touching upon the idea of architectural origins.'[343] Although Bawa commenced his architectural practice almost seven years after Islam, it seems

[342] Ashraf, "Reincarnations and Independence: The Modern Architecture of South Asia," 25.
[343] Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, 580.

both shared similar ideologies in terms of representing native traditions in a formal architectural language.

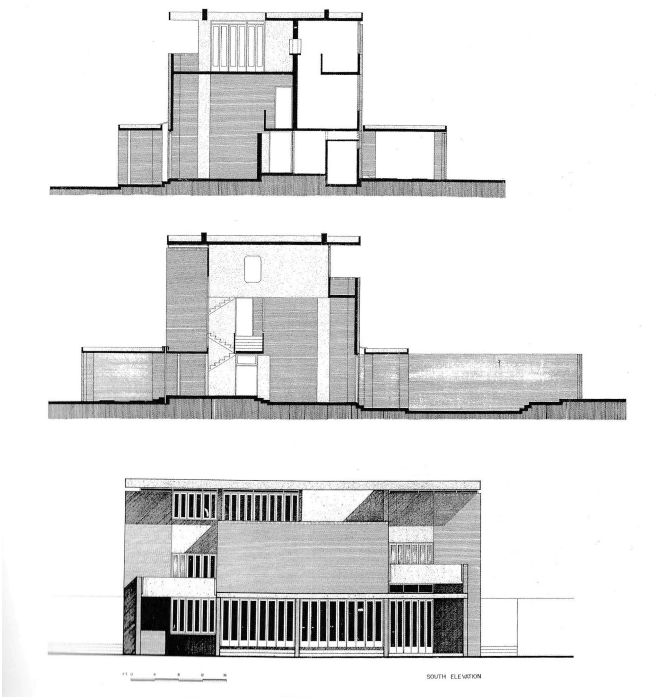


Figure 58: Architect's own Residence, Dhaka, Bangladesh (1969), Muzharul Islam. Source: Zainab F. Ali, and Fuad H. Mallick, eds. *Muzharul Islam Architect*, (Dhaka: BRAC University Press, 2011



Figure 59: 3-D model of Architect's own Residence, Dhaka, Bangladesh (1969), Muzharul Islam. Source: Archives of Architecture (Bangladesh)

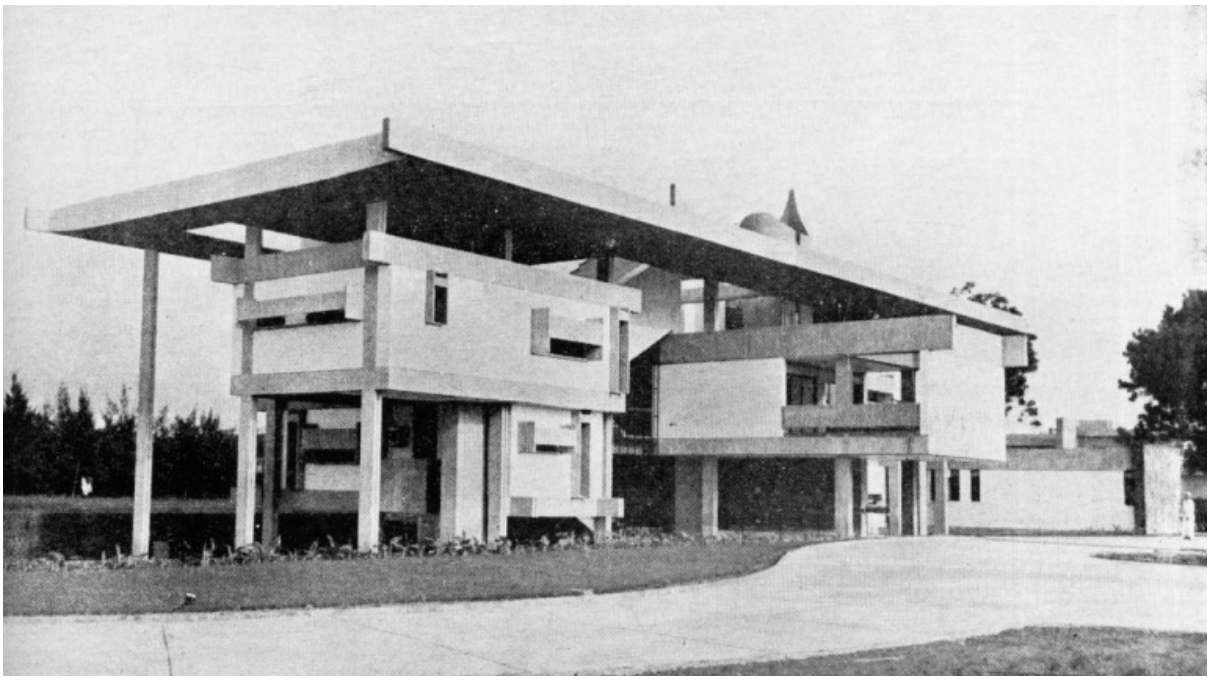


Figure 60: Harivallabhdas House, Ahmedabad, India (1962), Achyut Kanvinde. Source: Artstor

BCSIR, NIPA and the architect's own residence expressed 'the power of architecture' by demonstrating the connection and synthesisation between clear and simple forms, plain and volume in massing and solid and void spaces. These buildings demonstrate Islam's deliberate attempt to consider the local climate in the ways and means of incorporating layers of function, form and orientation in construction. The designs also included scrutinised detailing for the layout and shape of shading devices, use of natural light and the encouragement of airflow across buildings. The major goal was to create a comfortable interior environment that could minimise the mechanical cooling. These architectural vocabularies are illustrated in Islam's other projects as well such as the Housing of Class IV Employees (1962) on the Azimpur Estate, the Head Quarters Building of Agricultural Development Corporation (1965-71), EFU Building (1965-71) at Motijheel and Road Research Laboratories (1965-71). These projects in Islam's career provided him with opportunity to play a more 'expressionist' role in future Modern Architectural endeavours. In all of these buildings, Islam's

designs introduced and established a strong vocabulary reflecting particular places, people and climates with a rational reference to habitat, economy and ecology in East Pakistan. This represented a transformation in structure from Mughal influences, through phases of colonial concoctions, to the later pseudo-Islamic invasion of Pakistan's regime.

3.4.2 The Collaboration: Five Polytechnic Institutes

In light of the expansion of technical education in the country, the Second Five-Year Plan was issued to build polytechnic education facilities in different towns and cities in Pakistan. In 1966, the scheme was assisted and funded by the World Bank whilst the Directorate of Technical Education specified that each campus should have facilities and accommodation for 2,000 students.[344] The academic programme was to educate and train students who could subsequently supervise cotton, jute, gas and other technologies in the country. Five towns – Rangpur, Pabna, Barisal, Bogra and Sylhet were allocated in East Pakistan in which to construct these institutes. The massive project was commissioned to *Vastukalabid*, the private architectural firm of Muzharul Islam. Whilst studying at Yale together, Islam aspired to work together with his friend Stanley Tigerman. Therefore, Islam invited Tigerman to collaborate with him in the designs of these institutes.[345]

---

[344] Foyez Ullah, "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam," 37.
[345] The first grant from the Ford Foundation was provided in 1951 to help the government establish three polytechnic institutes and three home economics colleges both in West and East Pakistan. Eventually, after 1951, more funding was provided by the World Bank and Doxiadis Associates was assigned to design the West Pakistan Polytechnic Institutes (1958) whilst Islam received the commission for the Five Polytechnic Institutes (1966-78) which he collaborated with Tigerman. See, George F. Gant, "The Ford Foundation Program in Pakistan," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, no. 323 (1959).

The responsibilities of the architects included site surveying, preparing masterplans, designing individual buildings and supervising the projects. The preparation of masterplans took almost a year as the sites were dispersed all over East Pakistan as well as the political turbulences being at their height (fig. 61-65). The situation of outraged protests made it very difficult for Tigerman to travel from Chicago to Dhaka, something which is evident in his memoirs.[346]

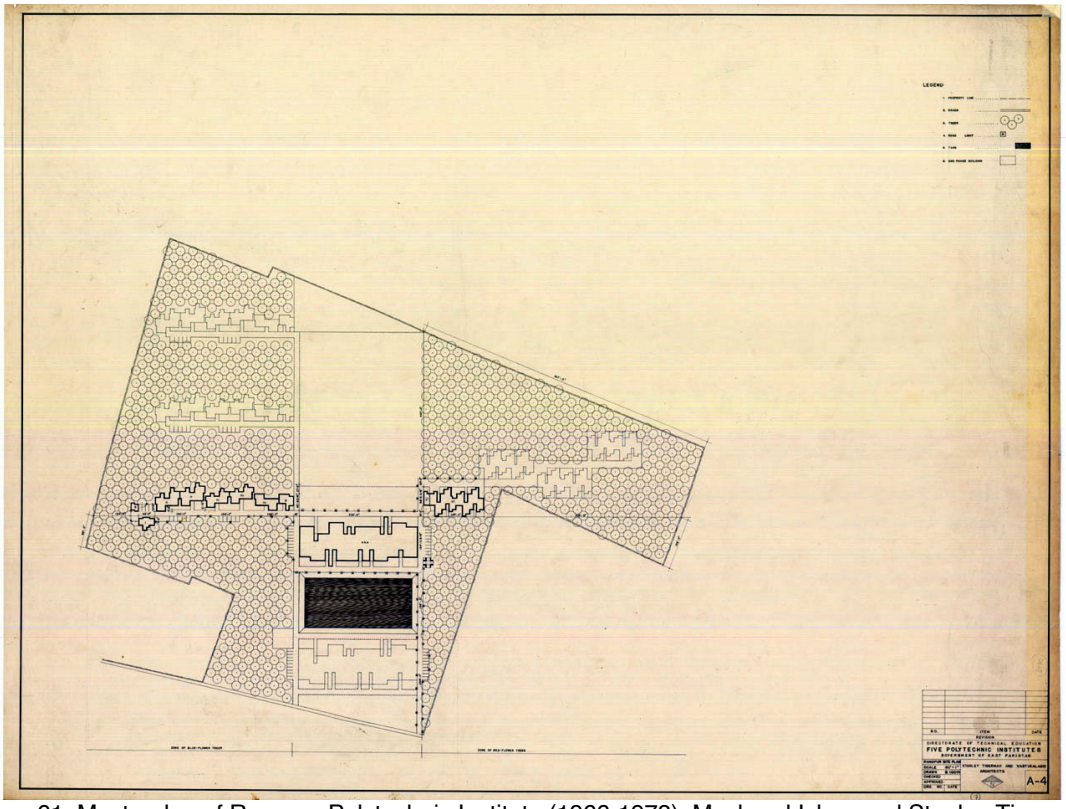


Figure 61: Masterplan of Rangpur Polytechnic Institute (1966-1978), Muzharul Islam and Stanley Tigerman.
Source: Muzharul Islam Archive

[346] Tigerman, *Versus, an American Architect's Alternatives*; Stanley Tigerman, *Designing Bridges to Burn: Architectural Memoirs* (San Francisco: ORO Editions, 2011).

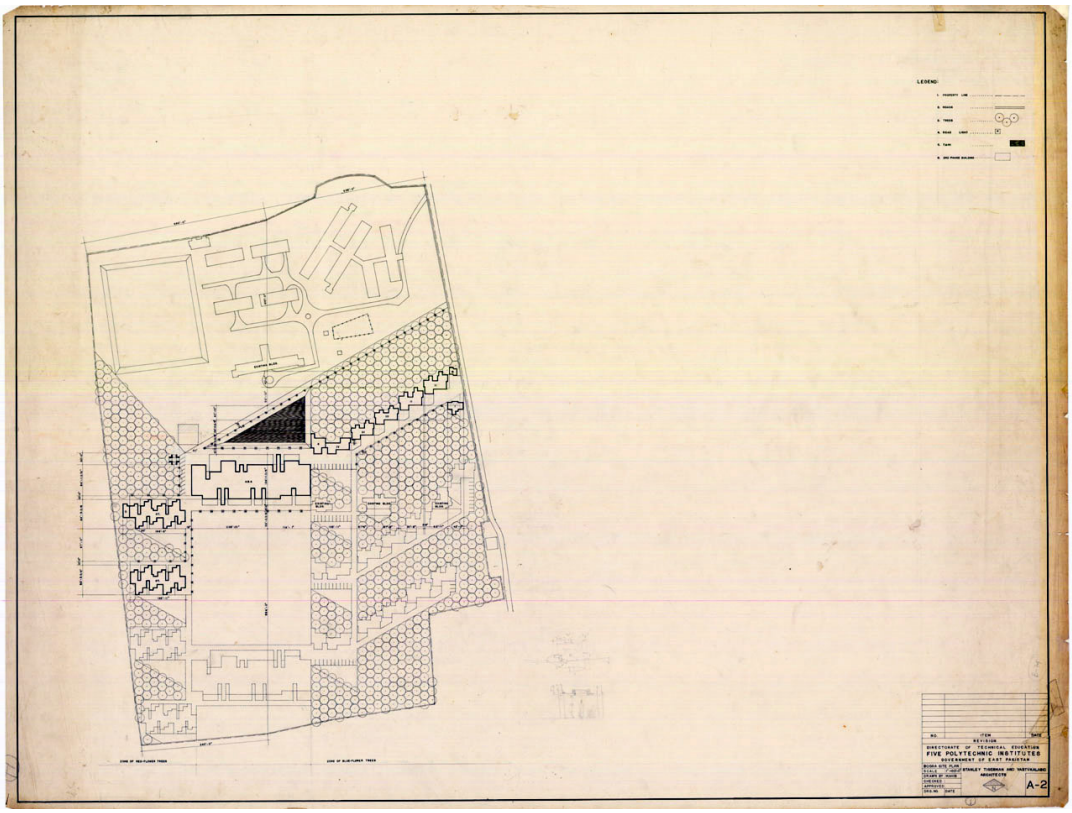


Figure 62: Masterplan of Bogra Polytechnic Institute (1966-1978), Muzharul Islam and Stanley Tigerman. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive

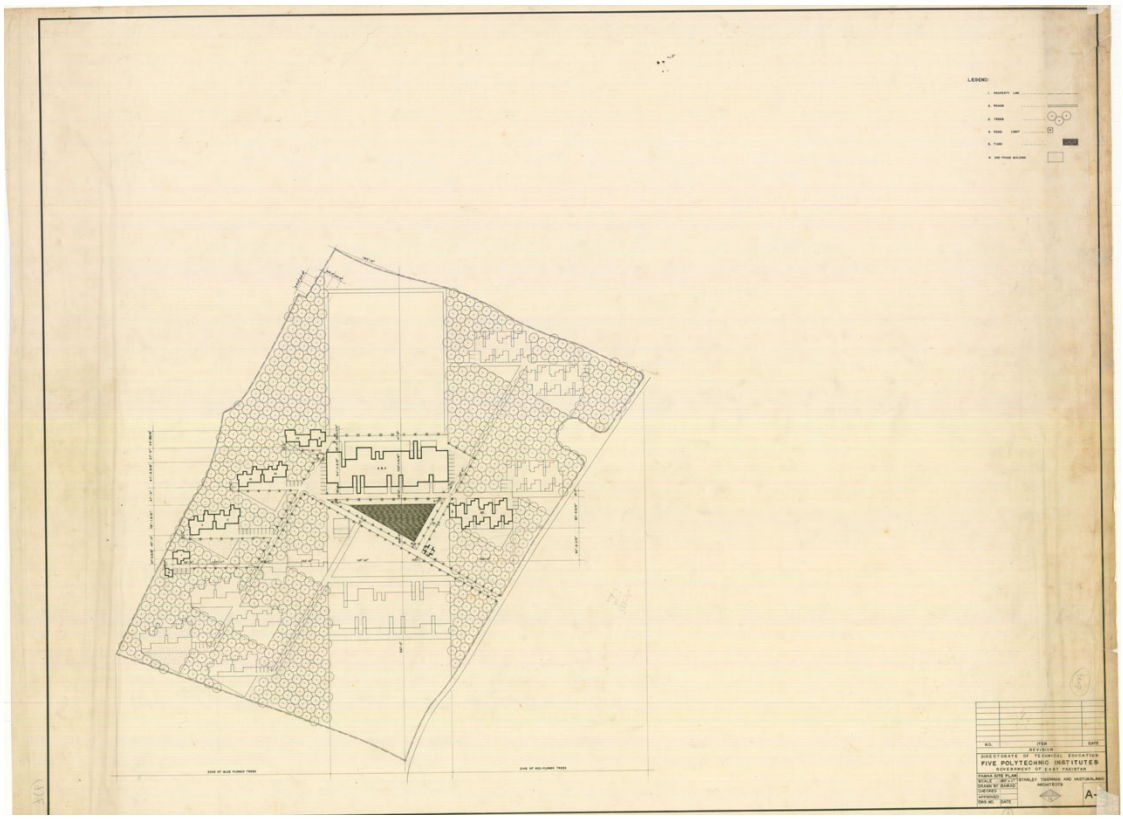


Figure 63: Masterplan of Pabna Polytechnic Institute (1966-1978), Muzharul Islam and Stanley Tigerman. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive

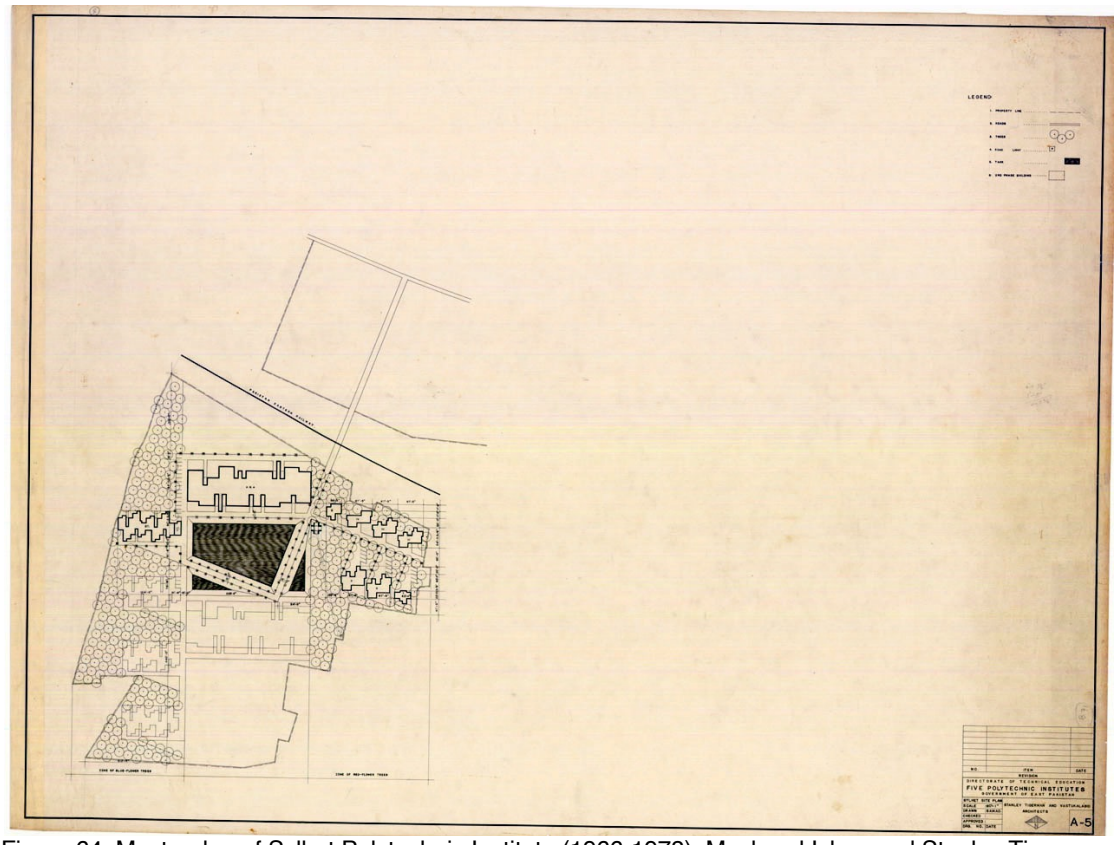


Figure 64: Masterplan of Sylhet Polytechnic Institute (1966-1978), Muzharul Islam and Stanley Tigerman.
Source: Muzharul Islam Archive

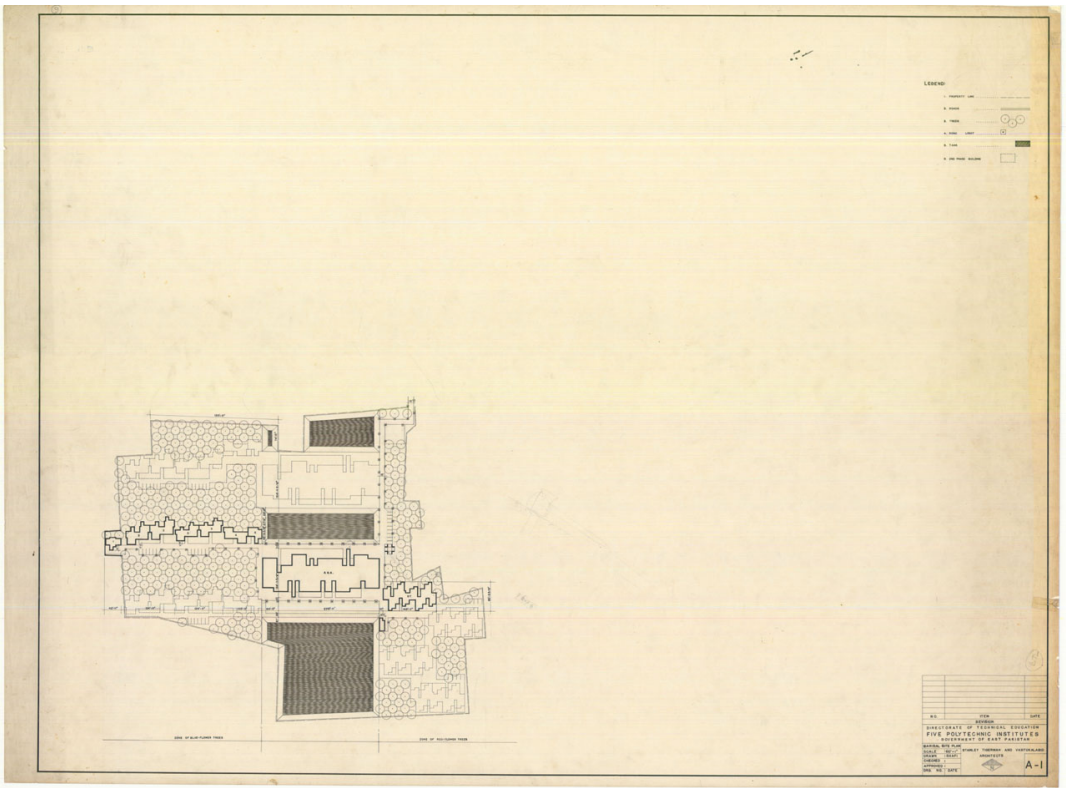


Figure 65: Masterplan of Barisal Polytechnic Institute (1966-1978), Muzharul Islam and Stanley Tigerman.
Source: Muzharul Islam Archive

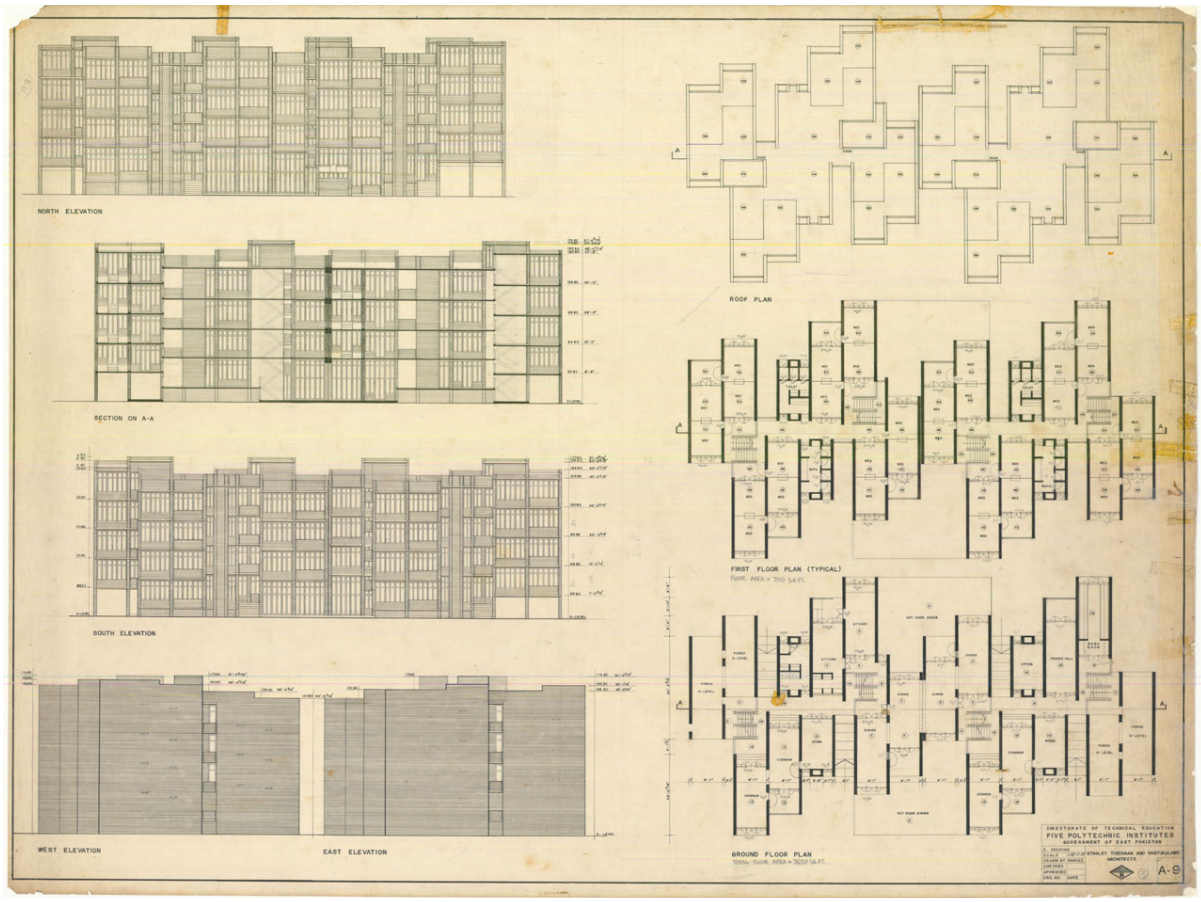


Figure 66: Elevation and Plan of the Main Building, Prototype for Five Polytechnic Institutes (1966-1978), Muzharul Islam and Stanley Tigerman. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive

The form was decided to be of simple structure with parallel brick walls and concrete floors, a scheme that was flexible and extendable. The climatic considerations in the design received utmost priorities for the buildings and overall masterplan. During the design process, Tigerman revealed how differently they evaluated the climatic problems. He writes,

> The work of this fifteen-year phase generally illustrates problem-solving interpretations of the 1960s and specially that of Chicago pragmatism. One atypical project spans almost the entire phase - the Bangladesh Polytechnic Institutes. Style, Structural Expression - all my earlier interests - do not form a part of the thought process of this stage. They somehow seemed

> inappropriate to an architecture emanating from post-Team-Ten attitudes and other problem-solving postures of the time.[347]

In order to access maximum wind flow, alongside north-south orientation of the building, the architects decided to utilised Bernoulli's principle or the Venturi effect which involves the energising of air movement to artificially increase its velocity.[348] This principles in architecture is applied by creating stacks of planes within massing or roof in order to provide more air movement especially at lower levels of a building (fig. 66-68).[349] This application of arranging walls decreases the pressure of hot air created inside a building and takes in the fresh air. Islam and Tigerman sketched as many details as they could, given the existent extreme climatic conditions of South Asia. The construction methods and materials that they selected for the project included using reinforced brick-bearing walls designed to resist seismic forces and teak-louvered shutters with fly netting and terrazzo floors.[350] The load-bearing structures with their exposed brick walls ran as parallel planes in a north-south direction whilst east-west sides were open with wooden window blinds. However, whilst examining the buildings on site, surveyors criticised the staggered wall treatment for making the interior darker even though shade and shadow did in fact work well on the exterior.[351]

---

[347] To understand the problems of climate and environment during the design phase that concerned Islam and Tigerman see, Tigerman, *Versus, an American Architect's Alternatives*, 60.
[348] Tigerman, *Designing Bridges to Burn: Architectural Memoirs*, 134.
[349] T. van Hooff et al., "A Venturi-Shaped Roof for Wind-Induced Natural Ventilation of Buildings: Wind Tunnel and CFD Evaluation of Different Design Configurations," *Building and Environment* 46 (2011): 1797-807.
[350] Tigerman, *Designing Bridges to Burn: Architectural Memoirs*, 134.
[351] Mofidul Haque, interview by Author, Tape Recording, August 24, 2018.

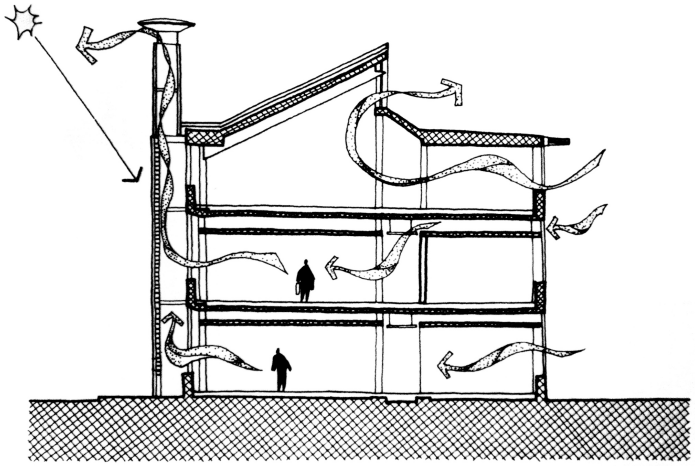


Figure 67: The stack effect: hot air rises due to buoyancy, and its low pressure sucks in fresh air from outside.
Source: Brown, G. Z. and Dekay, Mark, *Sun, Wind, and Ligh*t, (New York: Wiley, 2001).



Figure 68: Staggered Mass of the Polytechnic Institute (1966-1978), Muzharul Islam and Stanley Tigerman.
Source: Author

These projects were an elaborate attempt to produce prototypical components in order to create rational and methodological principles of design for the five institutes. The design strategies and methods were outlined by Lifchez and were based on Islam and Tigermen's masterplan detailing local conditions and providing an analysis of the

architects' considerations and setbacks such as microclimatology, seismology and building materials.[352] The site plan and landscape design for these projects were merged with the existing vegetation and water body. From the dwelling buildings to the teaching buildings, all were composed in a staggered manner in order to have natural air flow. The freestanding water tower acted as a campanile providing hierarchy to the site (fig. 69).



Figure 69: Rangpur Polytechnic Institute (1966-1978), Muzharul Islam and Stanley Tigerman. Source: Archives of Architecture (Bangladesh)

During the construction of these massive projects in different locations, Tigerman and Islam both faced heavy difficulties due to political turbulence and both travelled back and forth between the USA and Pakistan in order to consult over the construction and

[352] Lifchez, "Masterplan Study gives East Pakistan New Approaches for Tropical Architecture," 153-60.

design of these Institutes. However, the project undertaken by the collaborative team of Islam and Chicago architect Tigerman ultimately resulted in 'extraordinary meticulous research on form determinates in relation to tectonics, ecology, and climatology, and material and traditional building techniques,' in which they believed that they were 'contributing to the process of creating a systematic modern building practice.'[353] Furthermore, Tigerman highlighted Islam's deep urge to seek the Bengali identity through architectural language during this period of economic disparity and religious perplexities.[354] Considering his friend Islam's vision for Bangladeshi architecture, Tigerman states, 'Everything we did was rational and well within the modernist canon as documented in the masterplan. Our architectural training as modernists eschewed the ornamental programs that we might otherwise have appropriated to symbolically represent the Bengali culture.'[355]

3.4.3 Masterplans of the Universities

Islam's architecture evolved and took major shifts during the development of several masterplans and the designing individual buildings within the site plans. These included two universities, Jahangirnagar University (1968-71) on the outskirts of Dhaka, and Chittagong University (1965-71), plus another project which was a housing scheme at the Jaipurhat Limestone Factory (1980-84). These projects illustrate major transitions in Islam's design methods in planning, arranging the functions and synthesising the landscape. These masterplans were formed with strict

[353] Ashraf and Belluardo, *An Architecture of Independence: The Making of Modern South Asia: Charles Correa, Balkrishna Doshi, Muzharul Islam, Achyut Kanvinde*, 61.
[354] Tigerman, *Designing Bridges to Burn: Architectural Memoirs*, 134.
[355] Tigerman, *Designing Bridges to Burn: Architectural Memoirs*, 134.

geometry in order to generate an impression of an ‘alternative city’ and move away from the conventional morphology of city and country by formulating communal spatial enclosures, streets and continuous facades.[356] The masterplans were outlined by the concept of a green landscape, composed of pure geometric shapes, such as squares, rectangles and triangles which transformed the natural terrain into a scene of deep green and clustered masses of red brick. The arrangement of different typology of buildings in open spaces resulted in creating volumes of various shapes and sizes forming enclosed large courtyards. The different sections of the campuses such as the dormitories, staff quarters and academic blocks are organised focussing on the main street axis. The different levels of building blocks generate a dynamic visual with a careful integration with the landscape.

Chittagong University is located on hilly terrain in the south-eastern part of Bangladesh; an ample area of 1600 acres in which almost 1200 acres are hilly areas (fig. 70). At first, in order to understand the construction process and to survey land in these hilly areas, four to five buildings were erected on top of the hills. Although the buildings on the hills enhanced the visual scenario, nonetheless, the experiment proved to be unsustainable due to the slopes of earth and did not go well because of the sporadic erosion of land during the heavy monsoon.[357] This procedure also indicated the need for several road networks within the campus (fig. 71). Additionally, buildings were decided to be constructed on the plateau as those areas prevent soil erosion caused by the water running from the slope. However, the plateaus were

[356] Ashraf, "Muzharul Islam, Kahn and Architecture in Bangladesh," 62; Ashraf and Belluardo, *An Architecture of Independence: The Making of Modern South Asia: Charles Correa, Balkrishna Doshi, Muzharul Islam, Achyut Kanvinde*, 62.
[357] Foyez Ullah, "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam," 41.

dispersed about the site and therefore required a masterplan which could coherently arrange the various function.



Figure 70: Masterplan, Chittagong University (1968-1971), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive.

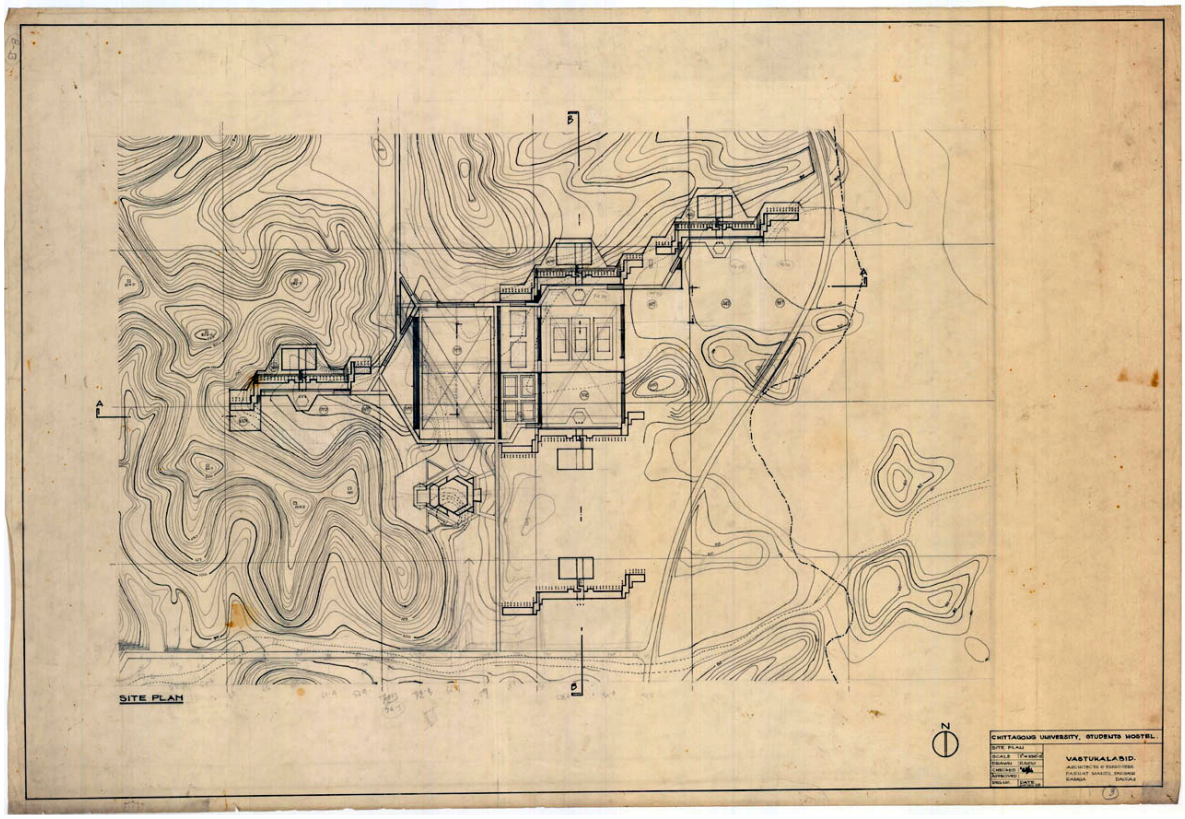


Figure 71: Site Plan, Chittagong University (1968-1971), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive.

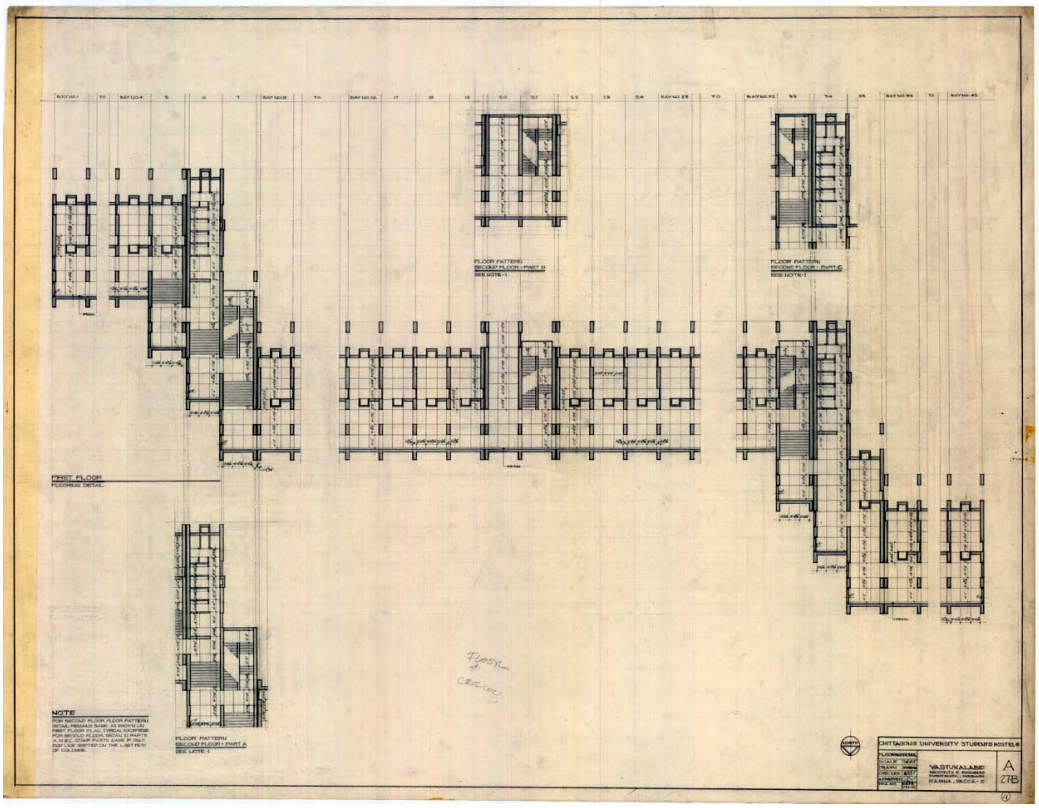


Figure 72: Floor Plan, Chittagong University (1968-1971), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive.

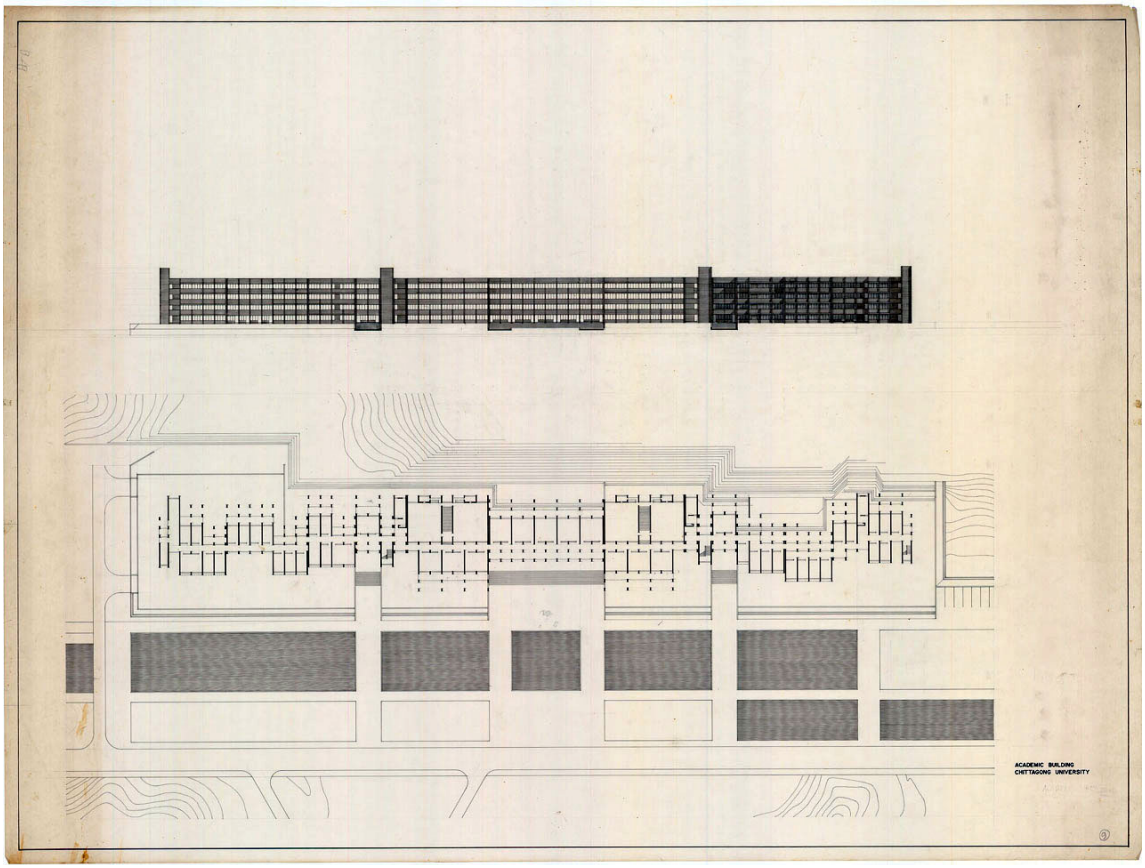


Figure 73: Plan and Elevation of the Academic Building, Chittagong University (1968-1971), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive.

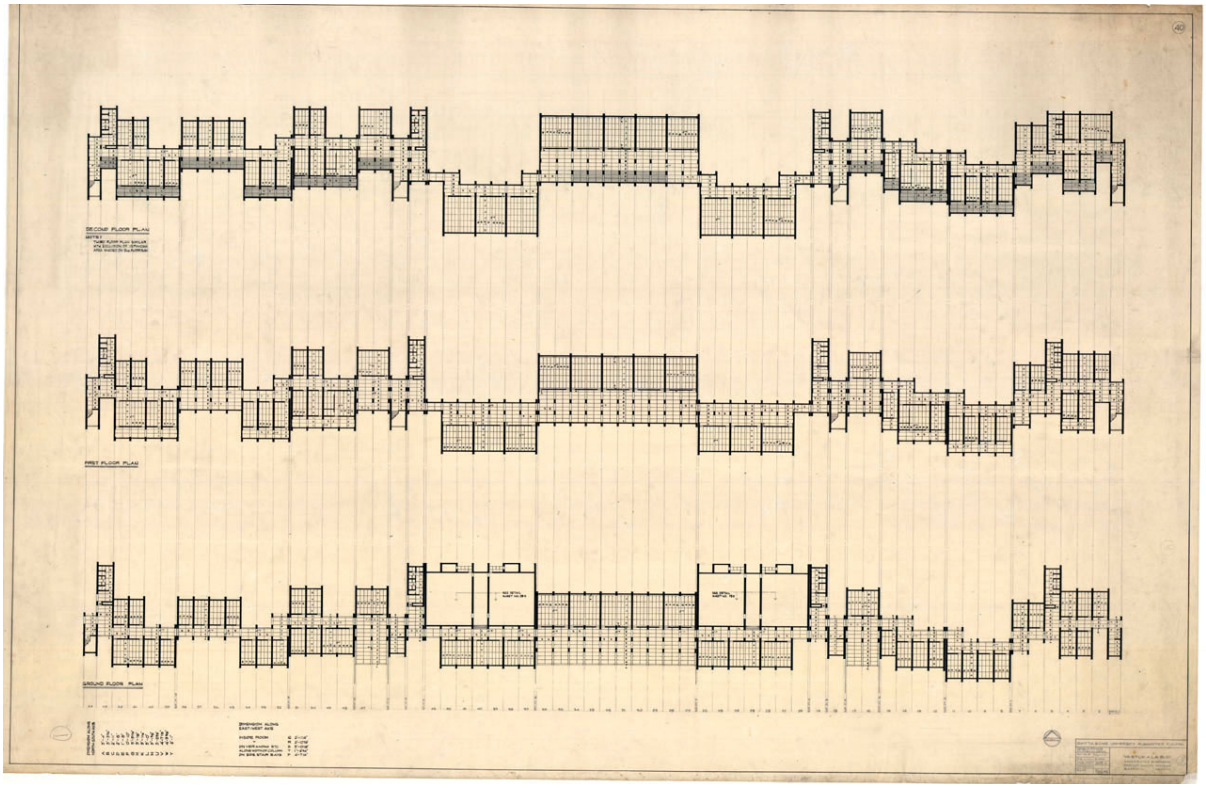


Figure 74: Floor Plans, Chittagong University (1968-1971), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive.

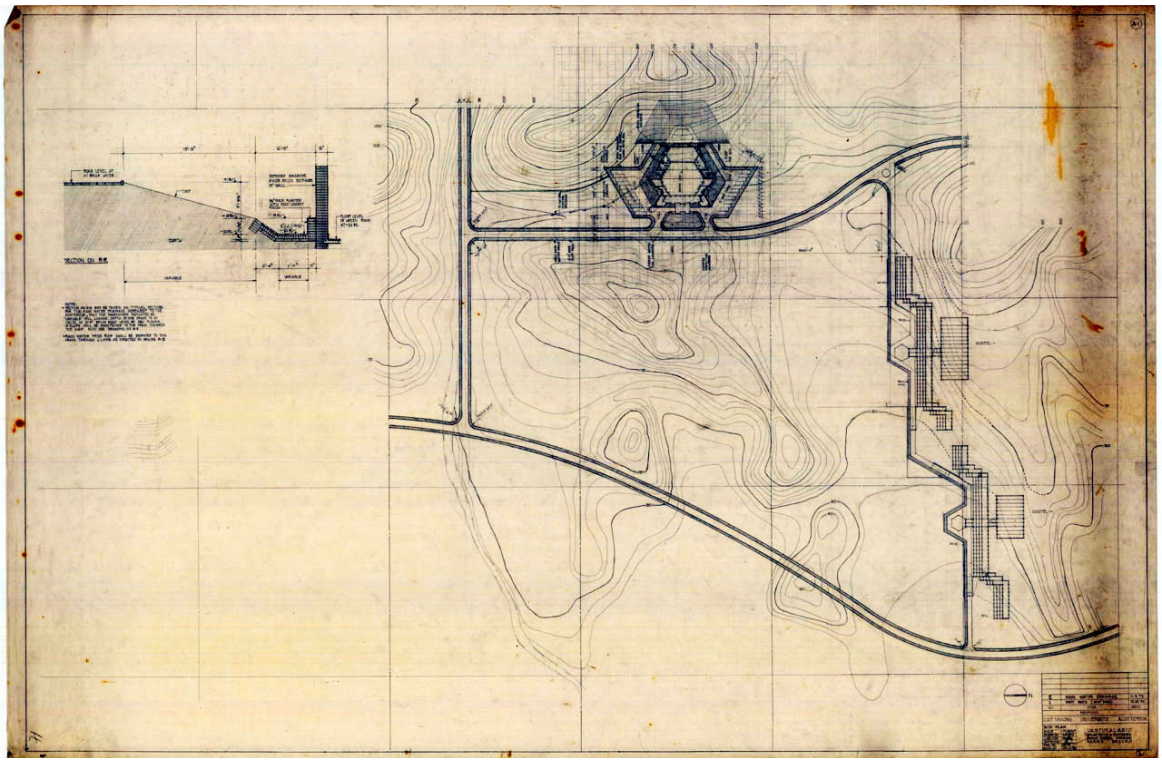


Figure 75: Plan of Auditorium, Chittagong University (1968-1971), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive.

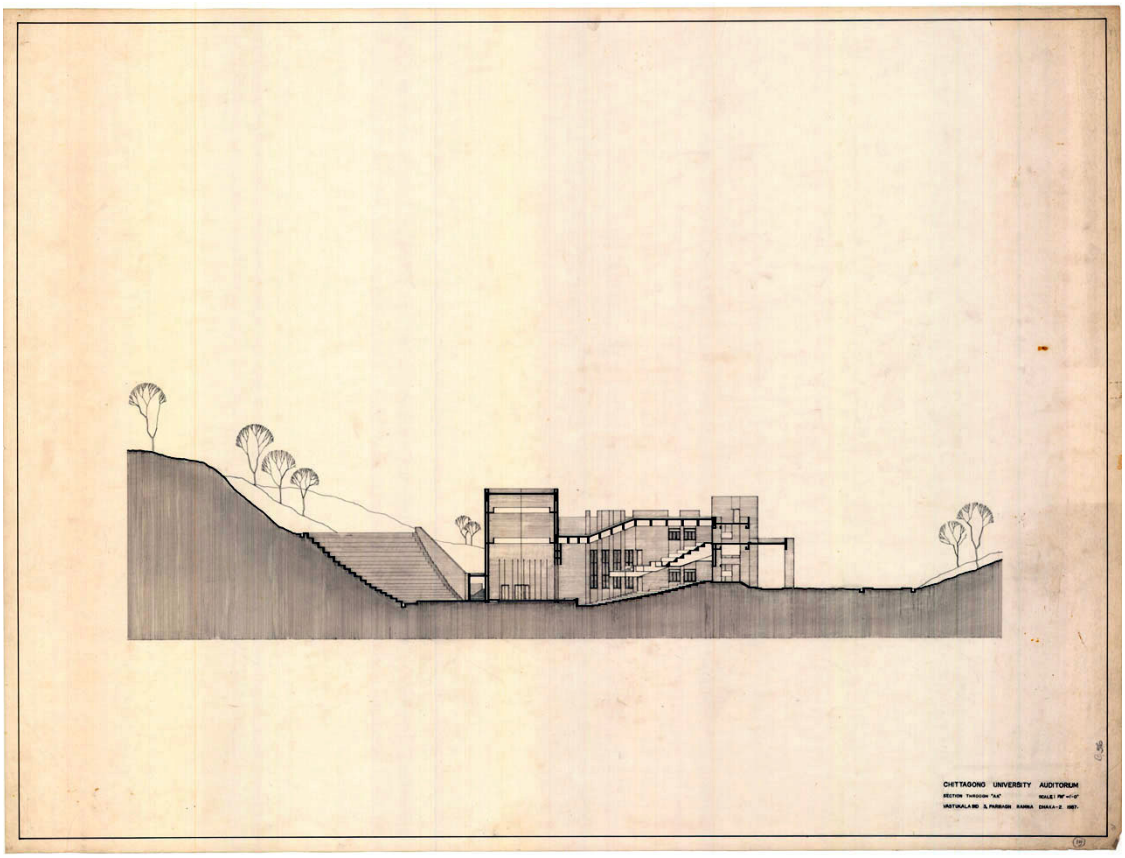


Figure 76: Section of Auditorium, Chittagong University (1968-1971), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive.



Figure 77: Auditorium, Chittagong University (1968-1971), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive.

The original masterplan was prepared to accommodate 7500 students however the designs were made flexible for future expansion.[358] The buildings were designed with terraces on different levels to complement the stepped character of the hilly terrain (fig. 72-74). Individual buildings were positioned by carefully studying their functional relationship with emphasis placed on the environmental qualities such as the auditorium (fig. 75-77). The administrative building, faculty housing and student dormitories were positioned on the bottom edge of the hills. The forms of these buildings, constructed with local red bricks, were clearly generated from geometric concepts (fig. 79-80). Rectangular in shape, each of the buildings was orientated in the north-south direction either in a staggered way or by juxtaposing the walls (fig. 78). Similar to Islam's other design techniques, a sun-breaker was one of the main considerations. The sun-breaker was designed as an extended canopy in the NIPA

[358] Foyez Ullah, "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam," 41.

building and parallel staggered walls in the Five Polytechnic Institutes. For the buildings of Chittagong University Islam designed the sun-breaker with deep windows in masonry walls.

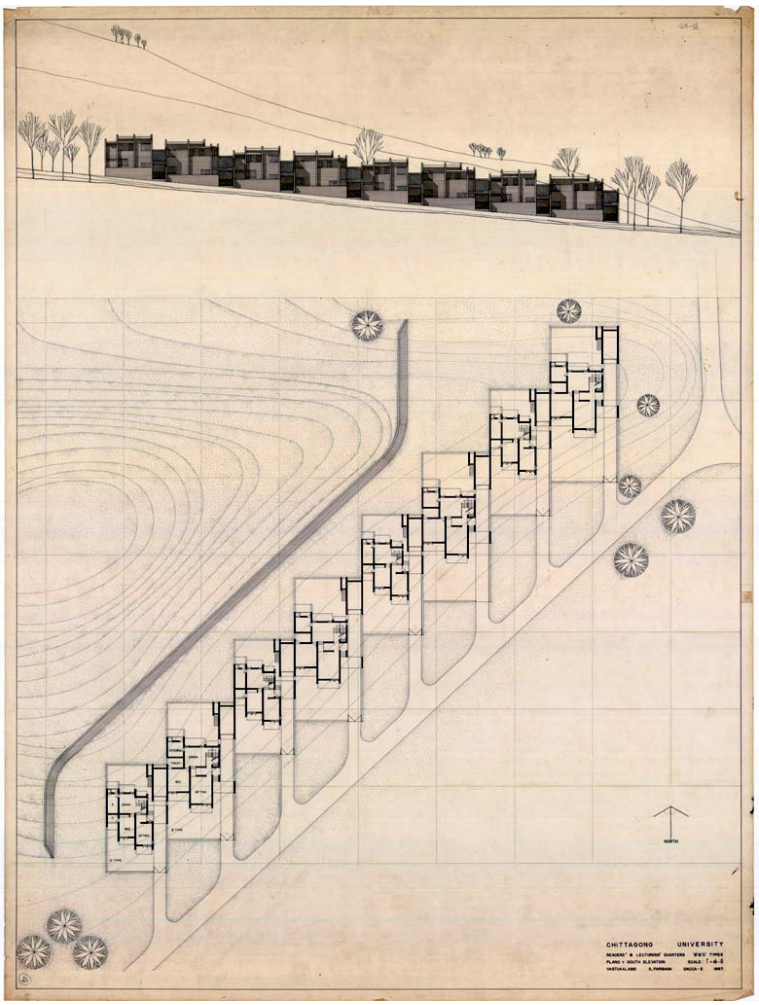


Figure 78: Staff Quarter, Chittagong University (1968-1971), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive.



Figure 79: Student Dormitory, Chittagong University (1968-1971), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive.



Figure 80: Student Dormitory, Chittagong University (1968-1971), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive.

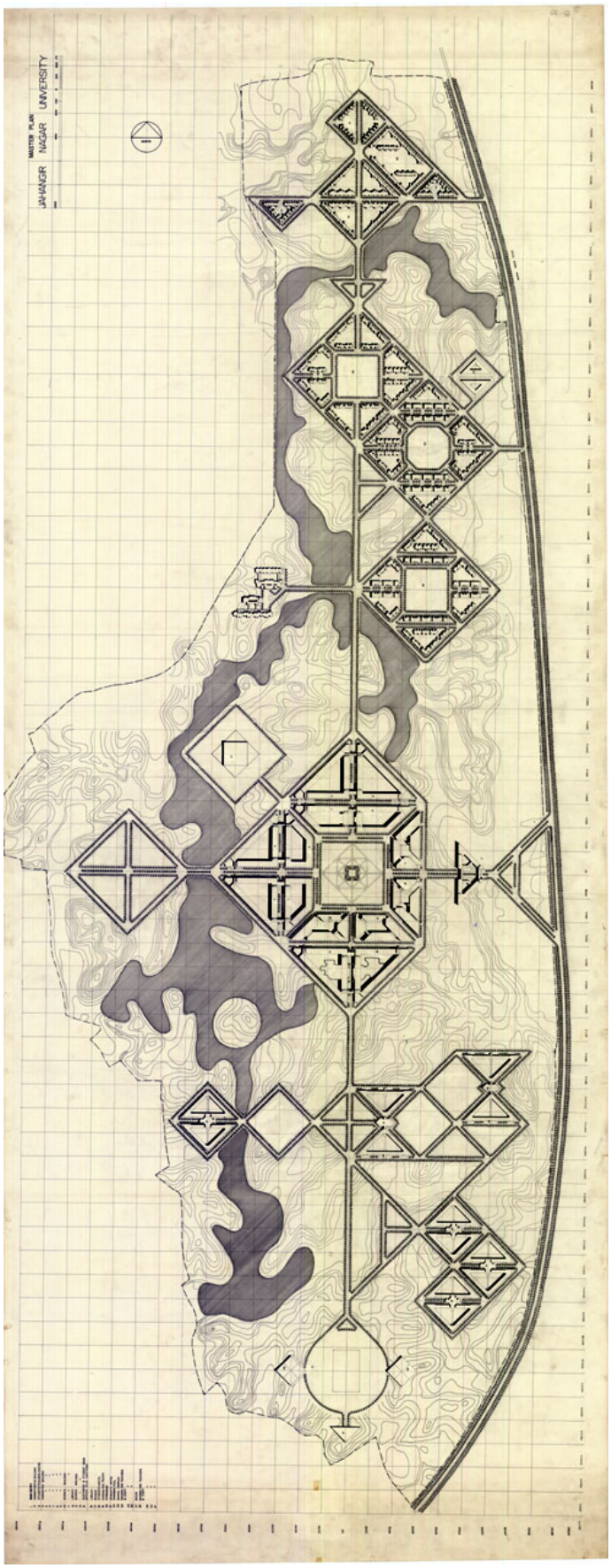


Figure 81: Masterplan of Jahangir Nagar University (1967-1975), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive

In contrast to the hilly terrain of Chittagong University, the site of Jahangir Nagar University is on a flat land. It is assumed that the physical presence of and personal contact with Louis I. Kahn during the late 1960s may have motivated Islam to engage with primary geometrical forms – such as square and triangles - in the masterplan of Jahangir Nagar University (fig. 81). Foyez argues that the strategy of using a diagonal axis to position the geometric form may have a deep inspiration from Islam's Bauhaus based training at Oregon.[359] Both influences of Kahn and Bauhaus are evident in the circulation focussed on one main axis surrounded by platonic forms. By forming tilted square motifs in a network of streets, open spaces and built environments, Islam merged architecture and urban planning in the masterplan of the university. The tilted motifs emerged out of three-dimensional volumes and were placed one after another in a staggered position in order to create spatial enclosures so that each building received the same degree of sun exposure and natural ventilation. The organised tilted square in the masterplan recalls Kahn's Erdman Hall in Bryn Mawr College. The principle of tilted square motifs later evolved in a more complex way in Islam's masterplan for Jaipurhat. Formed within a strong axis and marking a focal point for the campus, the main triangular blocks are functioned with student dormitories, teachers' housing and academic and administrative buildings (fig. 82-83). However, the original designs of Islam are hardly evident in the present buildings of the university. Only a number of buildings such as a student dormitory, reader's quarter and an employee housing were built according to the proposed plan by Islam (fig. 84).

[359] Foyez Ullah, "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam," 43.

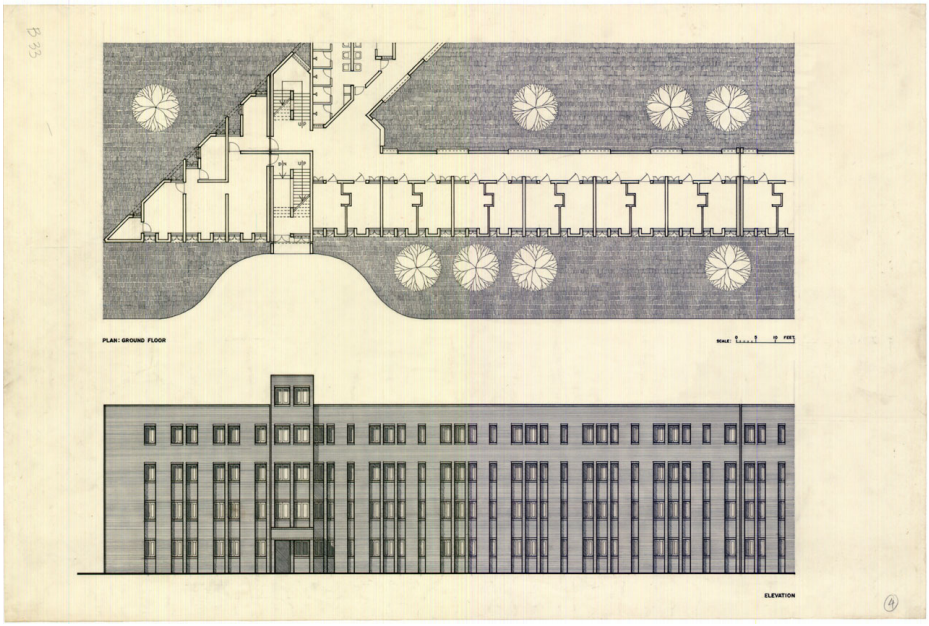


Figure 82: Detailed Floor Plan, Jahangir Nagar University (1967-1975), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive.

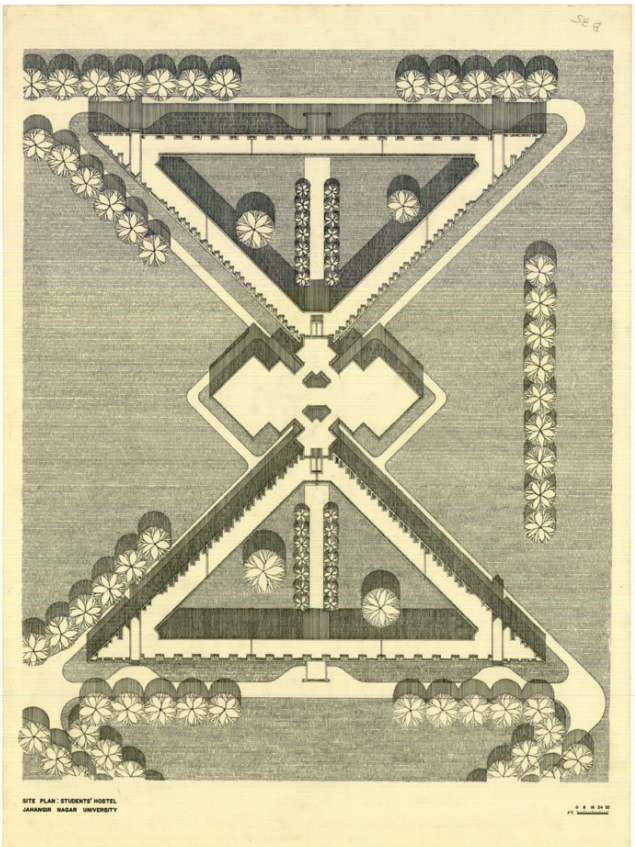


Figure 83: Plan of the Student's Hostel, Jahangir Nagar University (1967-1975), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive

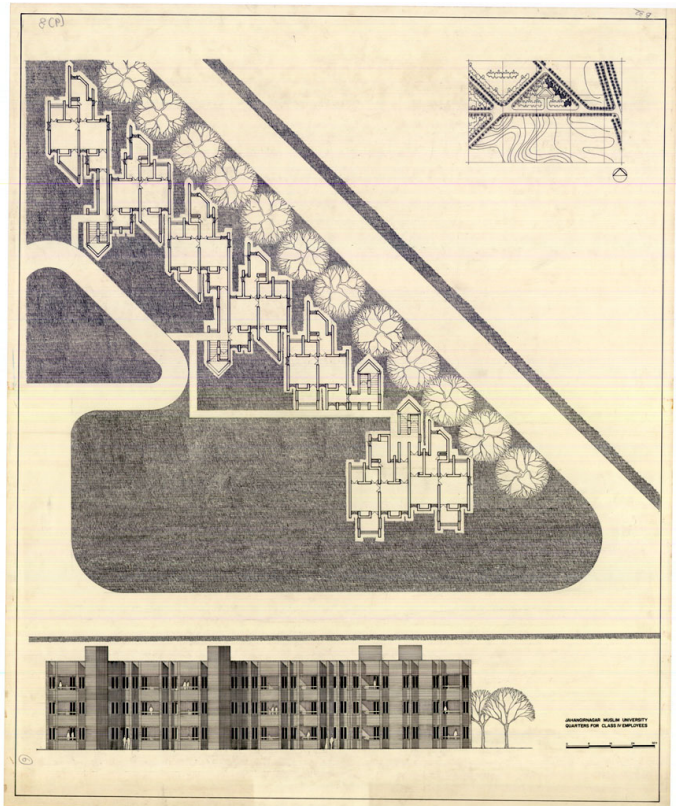


Figure 84: Quarters for Class IV Employees, Jahangir Nagar University (1967-1975), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive

The individual buildings were constructed with local red bricks, as Ashraf describes, 'spaces and voids seem to be carved out of masonry solid [that] despite their often-curious geometrical purity and unlike the skeletal nature of his earlier projects, form a more earth-hugging ambiance.'[360] Ehsan Khan has commented on Islam's usage of local brick as a path to his consciousness for nation-building.[361] Khan stresses that Islam used to consult with local brick manufacturers in order to customise brick modules, colours and sizes which might also have had the aim to promote domestic brick industries in the ethos of separatism from the other part of Pakistan (fig. 85, 86).[362]

[360] Ashraf and Belluardo, *An Architecture of Independence: The Making of Modern South Asia: Charles Correa, Balkrishna Doshi, Muzharul Islam, Achyut Kanvinde*, 62.
[361] Khan, interview.
[362] Khan, interview.



Figure 85: Jahangir Nagar University (1967-1975), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive



Figure 86: Jahangir Nagar University (1967-1975), Muzharul Islam. Source: Muzharul Islam Archive

3.5 Conclusion

Muzharul Islam's projects between 1952 and 1971 represent 'a great deal of competence' in which the influences and inspiration of Kahn and Corbusier are evident.[363] In second phase of career, Islam's teacher Paul Rudolph and his friend Stanley Tigerman were also instrumental in widening his social visions. Islam formulated his own designs by exploring primary geometrical application in architecture. Islam's later works such as the masterplans of the universities resemble explicitly the monumental quality of Kahn's work. Foyez argues that in the shadow of Kahn or Corbusier's fundamentals, Islam may have struggled in a way to become a 'reformist-modern' or 'late-modern' architect.[364] However, Islam's experimental use of the universal vocabulary of Modern Architecture fused with traditional style created an architectural statement of his own. Nevertheless, why is the architect who led post-partition Modernism in the Indian subcontinent not considered as a pioneer in the same way that Doshi and Correa of India and Mehdi Ali Mirza of Pakistan are? Both Foyez and Ashraf argue that although Islam established a body of actual architectural practice in East Pakistan and later in Bangladesh, nevertheless, it was not until the late 1980s or 1990s that the theories and ideologies behind his designs were explored.[365]

The designs evaluated above, undoubtedly created a new style of architecture combined with traditional elements in the architectural realm of Bangladesh. Ashraf

---

[363] Foyez Ullah, "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam," 59.
[364] Foyez Ullah, "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam," 59.
[365] Foyez Ullah, "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam," 73; Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, "Muzharul Islam's Modernity and the Idea of Return Home," in *Muzharul Islam Architect*, ed. Zainab F. Ali and Fuad H. Mallick (Dhaka: BRAC University Press, 2011).

confirms that there is an unexplainable sense of rootedness and 'Bengaliness' in Islam's designs.[366] Islam's architecture did not aim to address the direct line of the Modernism. However, Modern Architecture provided Islam with a set of morals such as methodology in planning and abstraction of forms whereas being aware of Bengali culture and tradition provided him with a sensibility to input ethnic values in the process of design. Bengali Modernism was arguably not an outcome of Islam's conscious architectural methodology, however, it may have been the result of his subconscious inspiration emanating his Bengali mindset.

The search for Bengali identity is inherent in Islam's work and many scholars have related it with his philosophies of Marx. Ashraf notes Marxist approaches in Islam's work can be seen as commitments of political engagement.[367] Islam's political views forms an intersection with his architectural designs. This continuing commitment to a rationalist philosophy led Islam to his vehement antipathy towards the manipulation of architecture and culture within a highly politicised religious situation.'[368] When Islam was asked about his philosophical approach in architecture by the chairperson of BRAC University's Department of Architecture, Zainab F. Ali in the series of 'Angan' lectures (2012), his response was simple: he designed whatever the site required in accordance with the conditions of the surroundings and which would prove practically functional for the users.[369] There were no notions of philosophical approach in Islam's statement.

---

366 Ashraf, "Muzharul Islam's Modernity and the Idea of Return Home," 13.
367 Ashraf writes *Rabindrik*. I am using Tagorian. This term is related to the Bengali author Rabindranath Tagore. See, Ashraf, "Muzharul Islam's Modernity and the Idea of Return Home," 11.
368 Ashraf, "Muzharul Islam's Modernity and the Idea of Return Home," 11.
369 Ashraf, "Muzharul Islam's Modernity and the Idea of Return Home," 12; Ali and Mallick, interview.

On evaluating Islam's career, it is certain that his strength and values lie in the practical architectural work rather than in theories. In fact, unlike other influential architects, Islam's theoretical output is minimal. Although there are some citations from Bengali newspapers in Islam's website archive, nevertheless no published articles written by him exists today except for the participant paper publication for the Aga Khan Award for Architecture entitled 'Introducing Bangladesh – A Case for Regionalism' (1987).[370] Whilst my analysis largely examines the Modern influence of Islam's designs, nevertheless, in this aforementioned article Islam solely included his views on Regionalism. This may be because the seminar was on the Regional Architecture of South Asia and Islam focussed on the history, tradition, socio-cultural and regional manifestation of architecture. How then do his modern principles fit into the architectural understanding of regionalism? Islam suggested that an orthodox approach should be avoided on implying Regionalism and only by understanding tradition can 'real' architecture be produced.[371] This perspective can be seen as Islam's personal effort to incorporate his own vocabulary within Modern Architecture. According to Ashraf, 'what real architecture aspires to is a sort of ascetic condition, where the goal is to gradually filter out everything conditional and extrinsic, to arrive at an irreducible stratum where there is simple coincidence of appearance and reality, where nothing needs to be qualified by something else.'[372] These aspects are evident in Islam's architectural career and in his complex relationship with the politics of the time. Islam linked architecture to a larger context of social and political issues within South Asia. Although his practice was often interrupted, it reflected a tension between

370 Islam, Ashraf, and Haque, "Introducing Bangladesh - a case for Regionalism."
371 Ashraf, *An Architect in Bangladesh: Conversation with Muzharul Islam*.
372 Ashraf, "Reincarnations and Independence: The Modern Architecture of South Asia," 29.

'social engagement and artistic autonomy' that in turn referred to political ideology and architectural production.[373] Both Morshed and Ashraf remark that the abstractive quality of Islam's architecture was a method for him to 'examine what being a secular Bengali entailed.'[374]

Islam's formation in architecture occurred after Modern Architecture was established in the world. His academic training in Oregon and Yale introduced him to basic design, climatic and technology application in buildings. Furthermore, Corbusier and Kahn were a great inspiration during his professional period which demonstrated distinctive improvisation in dealing with climatic consideration and combining modernism with tradition. The first phase of his career designing the Fine Arts Institute and Public Library with concepts and ideas of the International Style and amalgamating this with Bengali culture and local materials delineates Islam's awareness of world architecture as well as values for tradition. The second phase of his career in the following decade was one of the most productive periods of his life in which he designed diverse projects such as residences, laboratories, institutions, offices and universities. This was the period in which Islam's designs revealed their maturity and his works were comparable to a level of perfection that dealt not only with shapes, forms and masses but also with context, climate and material usage. Islam's architectural endeavours are not purely aligned with Modernism, however, his experimentation in both geometrical designs

[373] Ashraf and Belluardo, *An Architecture of Independence: The Making of Modern South Asia: Charles Correa, Balkrishna Doshi, Muzharul Islam, Achyut Kanvinde*, 57.
[374] Morshed, "Modernism as Postnationalist Politics: Muzharul Islam's Faculty of Fine Arts (1953–56)," 544.

and climatic consideration may synthesise his architecture as a similarity and contradiction between Modernism and Regionalism.[375]

The complex theory of Islam's architecture may not be resolved from his designs, but it can be comprehended from his struggle in his professional career which transcended the paradox of identity and led him to isolation at the end of it. Despite this continuous struggle, Islam kept himself active as an architect during the last phase of his career and his architectural views and concerns continue to inspire the leading and emerging architects of the present-day Bangladesh. Morshed remarks that 'Islam interpreted the prevailing political conditions in his homeland as a fateful conflict between the secular humanist ethos of Bengal and an alien Islamist identity imposed by […] West Pakistan.'[376] Furthermore, Ashraf notes that his crucial contribution 'was persistence in formulating a Bengali sense of identity that permeates more than just architecture.'[377] In an interview conducted with Wares, an architecture and educator who worked very closely in *Vastukalabid* with Islam, Wares asserts that Islam's idea of architecture was rational incorporated with modern abstraction reflecting his 'severe patriotism.'[378] Islam's work represents an identity true to its character which expresses the essence of a new-born nation.[379] Whilst architecture in this land was a missing element in the Bengal Renaissance in the late nineteenth century, nevertheless,

[375] Foyez Ullah, "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam," 81.
[376] Morshed, "Modernism as Postnationalist Politics: Muzharul Islam's Faculty of Fine Arts (1953–56)," 532-49.
[377] Ashraf, "Muzharul Islam, Kahn and Architecture in Bangladesh," 59.
[378] Wares, interview.
[379] Misra, Chakraborty, and Mandal, "Critical Regionalism in the Post-colonial Architecture of the Indian Subcontinent," 105.

Islam’s single-handed introduction of a new style of architecture filled the gap with the local rationale of place and climate.

Chapter 4: Architecture of the 'Tropics'

Ayub Khan's economical alliance with the USA established Pakistan as one of the most developing countries during the 1960s. With the assistance and support of various international foreign aid bodies and policies, Khan's Basic Democracies and Second Five-Year Plan required a massive institutional body to educate and train the major population in various sectors of employment. It was necessary to build many educational and training centres for rural and community development. Since there were not many native architects and engineers, alongside the Government of Pakistan, foreign aid bodies approached several American institutions to send trained architects to collaborate and provide traineeship to the locals. This brought opportunities for expatriate architects to work in a country which required a great deal of modernisation as well as an articulated system for a growing industry. Most of these architects were known for their site-specific architectural language namely, Constantinos A. Doxiadis, Daniel C. Dunham, Robert Boughey, Paul Rudolph and Richard Vrooman. In this chapter, I will focus on the projects of the aforementioned architects who were recruited to work in East Pakistan during a vehement political situation. Similar to Stanley Tigerman's experience (discussed in Chapter 3), these architects also faced the continuous anxiety of the raging civil war. Yet they continued their architectural endeavours and produced some of the most important buildings that still exist in the present-day Bangladesh. In this chapter, selected buildings will be examined through the idea of suitable architecture for climate and context introducing a new definition of postcolonial society.

4.1 Introduction

By 1961, Khan had a strong hold on the nation by stabilising the economic restraints after establishing a strong alliance with the USA and other foreign countries. As a result, this became an era when Pakistan embarked on colossal development projects by receiving huge amounts of foreign funding from the Harvard Advisory Group (HAG) and the Ford Foundation. The USA funded over 100 million dollars per year to Pakistan through the Ford Foundation and the UN Technical Assistance Administration. Furthermore, through the Colombo Plan, other foreign countries, such as the UK, Canada and Australia provided 20 million US dollars per year.[380] Subsequently, the government was assisted by UN consultants and the Ford Foundation to develop schemes and prototype models for schools, institutions, rural settlements and agricultural systems. These schemes were designed to be effective and swift in order to accelerate self-mobilisation in the country for future development programmes. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) assisted in the set up of an architectural department to train locals as architects and to be self-sufficient in the technical sectors. In order to fulfil these programmes, many international architects were invited and the priority was given to West Pakistan. Some international architectural firms were assigned to projects in West Pakistan and later they would be requested to work in the East such as Doxiadis. Nonetheless there were a number of architects who were specifically recruited to work in East Pakistan. A branch of the Louis Berger Associate & Consulting Engineering firm was established in East Pakistan in which Dunham was assigned as the chief architect and later replaced by Robert Boughey. Correspondingly, USAID collaborated with Texas

[380] Gant, "The Ford Foundation Program in Pakistan," 150-59.

Agriculture and Mechanical (A&M) University to establish architectural education in East Pakistan which brought Richard Vrooman and his colleagues to the region. This chapter will examine the aforementioned expatriate architects' endeavours in East Pakistan. With selected public and institutional buildings as case studies, the architectural analysis is divided into three sections. The first section will examine Doxiadis' rural interpretation of institutional buildings of East Pakistan. The second section will study the architectural practice of Dunham as an attempt to understand his various attempts to incorporate Modernism within climate-friendly architectural techniques. Boughey and Rudolph's work will be mentioned in the study of Dunham's designs as they worked in various parts of a similar complex. The third and last section will analyse the importance of establishing architectural education in the region which was assigned to Vrooman. Alongside Vrooman's contribution to the first department of architecture, this section will also explore his architectural association with other American architects namely Dunham, Boughey and James C. Walden.

4.1.1 Existing Literature

Whilst the decade between the 1980s and 1990s became a period for Bangladeshi scholars to analyse and archive Muzharul Islam's architecture and Louis I. Kahn's Capitol Complex Project in Dhaka, the architecture of other expatriates remains largely overlooked. Some of the projects such as Doxiadis' design for the Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) in Dhaka University and Kamalapur Railway Station in Dhaka designed by Dunham and Boughey are acknowledged as exemplary Modern buildings in several articles within multiple architectural instances of pre-independent Bangladesh. However, very little has been written providing proper analyses of individual buildings.

In recent scholarship on Bangladeshi architecture, a few articles and book chapters can be found which attempted to specify the architecture of Doxiadis, Dunham, Rudolph and Boughey in East Pakistan. Thus, along with the minimal published literature on the subject, this chapter will study these architectural buildings based on a method of observation from images, drawings and architects' personal notes collected from archives and interviews conducted for this thesis.

More resources exist on Doxiadis' architectural practice in West Pakistan than East Pakistan. This is because his major accomplishments were in the projects developed in West Pakistan, such as the master plan for the new capital city of Islamabad and the refugee settlement programme in Korangi Town at Karachi. One of major writers to analyse Doxiadis' works is a historian from University of London namely Markus Daechsel. In his book entitled *Islamabad and the Politics of International Development in Pakistan* (2015), Daechsel provides a chronological study of Doxiadis' life, his principles and philosophies and how this applied to his methodologies for the projects of Islamabad, Korangi Township and Punjab University at Lahore.[381] In another article, focussing on the study of historical ethnography in the construction of Korangi Town, Daechsel attempts to understand Doxiadis' design methods and principles which often contrasted with how Ayub Khan wished to execute the projects.[382] Ijlal Muzaffar also mentions that rather than following strict ideologies of the Pakistani Government, Doxiadis often followed the design principles most accurate for both site and

[381] Markus Daechsel, *Islamabad and the Politics of International Development in Pakistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).
[382] Daechsel, "Islam and development in urban space: planning 'official' Karachi in the 1950s."

context.[383] Although these scholarly writings meticulously analyse Doxiadis' projects in West Pakistan and seldom refer to his works in East Pakistan, nevertheless these documents provide background information on his involvement with international organisations such as the Ford Foundation and how his architectural firm was commissioned for these massive projects.

Two Bangladeshi scholars namely Bayezid Ismail Choudhury and Farhan Sirajul Karim have examined Doxiadis' architectural works in East Pakistan. Choudhury's Master's dissertation was a critical evaluation of Doxiadis' four projects completed in East Pakistan in which he attempts to resolve whether his design methods were western-biased or whether there were references to the socio-cultural and climatic context.[384] By studying Doxiadis' principle of Ekistics and 'Real Architecture,' Choudhury analyses the architectural drawings for the projects in order to comprehend his technical and functional approach which would provide a more universal method of designing than the contextual method. In contrast, Karim's two articles on Doxiadis' works in East Pakistan argue that how his design process offered an understanding of rural development.[385] Karim suggests that Doxiadis' rural development programmes in Comilla were an important transition of his design methods disseminating him from universal modernism.

---

[383] Ijlal Muzaffar, "Boundary Game: Ecochard, Doxiadis, and the Refugee Housing Projects under Military Rule in Pakistan, 1953-1959," in *Governing by Design: Architecture, Economy, and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Dianne Harris (Pittsburgh PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012).
[384] Bayezid Ismail Choudhury, "The Architecture of C. A. Doxiadis in Bangladesh" (Masters diss., Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, 1999).
[385] Karim, "Between Self and Citizenship: Doxiadis Associates in Postcolonial Pakistan, 1958-1968."; Farhan S. Karim, "Interpreting Rural: Doxiadis vis-a-vis East Pakistan," *Forum* 9 (2019).

As the chief architect of Berger Associate's East Pakistan branch, Dunham and his family spent almost seven years in Dhaka. Within this period, Dunham not only contributed to important architectural projects but also engaged himself with the Bengali culture and maintained a cultural community amongst his other American peers. The life of Dunham and his family in Dhaka is very well documented in a five-volume book edited by his wife Mary Frances Dunham and his daughter Katherine Dunham entitled *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967* (2018).[386] Alongside, the chronological details of Dunham's architectural journey in East Pakistan, this five-volume book also provides with instances of the difficult situations the Dunham family had to face during the political turbulences and how they were transported to India during the civil war. The book demonstrates useful contextual information and photographs, however, the architectural analysis is not sufficient for the thesis. Bangladeshi scholar Rafique Islam's research provides more analytical studies of Dunham's architecture. Drawing attention upon Dunham's architectural education at Harvard University, Islam studies his work as a combination of Western and regional approaches to architecture.[387]

Studies of Paul Rudolph's work in East Pakistan are mostly neglected in scholarly works. Apart from several articles mentioning that Muzharul Islam invited Rudolph to work in his country, there are only two sources that can be found useful for this thesis. The first is an interview between Rudolph's associate William Grindereng and Bruce

[386] Mary F. Dunham and Katherine Dunham, eds., *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967*, 2nd ed., 5 vols. (2018).
[387] Rafique. Islam, "Contribution of Daniel C. Dunham to the Profession and Practice of Architectue in Bangladesh," (Academia.edu, December 2019). https://www.academia.edu/7472245/Daniel_Dunham_Contribution_to_the_profession_and_practice_in_Bangladesh.

Barnes in 2006 and the second is published in *Reassessing Rudolph* edited by Timothy Rohan (2018).[388] In the latter, Kazi Khaleed Ashraf has written a small extract entitled 'Tropical Trysts: An American Architect in the Bengal Delta' which provides some architectural instances in relation to Rudolph's design for the Agricultural University in Mymensingh.[389]

Primary analysis of the first architectural department in Dhaka will be conducted from the book entitled *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka* (2011) edited by Rafique Islam and Mary Frances Dunham in collaboration with a number of scholars and students who were associated with the institution (EPUET later BUET).[390] The book is a compilation of information and memoirs of the initiation of the first architectural department in the country. James C. Walden's article entitled 'My Dacca Days' published in the *Architectural Record* (2012) and Mary F. Dunham and Kate Dunham's five-volume book also provide some information regarding the establishment of the institution.[391] Robert G. Boughey's contribution to the faculty housing constructions will be demonstrated from the research article conducted by Fatema Tasmia in the *Journal of Architecture* (2021).[392]

---

[388] William Grindereng, interview by Bruce Barnes, Video Recording, June 28, 2006.
[389] Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, "Tropical Trysts: An American Architect in the Bengal Delta," in *Reassessing Rudolph*, ed. Timothy Rohan (Yale: Yale University Press, 2017).
[390] Amongst them are teachers of EPUET namely James C. Walden, others are former students of early batches of architecture are namely Dr Kh. Shahid Rab, Wajeda J. Rab, Nizam Khan, Anwar Hossain, Dr Nizamuddin Ahmed and M. Amimul Ehsan. Various materials from the publication were provided by Gali Minault, Chuck Vrooman, Jack Yardley, Samuel T. Lanford, Roy Vollmer, Katherine Dunham, Dr. Ali Azad Chowdhury, Abdur Razzaque, M. Ameenul Haque, Dr Obaidul Islam, Sal Choudhury and Anwar Hossain. See, Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham, eds., *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka* (Dhaka: 2011).
[391] Walden, "Memoir: My Dacca Days."
[392] Fatema Tasmia and Mahmudul Anwar Riyaad, "Sensitivity Towards Context and Climate: An Understanding of Robert G. Boughey's Architectural Works in Bangladesh," *Journal of Architecture* 18, no. 1 (2021).

Alongside these resources, the chapter will be structured and rely upon various materials and documents provided by archives and photographs from my own site visits conducted during data collection for this thesis. The architectural drawings and photographs are provided by Doxiadis and Emma Archives in Athens, The Paul Rudolph Institute for Modern Architecture in New York whilst Dunham's architectural material was provided by his daughter Katherine Dunham.

4.1.2 Chapter Argument

The public and institutional buildings selected as case studies in this chapter were built when Jinnah's Islamic nationalism converted to a nationalism in which Ayub Khan's most important motive was to keep alliance with the US. The buildings were Westernised Modern architecture embedded with regional and tropical encounters. The expatriate architects who designed these buildings were trained according to different Western architectural backgrounds. Some of them were assigned to design projects based on yearly contract, some of them visited the site once whilst some of them never visited the country at all and would send architectural drawings only by merely surveying site reports and photographs of the area. On the one hand, some scholars argue that these projects were biased towards Western techniques and methods whilst on the other hand some scholars have indicated a certain incorporation of regional characteristics within the tropical construction techniques applied. Even when Vrooman and his colleagues set up a curriculum for architectural education they wanted to teach building techniques that could be used locally alongside universal methods of design. However, can these architectural endeavours really be considered

as examples for the nation building of Bangladesh? Or were these colossal projects true to Khan's nationalism? During their stay and visit in Dhaka, most of the architects experienced political setbacks and delays in their projects. Did the Bengali agitation against the Pakistani government play any significant role during their jobs? Did it either encourage or discourage them to develop their designs? Why did Doxiadis attempted to interpret rural Bengali characteristics in East Pakistan in contrast to his Islamic interpretation in West Pakistan? Why did Dunham incorporated abstracted Islamic architectural features combined with modern and cultural connotations? During the development of an architectural curriculum, why did the academicians considered teaching involving the incorporation of local design methods? All of these architects arrived from foreign countries and were given the responsibility to guide the native inhabitants of East Pakistan. Therefore, most of them attempted to understand the culture and tradition of the region in order to provide their knowledge and develop their designs accordingly. The aforementioned questions cannot be answered simply; rather they should be evaluated by overviewing the case studies. Therefore, against the backdrop of the ample foreign funding that assisted the Pakistani Government in these colossal development schemes and projects along with the ongoing political crisis, I will attempt to investigate how these architects manifested their Western knowledge of architecture in East Pakistan echoing cultural connotations and rural interpretations.

4.2 Rural Interpretation and Provincialism

In 1958, the Greek architect and planner, Constantinos A. Doxiadis was first commissioned to work on two projects in Pakistan (fig. 87). Firstly, as a consultant of

the US Technical Assistance and Productivity Program (TAP), Doxiadis Associates (DA) were selected by UNESCO and the Ford Foundation in a joint scheme to develop and design a large-scale programme for primary and secondary education in Peshawar and Comilla. Secondly, DA were involved in the clearance of slums and the resettlement of a new township in Korangi at Karachi which had originally been started by Michel Ecochard in 1953.[393] The first project was a part of a larger rural development programme which was an important channel to mediate technical experts in Pakistan from the US, the UN and other foreign allies. Alongside these two projects, Pakistan became one of the biggest clients of DA and commissioned to design other institutions. In West Pakistan, DA designed the Government Polytechnic at Rawalpindi (1958), the Education Extension Centre (1960) and University at Punjab (1965) at Lahore and West Pakistan Agricultural University (1965). In East Pakistan, DA worked on the National Academy for Education Management (1959), the Home Economics College (1961) and the Teachers and Students Centre (1963) at Dhaka.[394] In a context of cultural and political crisis, DA is one of the architectural firms who managed to complete a good number of projects in both provinces of Pakistan. This was possible because the Ford Foundation and Government of Pakistan were aligned to offer the architect full autonomy in design which demonstrated both local and transnational features.[395] Despite Doxiadis working in East and West Pakistan simultaneously, there were huge differences in his design outcomes for the institutions in regards to concept, material, colour, shape and form. As a visiting consultant and

[393] Karim, "Between Self and Citizenship: Doxiadis Associates in Postcolonial Pakistan, 1958-1968," 139.
[394] Choudhury, "The Architecture of C. A. Doxiadis in Bangladesh."
[395] Karim, "Between Self and Citizenship: Doxiadis Associates in Postcolonial Pakistan, 1958-1968," 136.

in contrast to Muzharul Islam, the political and cultural conundrum was not a big factor for Doxiadis. However, as a designer Doxiadis was able to detect the homogenous past of the two wings of Pakistan such as their Mughal and Colonial rulers alongside their cultural and political polarities in the 1960s. In this segment, I will examine the Academy of Rural Development designed by Doxiadis in East Pakistan in order to understand how this work distinguished itself from that constructed in West Pakistan.

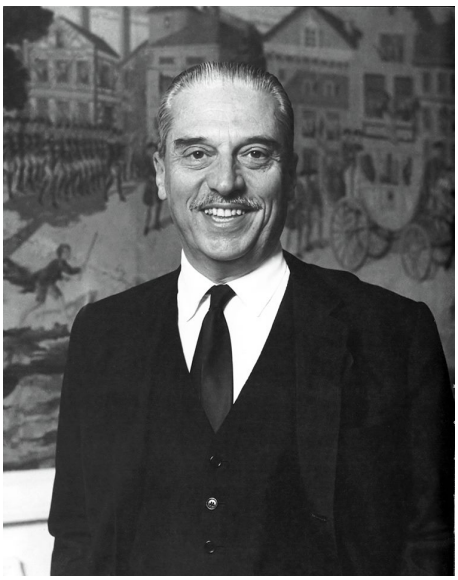


Figure 87: Constantinos A, Doxiadis (1913-1975). Source: Doxiadis Archives. Accessed April 15, 2020.

4.2.1 Rural Development Programmes

The rural development programme existed before Khan came into power in the First Five-Year Plan (1955-1960).[396] The programme established in 1953 was funded by the Village Agricultural and Development Programme (V-Aid) in assistance with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Ford

[396] Kaiser Bengali, *History of Educational Policy Making and Planning in Pakistan*, The Sustainable Development Policy Institute (Pakistan: The Sustainable Development Policy Institute, 1999).

Foundation.[397] The main aim for the programme was to establish education as a process to literate the younger generation of Pakistan. In 1959, Khan took control over the V-Aid programme and added in the existing scheme of the Basic Democracy. Khan's main motive was to decentralise political hierarchy and set up dispersed partial authority in a way that it would make it difficult to challenge his dictatorial system to rule the country.[398] The V-Aid programme facilitated and modified by Khan focussed on social and agricultural technology. At first, Peshawar and Comilla were selected for two rural development centres in which the latter received more attention as East Pakistan was considered to be a more vulnerable rural frontier as the land was profitable for growing crops.[399]

The Ford Foundation already had a scheme developed in 1955 which was accepted by the then Prime Minister Muhammad Ali. A technical consultant from Michigan State University (MSU) was appointed to advance on the basic scheme by carrying out a survey across Pakistan. Floyd Reeves, an MSU professor did the survey and developed a proposal on budgets for roughly the first four years between 1957 and 1960. The plan was finally approved to develop academies in Peshawar and Comilla, however, the government created separate boards to supervise the budget and construction for the projects in each province of Pakistan. After several workshops and seminar, the rural development programme was finalised in 1957 by the Ministry of

[397] V-Aid was a scheme by the US Government to support community in Asia, Africa and Latin America. By the end of 1960s, USAID shifted focus from community development programme to a more technology oriented schemes such as primary and secondary education, advancement in agricultural mechanisation and technology training. See, Nick Cullather, *The Hungry World : America's Cold War Battle against Poverty in Asia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2022).
[398] G. W. Choudhury, "New Political Order in Pakistan," *Civilisations* 14, no. 3 (1964): 192-201.
[399] Arthur Franklin Raper, *Rural Development in Action : the Comprehensive Experiment at Comilla, East Pakistan* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970).

Finance and Revenue of Pakistan and the Ford Foundation decided to send the schemes to DA for the design of the academy buildings in the two provinces.

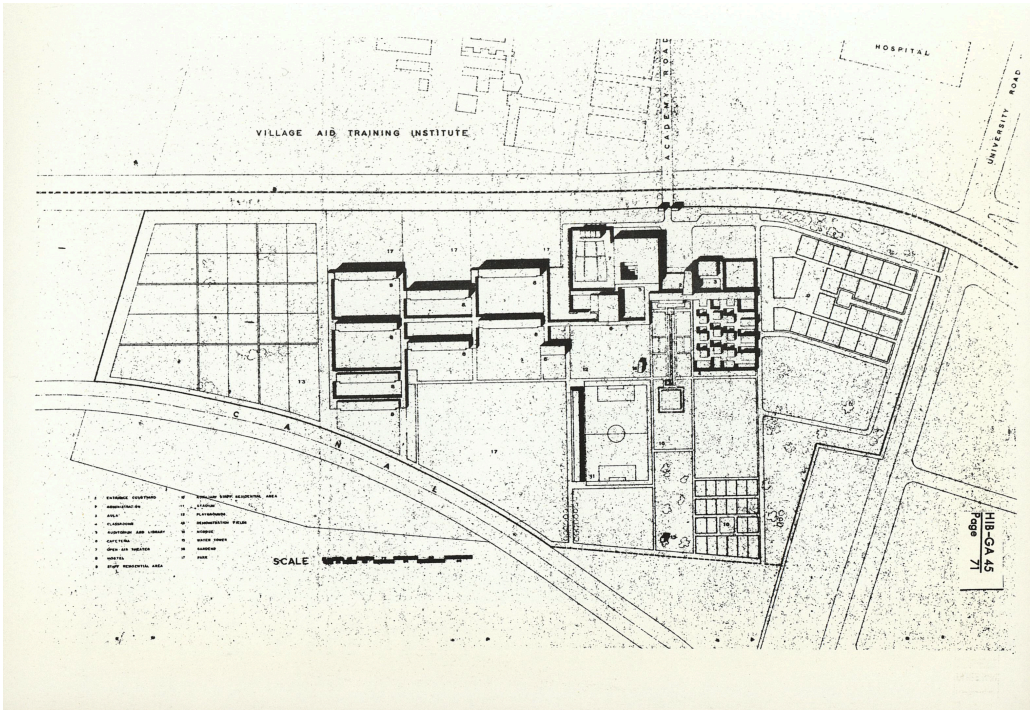


Figure 88: Basic Layout of Rural Development Programme. Source: Doxiadis Associates, 'Two Academies for Village Development: Comilla, East Pakistan - Peshawar, West Pakistan,' *Ekistics* 45, Vol. 8 (1959), 70

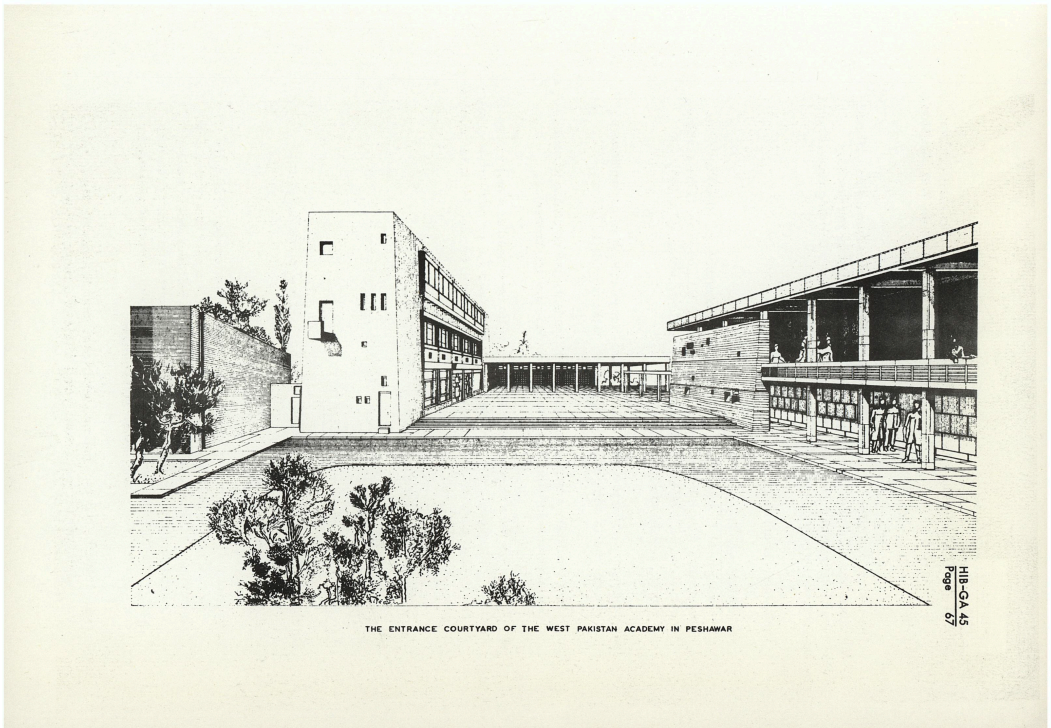


Figure 89: Entrance, Academy of Rural Development Programme, Peshawar. Source: Doxiadis Associates, 'Two Academies for Village Development: Comilla, East Pakistan - Peshawar, West Pakistan,' *Ekistics* 45, Vol. 8 (1959), 67

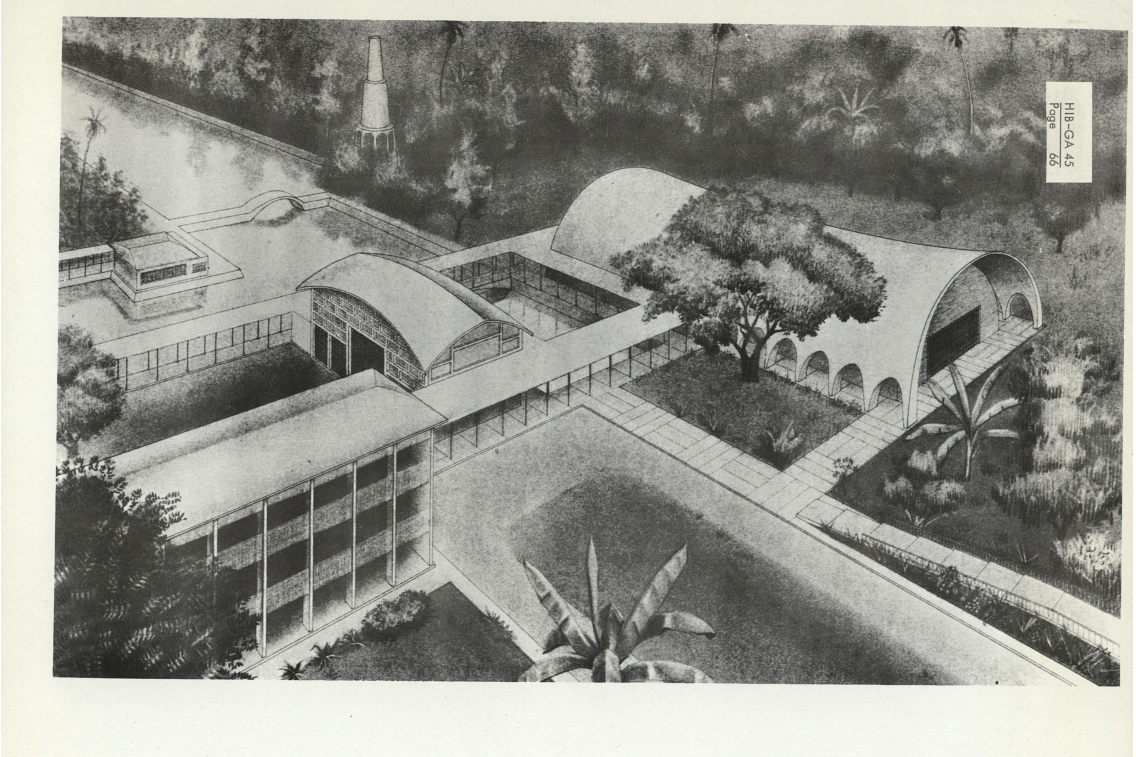


Figure 90: Academy for Rural Development Programme, Comilla. Source: Doxiadis Associates, 'Two Academies for Village Development: Comilla, East Pakistan - Peshawar, West Pakistan,' *Ekistics* 45, Vol. 8 (1959), 66

The programmes of rural development centres were the same for both Peshawar and Comilla (fig. 88), however, climate and context differed greatly – mainly for the site and environment. This is one of the main reasons the two centres were very different from one another.[400] The site for Peshawar was located in an urban setting in contrast to the ample landscape grounds of Comilla. On the one hand, the design of the Comilla academy was developed by ensuring cross-ventilation and using existing water tanks and trees whilst on the other hand the Peshawar campus was designed by focussing on the façade treatment such as smaller openings in windows with *jali* works as a shading device. The buildings for the Peshawar academy were not built according to

[400] Karim refers to this from the Doxiadis' notes. See, Karim, "Interpreting Rural: Doxiadis vis-a-vis East Pakistan," 249.

DA's design as the budget did not allow for detailed *jali* works and needed more simplified solutions (fig. 89). However, the Comilla academy was built according to DA's plan as the campus was designed as an expression of rural life with low height blocks focussing on the horizontality of the structures (fig. 90).

The buildings in the Comilla academy were designed with large windows for cross-ventilation and an extended roof as a sunshade. The low height blocks of classrooms, dormitories and cafeteria are linked with networks of shaded and columned corridors to ensure entrance of natural light and ventilation (fig. 91-92). The large windows and sunshades were incorporated for climatic settings nevertheless the structure recalls the overhanging eaves (*Chajja)* in Mughal Architecture. The overall setting of the complex was primarily determined by climate with north-south orientation of buildings, façade treatment and by using local trees and plants as landscape.



Figure 91: Courtyard, Classroom Block and the Auditorium, Academy for Rural Development Programme, Comilla. Source: Khairul Islam Tufan



Figure 92: Linear Corridors with Columns, Academy for Rural Development Programme, Comilla. Source: Khairul Islam Tufan

For the central auditorium of the rural academy in Comilla, Doxiadis used *dochala* as the form of roof – a curvilinear shaped canopy typically seen in the vernacular rural hut of Bengal (fig. 91). The addition of a vernacular symbol demonstrates a monumental yet rural appearance, which perhaps contrasts with the overall philosophy of Doxiadis' architecture. The parabolic-shaped *chala* had been used by Doxiadis in his designs for the auditorium in the Home Economics College and TSC building in Dhaka University and in the mosque of National Academy for Educational Management. Karim argues that the metaphor Doxiadis employed exudes dual and anachronistic meanings in which the interpretation of ruralism in East Pakistan complicates Khan's vision of political provincialism by development schemes.[401]

[401] Karim, "Between Self and Citizenship: Doxiadis Associates in Postcolonial Pakistan, 1958-1968," 148.

Following Karim's argument, the next segment will examine the dual interpretation of the roof form employed in DA's buildings.

4.2.2 The Double Meaning – Interpreting Architecture

Despite Khan wanting to control the two wings of Pakistan centrally, politics and economy had always marginalised East Pakistan. Cultural characteristics from Bengal would be seen as provincial in contrast to Pakistani culture which was accepted as national. However, the negative connotations of provincialism were perhaps implemented with altered meaning by Doxiadis.

In comparison to the works in East Pakistan, Doxiadis undertook a higher number of designs in West Pakistan. Therefore, he spent a substantial amount of time in West Pakistan surveying and studying the local building construction techniques and climatic solutions. Doxiadis perceived little knowledge of the local architecture of East Pakistan and mostly used meteorological data to address climatic factors in this wing. This is evident from an interview conducted by Karim in 2017 with an associate of DA, namely Hadjopoulos published in *Forum*. Karim writes, 'Hadjopoulos, a retired senior architect of DA personally told me that Doxiadis' approach to architecture in the developing countries was ambivalent because, on the one hand, he preferred scientific universalism, but on the other hand, he was genuinely eager to maintain the cultural diversity and uniqueness of the place.'[402] The implementation of the parabolic roof reminiscent of the Bengali vernacular hut in Doxiadis' design of East Pakistan was inspired by two major references. The first was the 'tropical hut' inspired roof of the

[402] Karim, "Interpreting Rural: Doxiadis vis-a-vis East Pakistan," 255.

dining hall of the University College of Ibadan in Nigeria designed by Fry (fig. 93). The second was Doxiadis' first encounter of this form during his visit to the Naulakha Pavilion at Lahore Fort (fig. 94).[403] Being inspired by a pioneering architect in tropical design in Africa, it is likely that the rural shaped hut-roof was implemented as a strategy to separate colonised from the coloniser. But what did Doxiadis intend to separate by implementing *chala* in the context of modernism in East Pakistan?



Figure 93: Dining Hall of University College, Ibadan, Nigeria, Maxwell Fry. Source: RIBA Photo Archives

[403] Karim, "Interpreting Rural: Doxiadis vis-a-vis East Pakistan," 258.



A very interesting building in this courtyard is the Naulakha Pavillion on one of the walls vertical to the main hall of the Shish Mahal.

Its characteristic element is the curved roof, the one which according to some historians reminds of the thatch roofs of East Bengal and proves the influence of Bengali elements in

Figure 94:Pages from Doxiadis' diary showing his visit to Naulakha Pavilion, Lahore. Source: Doxiadis Archives

Between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the Bengal Sultans would build mosques in Bengal villages with *dochala* roofs in order to symbolise political authority in the area.[404] Similarly when Mughals started to rule in the sixteenth century, in order to establish new areas under their authority, they would build a mosque with *dochala* as a centre for the village. The parabolic roof inspired from the Bengal hut became a symbol of Mughal authority yet still empathising with the locals by building them a central mosque referring to their cultural past.[405] The roof of the mosques during the

[404] Richard Maxwell Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).
[405] Catherine B. Asher, *Architecture of Mughal India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

Mughal period manifest a double meaning – 'a symbol for regional identity and a political gesture of an inclusive and centralised Muslim empire.'[406] Karim argues that Doxiadis may not have shared this similar intention to symbolise the Mughal but he was aware of the two-folded meaning of one feature.[407] The incorporation of a roof featuring symbolism from both Bengal and Mughal pasts may have been the safest choice for Doxiadis when designing within a context of political ambivalence between East and West Pakistan. On the one hand, the parabolic *chala* symbolises the authority of West Pakistan over the East as well as recalling Islamic pasts from Mughal period. On the other hand, the symbolic roof remains part of the Bengal heritage that would work to Khan's advantage in the minds of the Bengali people. In both cases, the reading of the incorporation of the curvilinear roof serves as an intricate yet complex ideogram in a context when civil war was embroiled between the two halves of Pakistan. Despite being commissioned by the Government of Pakistan, Doxiadis did not hesitate to design with aspects of Bengali heritage because he had unfolded the meaning behind *dochala* as Karim states, 'his deployment of this cultural image was intended to create a sense of territoriality on the endless sprawl of East Pakistani rural frontier, which was misunderstood by West Pakistan.'[408]

Eventually, the architectural interpretation of Doxiadis' *dochala* became a symbol of the rural Bengal hut in Bangladesh. Although the notion of *chala* usage was prominent in both temples and mosques, nonetheless, perceiving the final adaptation from the Mughals, the architectural feature might have represented political authority during the

[406] Karim, "Interpreting Rural: Doxiadis vis-a-vis East Pakistan," 258.
[407] Karim, "Interpreting Rural: Doxiadis vis-a-vis East Pakistan," 258.
[408] Karim, "Interpreting Rural: Doxiadis vis-a-vis East Pakistan," 273.

Ayub Regime. The curvilinear roof in Bengal thus demonstrates a 'history of reconciling the governed and governing' and 'the elite and the subaltern.'[409] Doxiadis' architectural interpretation of *dochala* may have played a similar role for a time, but it could not bridge the gap between the authoritarian West Pakistan and discriminated East Pakistan. Rather the *dochala* aspires to connect the rural and urban context of Bangladesh up until the present day.

4.3 The American Acceleration

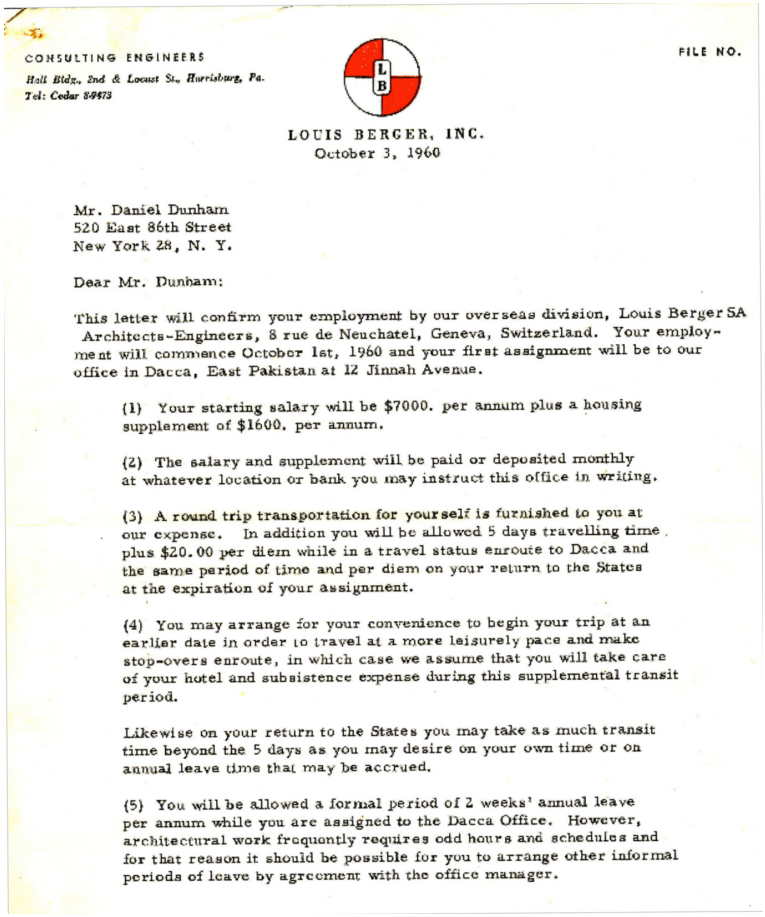
The rapid expansion of the USAID, the Ford Foundation and the World Bank's education development programmes and other schemes required more experienced architects and engineers in Pakistan. Doxiadis was given responsibilities for several projects in both provinces of Pakistan. However, he was mostly required to focus on the larger projects in the West wing such as to producing an urban planning scheme for the capital city Islamabad. In order to bring equal attention to both provinces, USAID offered the private firm - Louis Berger Associate & Consulting Engineering – the establishment of a subsidiary branch in East Pakistan.[410] This American based private firm was well recognised for its international architectural and engineering endeavours. The private firm was also involved in a major commission in the taking on of the Meghna Bridge project at Bhairab located in East Pakistan. The firm was actively seeking opportunities for more projects in the region. Thus, in 1960, by accepting offer from the USAID, Louis Berger Associates opened their first local private architectural office at Jinnah Avenue located in Dhaka and appointed Daniel

[409] Karim, "Interpreting Rural: Doxiadis vis-a-vis East Pakistan," 261.
[410] Mary F. Dunham and Katherine Dunham, eds., *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967, Part II: Our Days*, 2nd ed., 5 vols., vol. 2 (2018), 16.

C. Dunham – an American architect - as the new head of the division (fig. 95).[411] Dunham actively worked as the chief architect for almost three years until he accepted to teach as a professor in the department of architecture at EPUET. During his time working at Louis Berger Associates, Dunham worked on a number of government projects which was part of the development scheme funded by foreign organisations such as the masterplans and buildings of universities located in Rajshahi, Mymensingh and Barisal plus an important transportation hub – Kamalapur Railway Station in Dhaka. The World Bank also commissioned Paul Rudolph in developing a masterplan for the Agricultural University in Mymensingh in which Dunham also designed several university buildings.[412] After Dunham joined EPUET in late 1962, Louis Berger Associates hired Robert G. Boughey as the chief architect who continued the architectural projects of the firm.[413] East Pakistan as a developing region became a productive hub for the American architects who provided fresh insights into new designs and construction techniques. The American development initiative is discerned in two ways by Bangladeshi scholars. Firstly, a general overview of the architecture is seen as Western models of design, however, construction techniques and material application needed to be adjusted locally according to budget. Secondly, Westernised themes of design were evident, nevertheless, like many other postcolonial countries, climate consideration was a big factor for the architects and eventually cultural context was taken into account by some architects especially Dunham and Boughey.[414] In this segment, I will investigate selected governmental

411 Dunham and Dunham, *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967, Part II: Our Days*, 4.
412 Ashraf, "Tropical Trysts: An American Architect in the Bengal Delta."
413 Islam, "Contribution of Daniel C. Dunham to the Profession and Practice of Architectue in Bangladesh."
414 "February 2020 Session: Muzharul Islam and Bengali Modernism."

projects in order to understand how the aforementioned American architects perceived the cultural and climatic context of East Pakistan.



CONSULTING ENGINEERS
Hall Bldg., 2nd & Locust St., Harrisburg, Pa.
Tel: Cedar 8-9473

FILE NO.

LOUIS BERGER, INC.
October 3, 1960

Mr. Daniel Dunham
520 East 86th Street
New York 28, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Dunham:

This letter will confirm your employment by our overseas division, Louis Berger SA Architects-Engineers, 8 rue de Neuchatel, Geneva, Switzerland. Your employment will commence October 1st, 1960 and your first assignment will be to our office in Dacca, East Pakistan at 12 Jinnah Avenue.

(1) Your starting salary will be $7000. per annum plus a housing supplement of $1600. per annum.

(2) The salary and supplement will be paid or deposited monthly at whatever location or bank you may instruct this office in writing.

(3) A round trip transportation for yourself is furnished to you at our expense. In addition you will be allowed 5 days travelling time plus $20.00 per diem while in a travel status enroute to Dacca and the same period of time and per diem on your return to the States at the expiration of your assignment.

(4) You may arrange for your convenience to begin your trip at an earlier date in order to travel at a more leisurely pace and make stop-overs enroute, in which case we assume that you will take care of your hotel and subsistence expense during this supplemental transit period.

Likewise on your return to the States you may take as much transit time beyond the 5 days as you may desire on your own time or on annual leave time that may be accrued.

(5) You will be allowed a formal period of 2 weeks' annual leave per annum while you are assigned to the Dacca Office. However, architectural work frequently requires odd hours and schedules and for that reason it should be possible for you to arrange other informal periods of leave by agreement with the office manager.

Figure 95: Dunham's employment letter from Berger Associates. Source: Katherine Dunham

4.3.1 The University Projects

In late 1960, Dunham arrived in Dhaka with his family and found himself in a crucial position as the architectural industry was almost non-existent in East Pakistan. Although there had been some ground-breaking projects undertaken by Islam and Doxiadis at this point, nevertheless, it was not enough for the rapid development which the Government of Pakistan required. Most government projects were carried out by the PWD and Dhaka Development Trust (DIT) (now known as RAJUK) but they lacked analytical expertise in terms of solutions suiting the local climate, materials and

methods. Dunham himself was freshly graduated with a Master's degree in Architecture from the Harvard Graduate School of Design (GSD) and had little experience in architectural practice (fig. 96).[415] Amidst this situation, Dunham was given an office without any trained architects, took over the continuing projects and started several new projects (fig. 97). Mary F. Dunham writes,

> Dan had to create his architecture studio from scratch: no staff, no supplies, no equipment and no furniture. To start with, he was given a large empty room in the four-story building on Jinnah Avenue where Berger had their offices […] For much of his time working at Berger, Dan was a one-man team with only a peon or two to sharpen pencils, run errands and ply him with coffee.[416]

Occasionally Louis Berger would send an architect from the head office, nonetheless, most of the works were done by Dunham himself. After a year, two American architects – Bob Mayers and John Schiff were hired who were experienced from working in New York. After Dunham left the firm, Boughey replaced him as the chief architect.

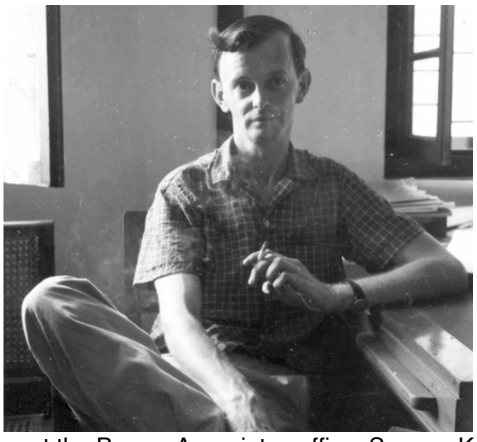


Figure 96: Dunham at the Berger Associates office. Source: Katherine Dunham

[415] Dunham and Dunham, *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967, Part II: Our Days*, 4.
[416] Dunham and Dunham, *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967, Part II: Our Days*, 4.

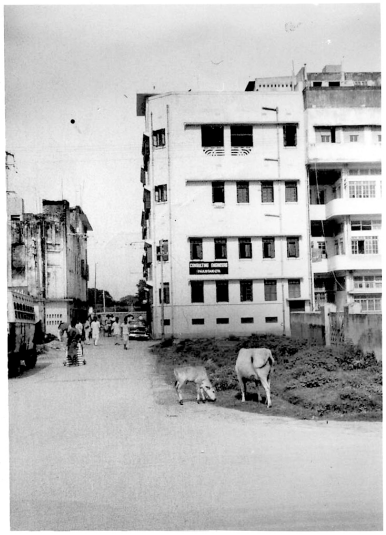


Figure 97: Berger Office at Dhaka, 1960. Source: Katherine Dunham

The consultancy firm also formed a partnership with The Engineers Ltd. which was run by Maqbulur Rahman, Majid Khan and Sanaullah Sheikh.[417] This partnership brought opportunity for Dunham to develop a masterplan and design buildings for Rajshahi University (RU). I have used 'develop a masterplan' in the previous sentence, however, there are three different opinions have been noted about the site of RU. The university had existed since 1953 as stated at the university entrance. However, Rafique Islam writes that the funding was available in 1960 and approximately three hundred hectares of land were provided to design a new campus.[418] Mary Frances states that Dunham was given a large site to re-design the masterplan.[419] Upon investigating on who designed the previous masterplan of RU, Wares mentions that

[417] Islam, "Contribution of Daniel C. Dunham to the Profession and Practice of Architectue in Bangladesh," 1.
[418] Islam, "Contribution of Daniel C. Dunham to the Profession and Practice of Architectue in Bangladesh," 4.
[419] Dunham and Dunham, *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967, Part II: Our Days*, 20.

colloquially it is known that Spiro Kostof designed the first masterplan.[420] Even after visiting the site of present-day RU in 2018, Kostof's contribution has not been legitimated and nobody actually know who designed the masterplan before Dunham. It was clarified by Mubassher Hussain that there was an existing masterplan in which some of the buildings were used as classrooms for the university and Dunham was given extra land to develop a new masterplan.[421]

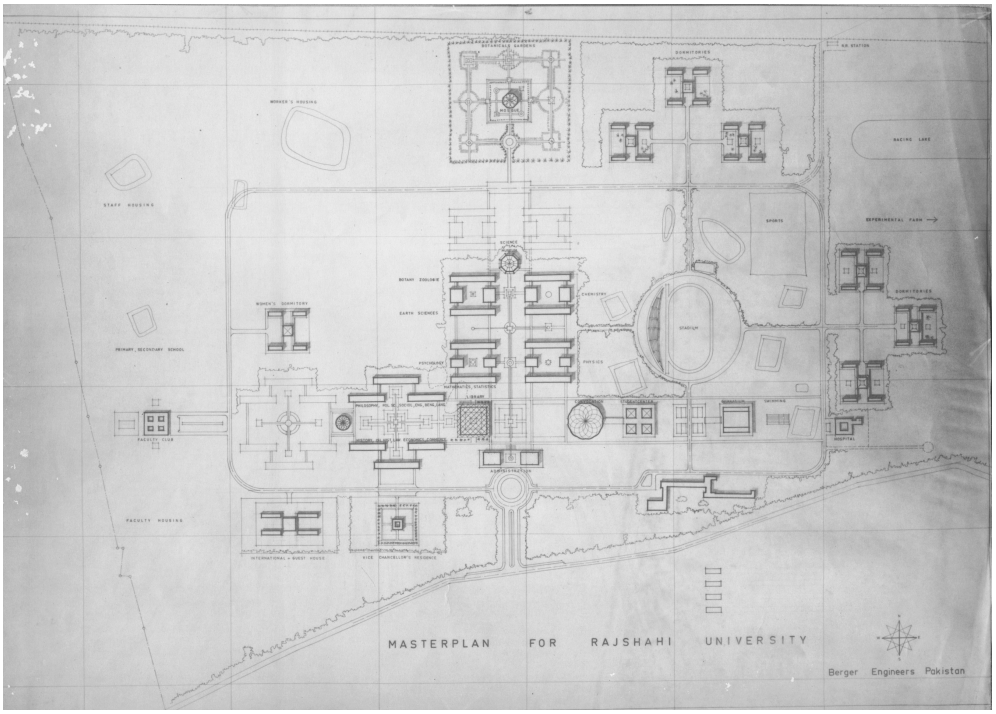


Figure 98: Site plan of the Rajshahi University by Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham

The campus was required to act as a semi-residential university with an existing train station on the north side of the site as it was anticipated that most of the students would need transportation in order to come to the area. Additionally, housing and dormitories were also required for faculties and students. Dunham's first task was to

[420] Wares, interview. This is also mentioned in Shamsul Wares, "Bangladeshe Adhunik Sthapotter Shuchonalogno o Shater Doshok," *Shilparup*, no. 2 (April-June 2009): 89-96.
[421] Hussain, interview.

make a compact campus by providing all facilities within walking distance. These facilities included the administrative building complex, a library, a convocation centre, department buildings of various subjects, classrooms, an auditorium, a hospital, a centre for sports and gym facilities, a mosque, staff housings and student dormitories and botanical gardens. Dunham kept the existing mango grove and organised the masterplan with grid-based pathways, positioning the major buildings within walking distance (fig. 98). The administrative buildings and library in the south leads to the central blocks of different departments and classrooms overlooking the mosque and botanical gardens in the north. The arrangement of the garden recalls a Mughal layout in which the prominent centre is occupied by the mosque (fig. 98). In the east section, a sports and gym complex acts as a mediator between the academic blocks and student dormitories. The campus was designed with sets of blocks interconnected by roadways which recalls Western urban grid plans of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, with a Mughal-manner mosque and garden layout, Dunham illustrated a hierarchy in his design as well as it connecting the region with its Islamic past. Dunham repeated the Mughal centrepiece pattern in the design of the Vice Chancellor's residence in the south-west side of the site. Taking climate into consideration, almost all of the facility buildings were positioned in a north-south orientation to allow sun-light and to circulate air naturally (fig. 98). Dunham surveyed other buildings in East Pakistan in which he found that the structures did not last long due to the use of cheap materials and poor construction techniques. Therefore, for a durable solution in both budget and foundation of the buildings, Dunham proposed low-height buildings, mostly two or three-storied and used both good quality local and imported material.

Instead of load-bearing application of brick, Dunham employed a concrete framework to structure the student dormitories. Most of the materials such as rods, electrical and plumbing equipment were imported which was expensive, however, the structural elements with a proper engineering solution provided a strong massing for the dormitory blocks (fig. 99). The library building was designed with concrete columns and beams and exterior masonry treatment was conducted with a play of solid and perforated patterns (fig. 100). The modern perforated masonry acted similarly to *jali* and provided natural light inside the double-height library (fig. 101).



Figure 99: Student Dormitory Block of Rajshahi University. Source: Katherine Dunham



Figure 100: Exterior of the Library, Rajshahi University. Source: Katherine Dunham



Figure 101: Interior of the Library, Rajshahi University. Source: Katherine Dunham

Located at the south-east corner, Dunham designed the hospital as a single-storied building block surrounding a courtyard. Reminiscent of the rural courtyard, this form also provided security and surveillance for a hospital as the offices, treatment rooms and patients rooms could be approached through the common courtyard space (fig. 102).[422] Similar to the other structures, Dunham used concrete columns and beams as a structural solution filled with brick walls. The beams were projected out as cantilevers which provided a shaded area in the entrance of the hospital blocks. Dunham designed vaulted arched roofs with bricks above the beams for heat absorption during the summer (fig. 103). Similar roof treatment with triangular shapes was applied in the cafeteria building which later became a signature character for other

[422] Islam, "Contribution of Daniel C. Dunham to the Profession and Practice of Architectue in Bangladesh," 6.

Louis Berger projects (fig. 104).[423] Although there are scattered notions of regional symbolism within the masterplan and in the designs of the building, nevertheless, Dunham incorporated logical and rational climatic solutions throughout the design. This became more prominent in his later designs for several buildings at the Agricultural University (AU) in Mymensingh.



Figure 102: Courtyard of Medical Centre, Rajshahi University. Source: Katherine Dunham

[423] Islam, "Contribution of Daniel C. Dunham to the Profession and Practice of Architectue in Bangladesh," 7.



Figure 103: Roof detail of Medical Centre, Rajshahi University. Source: Katherine Dunham

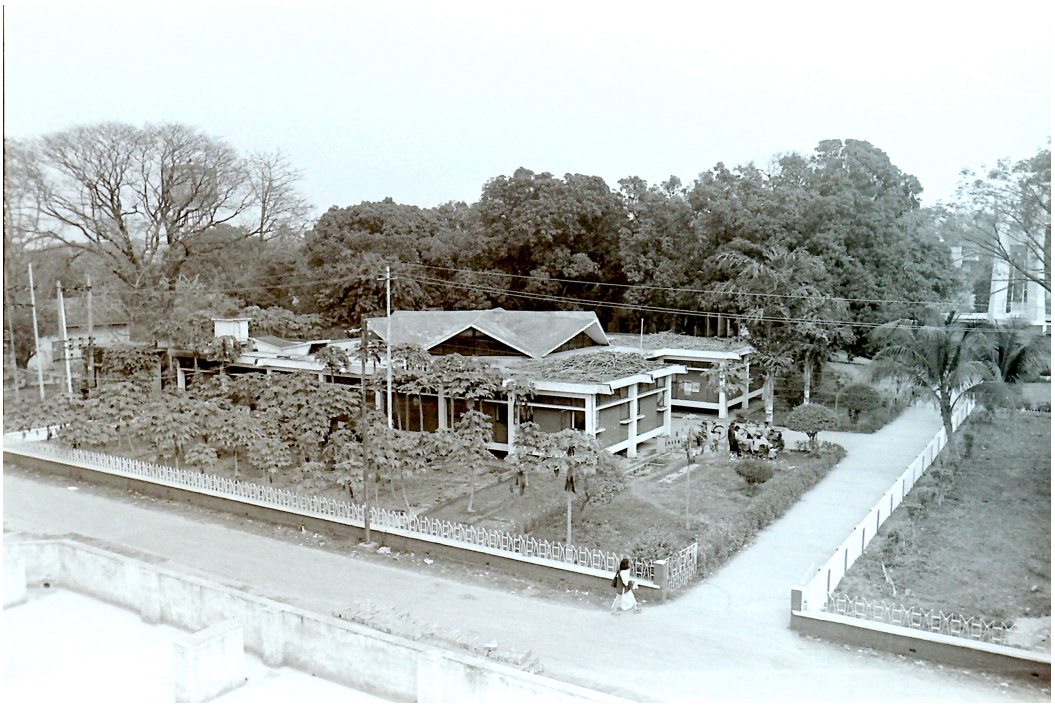


Figure 104: Roof detail of Students' Cafeteria, Rajshahi University. Source: Katherine Dunham

When Dunham was given the work of AU in 1961, a number of prominent buildings already existed on the site such as student dormitories designed by Tigerman.[424] The exterior of the student dormitory displayed exposed brick rather than regular white-washed stucco. Tigerman uniquely defined the exterior corners with bricks manifesting a weaving pattern (fig. 105). Dunham designed the additional buildings which included residence for the Vice Chancellor, a guest house, a dormitory and faculty housings.[425] Subsequently, in 1965, Rudolph was appointed by the World Bank to develop a masterplan for AU (fig. 106). It is also known from various resources that Rudolph was Islam's teacher at Yale University and Islam suggested the World Bank to commission Rudolph to design AU.[426] Rudolph had an ambivalent relationship with the project. One of his associates, William Grindereng confirms in an interview, that Rudolph reluctantly accepted the job as he was busy with his other projects in the US, thus he visited the site a few times and never saw the project after its completion.[427]

[424] Nurur R. Khan, interview by Author, Tape Recording, June 8, 2018.
[425] Dunham and Dunham, *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967, Part II: Our Days*, 18.
[426] Most of the resources mention that Islam was instrumental in inviting Tigerman, Rudolph and Kahn to East Pakistan. The invitation of these architects occurred through various governmental projects and Islam suggested their names as he knew them from studying in Oregon and at Yale. See, Nilufar, "Architecture of Pakistan Time in Bangladesh since 1947 to 1971."; Tigerman, *Versus, an American Architect's Alternatives*; Ashraf and Belluardo, *An Architecture of Independence: The Making of Modern South Asia: Charles Correa, Balkrishna Doshi, Muzharul Islam, Achyut Kanvinde*.
[427] Grindereng, interview. Provided by Claire T. Carney Library, UMass Dartmouth.



Figure 105: Brick Detail of the Student Dormitory in Agricultural University by Stanley Tigerman. Source: Author

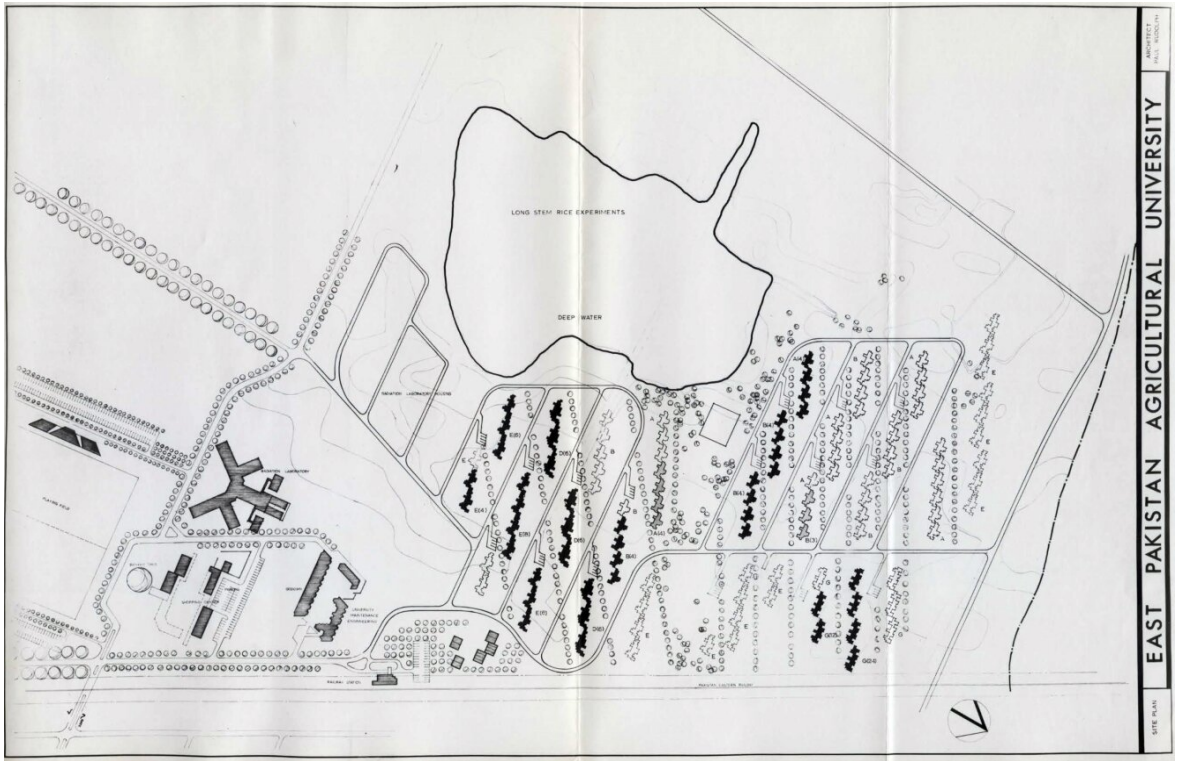


Figure 106: Site Plan of the Agricultural University by Paul Rudolph. Source: The Paul Rudolph Institution for Modern Architecture

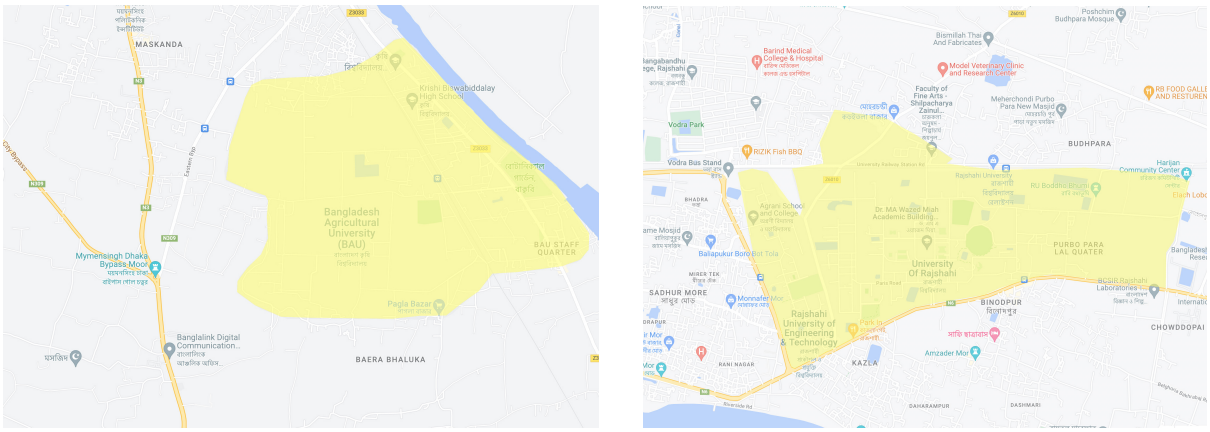


Figure 107: Google Map of Agricultural University and Rajshahi University for approximate measurement of the area. Source: Google Maps

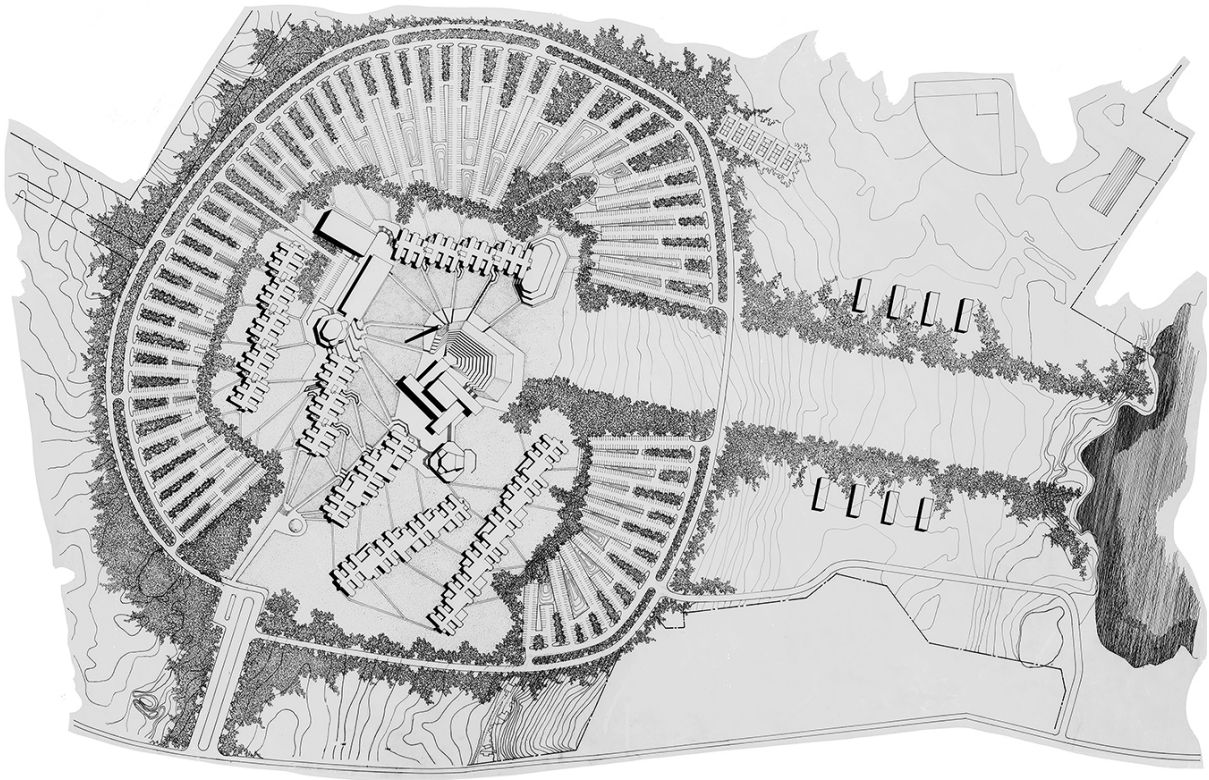


Figure 108: Site Plan of University of the Massachusetts, Dartmouth by Paul Rudolph. Source: The Paul Rudolph Institution for Modern Architecture



Figure 109: Courtyard and Stair connection of main building, Agricultural University, Paul Rudolph. Source: Author

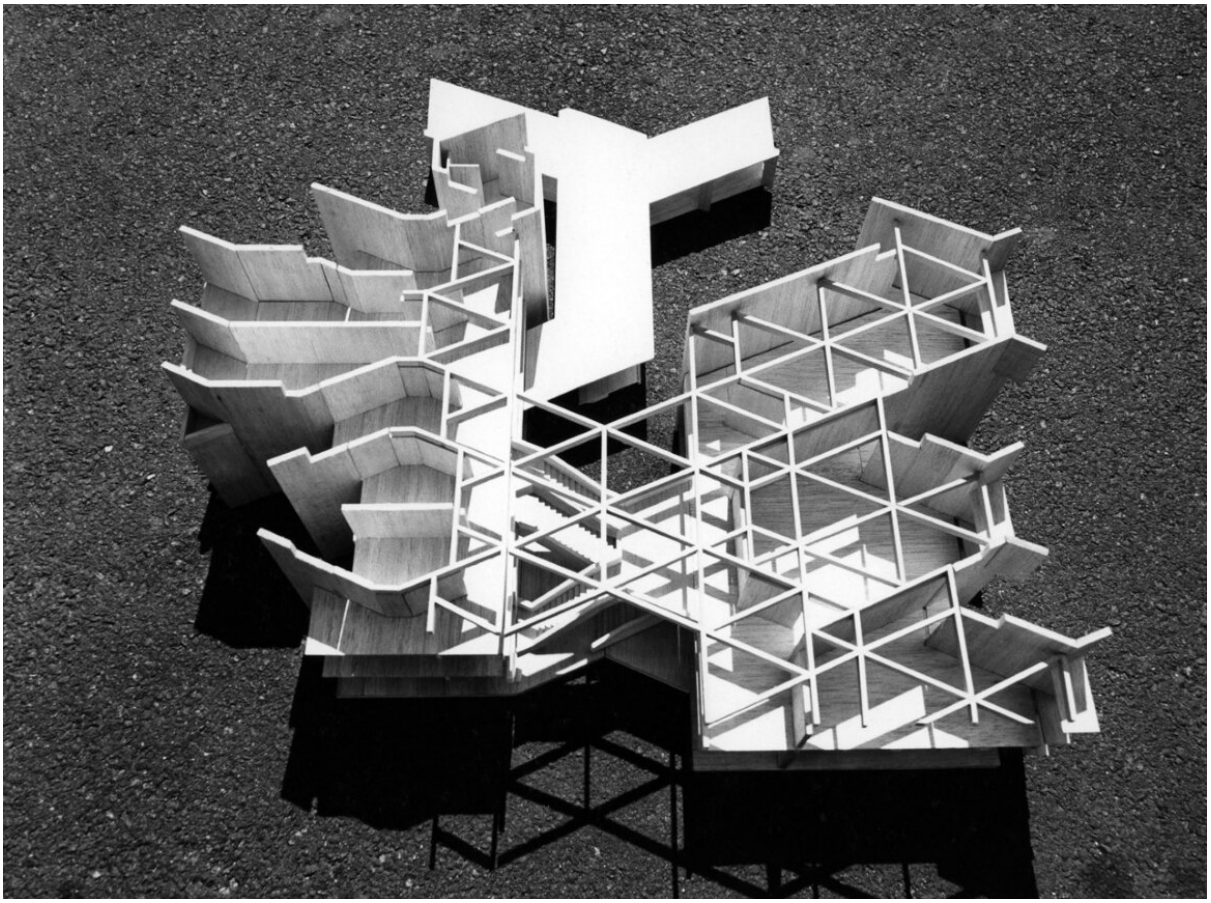


Figure 110: Architectural Model of Main Buiding of the Agricultural Building, Paul Rudolph. Source: The Paul Rudolph Institution for Modern Architecture

The site of AU in Mymensingh was similar to the area size of RU. Although no specific measurement of the area is mentioned, it can be speculated that AU was a more compact area than RU according to Google Maps (fig. 107). For similar functions and layout arrangement, Ashraf compares Rudolph's masterplan for the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth (UMassD) with AU stating that the scope and complexity of the masterplans reveals a micro-city expression and provide almost similar prospects (fig. 108).[428] However, apart from the staggered buildings echoing Brutalist features, the masterplan arrangement of UMassD and AU are in fact very different. The staggered classrooms of UMassD and laboratories of AU demonstrate a similar notion to Islam and Tigerman's Five Polytechnic Institutes proving that they were once Rudolph's students. In the AU, Rudolph arranged the staggered blocks in parallel at the eastern part of the site facing in north-south orientation for natural light and ventilation (fig. 106). In contrast, blocks of UMassD are arranged radially with slightly shifted north-south orientation for natural light, ventilation and heat or cold absorption for both winter and summer (fig. 108). Furthermore, UMassD's main administration block is a tilted square in which each linear block is stretched out from the form (fig. 108). In contrast, AU's main laboratory block (now fisheries building) has a unique shape in which Rudolph diagonally attached four rectangles with the main mass creating two wings at each side (fig. 106). Exposed beams arranged in triangular shapes create a three-dimensional experience within the courtyard which is connected by multi-layered stairs (fig. 109-110).

[428] Ashraf, "Tropical Trysts: An American Architect in the Bengal Delta."

The requirement for the VC residence was to design a big and comfortable house.[429] Dunham situated the building in a corner to incorporate the Bengali landscape and designed a roof deck which provided a beautiful view of the whole campus and the Brahmaputra River. The entrance was formed by a large overhanging canopy leading to a double-height lobby (fig. 111). The *piano nobile* consists of bedrooms connected by a bridge over the lobby with a high ceiling that provides cross ventilation and an easy flow from one space to another.[430] The guest house was designed in courtyard format in which the bedrooms were arranged surrounding an open atrium with a pool in the middle. The roof was designed with Dunham's unique triangular-shaped form which allowed each room to be cooler during the heated summer (fig. 112).

Other architects are also mentioned in designing a number of buildings in the AU. Boughey designed other additional hotels and a club house on the university campus. The American-Austrian architect Richard Neutra is known for designing the library of the AU. However, Neutra never visited Pakistan in the 1960s and sent the drawings by looking at site survey and photographs.[431] The library is constructed with a steel frame skeleton and cladded in white-washed stucco (fig. 113). One side of the reading room's exterior is treated with wooden louvres, however, due to its orientation not

---

[429] Mary Frances wrote, 'The VC kept demanding "something a little larger" at each meeting.' See, Dunham and Dunham, *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967, Part II: Our Days*, 18.

[430] Islam, "Contribution of Daniel C. Dunham to the Profession and Practice of Architectue in Bangladesh," 3.

[431] In mid 1950s, Neutra travelled to West Pakistan to design the Karachi Embassy (1955-56). He surveyed well about the tropics of West Pakistan and constructed a building that perfectly responded to the hot Karachi climate. He used the details of narrow horizontal strip windows, the use of vertical adjustable louvers and use of water in the landscape. However, East Pakistan's climate was different than the West, and Neutra failed to achieve similar result as the Karachi embassy in the library building of the AU. See, Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, *Architecture of Regionalism in the Age of Globalization: Peaks and Valleys in the Flat World* (Abingdon, New Yoek: Routledge, 2012), 143.

much light is provided inside (fig. 114). Ali and Mallick argue that because Neutra never actually travelled to Pakistan, his design implementation of the library building, and additional surroundings was therefore unsuitable for a hot, humid climate.[432] Therefore, his lack of direct experience was responsible for the unsuccessful construction of the floor heights plus the installation of a high roof on the shaded pathways from which the rain could easily penetrate, for those walking beneath (fig. 115).



Figure 111: Vice Chancellor Residence in the Agricultural University, Daniel Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham



Figure 112: Guest House in the Agricultural University, Daniel Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham

[432] Ali and Mallick, interview.



Figure 113: Library, Agricultural University, Richard Neutra. Source: Author



Figure 114: Wooden Louvre of the Library, Agricultural University, Richard Neutra. Source: Author



Figure 115: Corridor of the Library, Agricultural University, Richard Neutra. Source: Author

4.2.3 The Transportation Hub

One of the most important projects Dunham designed was the Kamalapur Railway Station in Dhaka and it was also his last work before leaving his job with Berger Associates (fig. 116). However, he continued to advise on the project after Boughey was given the responsibility to supervise the construction.[433] The station project offered an opportunity to design a grand structure that would symbolise a gateway to the capital city. The government provided land previously occupied by an abandoned old brick building which would be replaced by this transportation hub.

Berger Associates won the contract and like many other projects, Dunham introduced a new concept based on requirement and conditions rather than referring to past railway stations such as the Victoria Terminus of Mumbai (now known as Chhatrapati

[433] Dunham and Dunham, *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967, Part II: Our Days*, 21.

Shivaji Terminus) or Howrah Railway Station in Kolkata.[434] Although Rafique Islam states that Dunham's first proposal for the idea of a grand railway station followed European layouts with a two-storied arrival hall, sunken courtyard, and an administrative building with a Victorian style clock tower, nevertheless, this is denied by Katherine Dunham who stated that Dunham always intended to design an open-air structure with no exterior walls for ventilation.[435] Dunham proposed a design with a vast canopied structure supported by tall columns positioned in a grid (fig. 117). Dunham had expertise in this construction technique as he had worked on thin concrete shell design in a workshop during his study at Harvard University (fig. 118-119).[436]

The railway authorities required some alteration to the building in order to convey an Islamic image, such as requesting to use vaults. Dunham knew that it was a common practice in Pakistan to express Islamic identity through the application of symbolic shapes to facades. Therefore, with several cases of trial and error, he modified his design in which the roof was shaped to a pointed arch and which he described as the 'dome umbrella scheme' (fig. 120).'[437] This shape was inspired by Mughal mosques and mausoleums and was accepted by the railway authorities. Dunham abstracted Islamic features and incorporated these into his technical structure which allowed

[434] Dunham and Dunham, *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967, Part II: Our Days*, 21.
[435] Rafique. Islam, "Kamalapur Railway Station, Dhaka, Bangladesh," (Academia.edu, December 2019), 85. https://www.academia.edu/11816240/Kamalapur_railway_station_Dhaka_Bangladesh; Katherine D. Dunham, interview by Author, Zoom Meeting, July 13, 2022.
[436] Dunham and Dunham, *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967, Part II: Our Days*, 21.
[437] Islam, "Kamalapur Railway Station, Dhaka, Bangladesh," 87.

maximum ventilation during the summer and provided protection from heavy rain during the monsoon (fig. 121).[438]



Figure 116: Kamalapur Railway Station, Dhaka, Daniel C. Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham

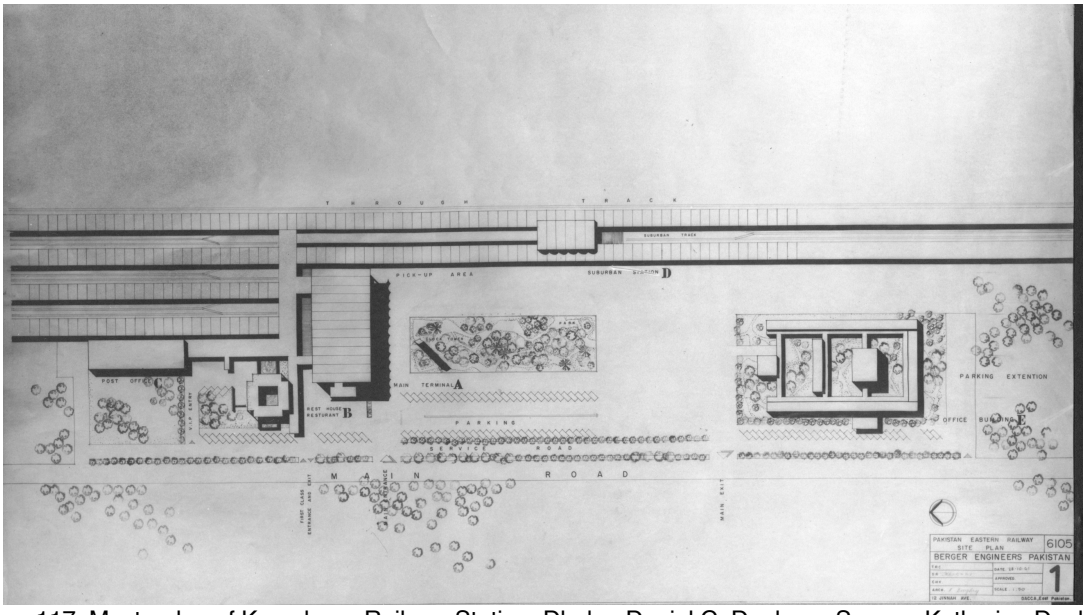


Figure 117: Masterplan of Kamalapur Railway Station, Dhaka, Daniel C. Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham

[438] Dunham and Dunham, *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967, Part II: Our Days*, 21.

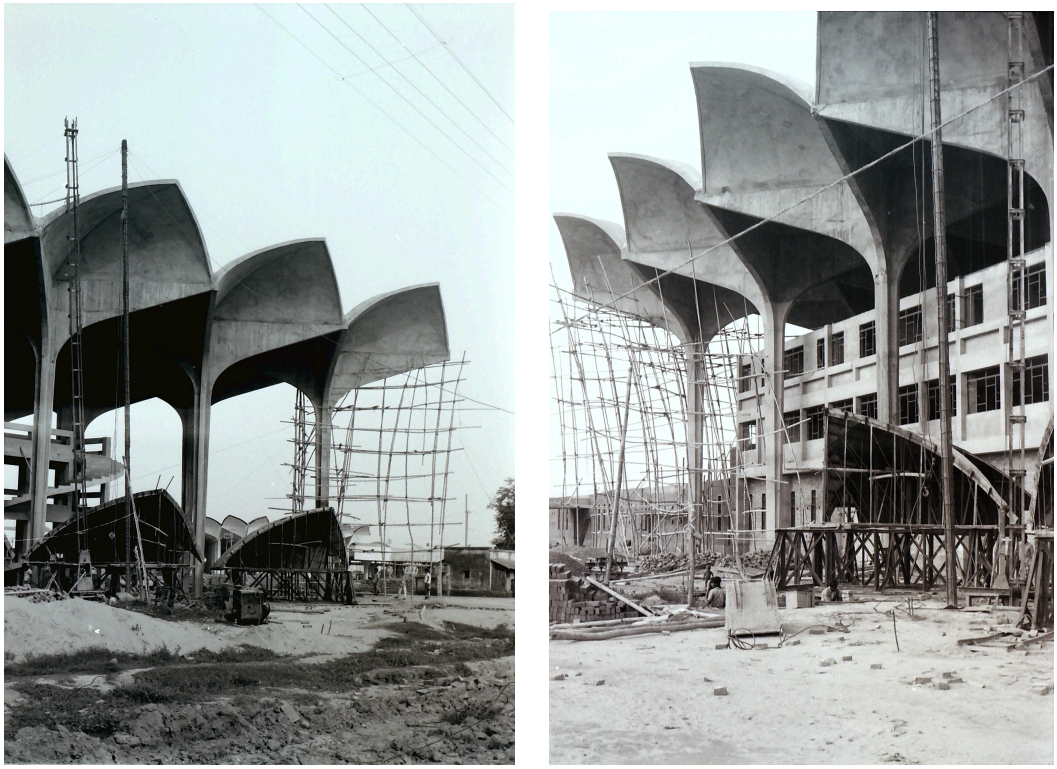


Figure 118: Construction of the Canopy Structure, Kamalapur Railway Station, Dhaka, Daniel C. Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham



HARVARD ARCHITECTURAL

CONSTRUCTION WORKSHOP

One of the major accomplishments of contemporary architecture was the integration of design and construction as inseparable parts of a total architectural process. This healthy merging counteracted the unfortunate split between visual and structural aspects that had developed in American architecture.

Students prepare mock-ups

Paraboloid umbrella in tomorrow's building

Now, however, the rapidly multiplying complexities and techniques of modern building methods are threatening to revive the former separation of design and construction. This trend clearly must be resisted with all the means at our disposal. Architecture must take into consideration not only the social requirements of our times, but also the best possible use of modern technical knowledge.

In order to combat the recurrent disintegration between construction and design, architectural students in the Harvard Graduate School of Design were given the problem of dealing with analysis, design, and actual construction of building components for today's dwelling. The object of the experimental work was to find what economic and technical problems must be overcome in order to lower the cost of building without sacrificing the standards of good design and architectural qualities. The work was done in the Architectural Construction Workshop of the Graduate School of Design, under the direction of Dean Jose Luis Sert, Professor Huson Jackson and Visiting Critics Eduardo Sacriste and Alvaro Ortega.

10 new england ARCHITECT and BUILDER, Illustrated — MARCH-APRIL, 1959

Figure 119:Workshop attended by Dunham in GSD at Harvard University. Source: Katherine Dunham

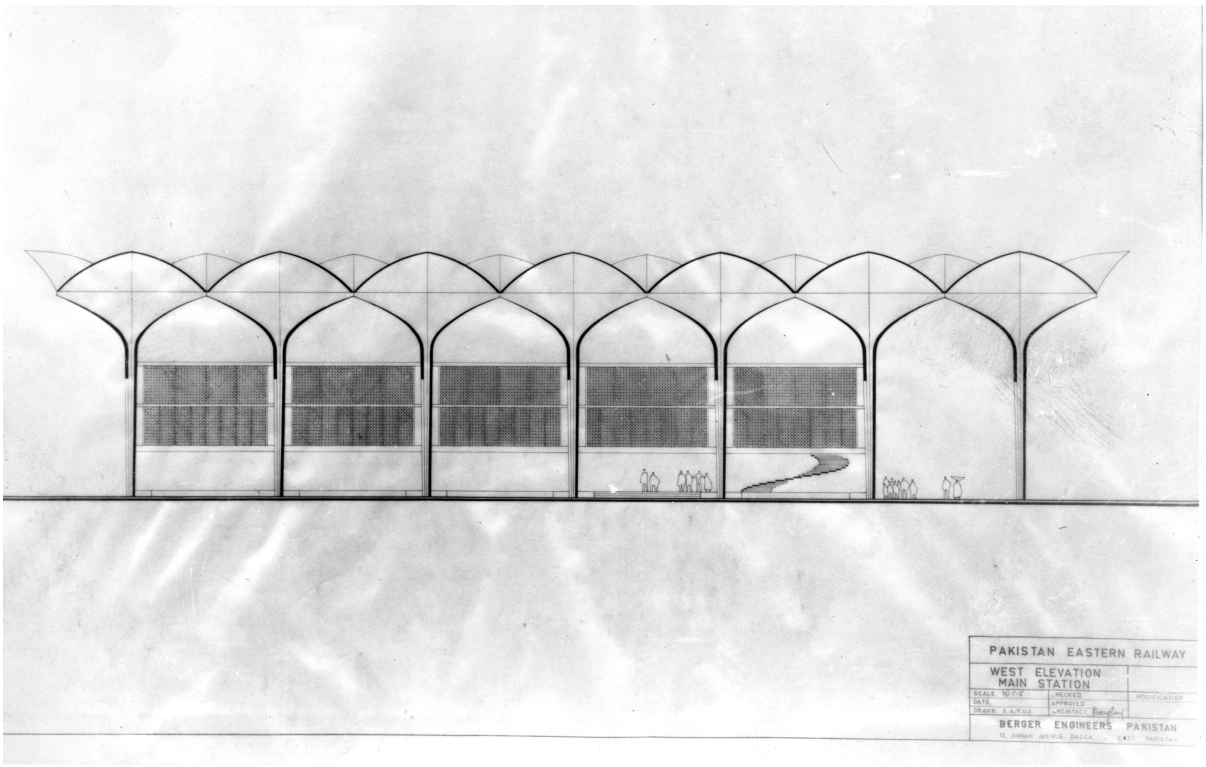


Figure 120: Pointed Arches for the Canopy, Kamalapur Railway Station, Dhaka, Daniel C. Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham

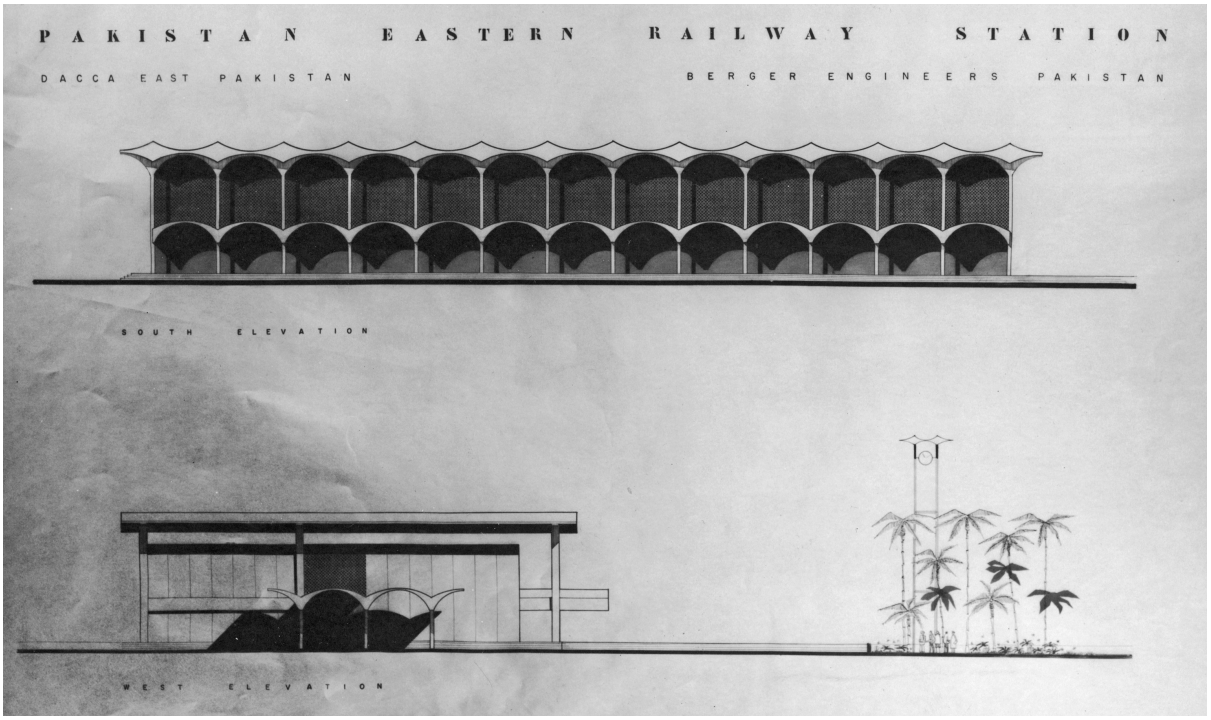


Figure 121: Vaulted Roof, Elevation of the Kamalapur Railway Station, Dhaka, Daniel C. Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham

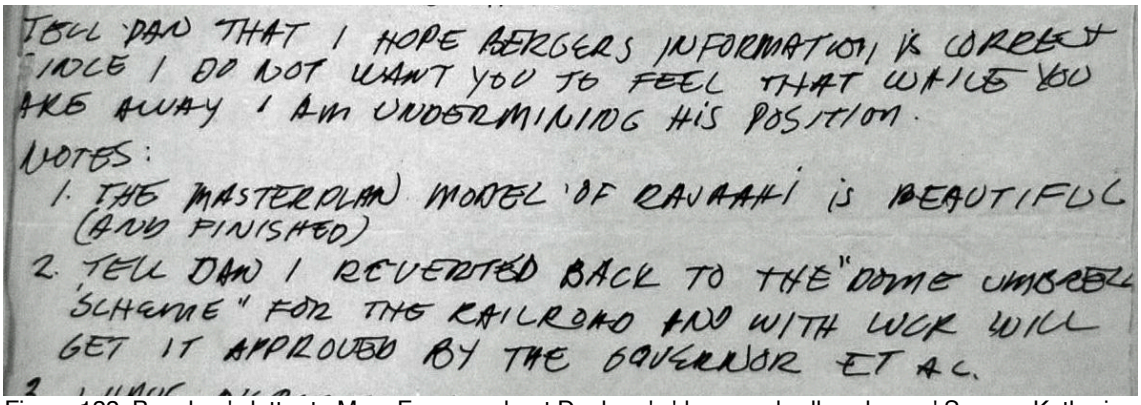

TELL DAN THAT I HOPE BERGERS INFORMATION IS CORRECT
SINCE I DO NOT WANT YOU TO FEEL THAT WHILE YOU
ARE AWAY I AM UNDERMINING HIS POSITION.
NOTES:
1. THE MASTERPLAN MODEL OF RAJSHAHI IS BEAUTIFUL
(AND FINISHED)
2. TELL DAN I REVERTED BACK TO THE "DOME UMBRELL
SCHEME" FOR THE RAILROAD AND WITH LUCK WILL
GET IT APPROVED BY THE GOVERNOR ET AL.

Figure 122: Boughey's letter to Mary Frances about Dunham's 'dome umbrella scheme.' Source: Katherine Dunham

Upon Dunham's leaving, the designs were changed by the authorities to cut costs. However, since Boughey was in charge of supervision, he assured that the 'dome umbrella scheme' would remain unchanged (fig. 121). This was evident in a letter sent from Boughey to Mary Frances,

> I do not want you [to] feel that while you are away, I am undermining his position. Tell Dan, I reverted back to the Dome umbrella scheme […] and with luck will get it approved by the governor (fig. 122).[439]

Kamalapur Railway Station reflects how limited available resources can still produce great buildings. However, it is assumed that the railway authorities further intervened during the supervision resulting in the lack of important solutions such as water penetration during heavy rainfall. The design of the station was begun in 1962 and it opened for service in 1968 when Dunham had already left the country. The structure remained one of largest in Dhaka in the 1960s and is still celebrated as an icon of pre-independent Modern Architecture in Bangladesh.[440]

---

[439] Dunham, interview.
[440] This is evident in recent exhibition at MoMA in which Dunham's Kamalapur Railway Station is featured.

4.4 Architectural Education

The establishment of formal architectural education demonstrate a prominent transformation in the institutional historiography of Bangladesh. The book edited by Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham provides a historical background of the establishment of the first architectural department in East Pakistan's (now Bangladesh's) University of Engineering and Technology (EPUET later BUET) followed by the narratives and experiences of the foreign educators and local students amidst the cold war context of East Pakistan. However, what has not been explored is the role of pedagogy within the architectural culture of the region in its political context that made the role so important. Thus, this segment reveals historical analysis of the initiation of architectural education in Bangladesh supplemented by empirical analysis of the pragmatic shifts in the field of architecture. I will argue that how institutionalising architecture in a local context was indeed a pivotal moment and how this intention unfolded radical possibilities in creating a foundation for architectural education in Bangladesh. In this section, a critical discussion of the architectural education establishment in East Pakistan will be included. The section will examine the architectural pedagogy in three parts. Firstly, a historical overview of the architecture department will be presented concerning the context in which the aids were provided and highlighting the educators and pupils who were involved. Secondly, an analysis of setting up the curriculum and the setbacks that had been faced by the expatriate teachers, will feature. And thirdly, a study of the construction of the architectural department building and its surrounding designs will be discussed, which involved the teachers and students in the tangible sphere of introducing architecture as a type of formal education and profession in the region. This analysis will help to

understand the communication between foreign and local embodiments through the ideas of learning, building, and adapting. The study will demonstrate a critical observation of the establishment of architectural education in East Pakistan which was entangled with the uncertainties of the 1960s until the Liberation War.

4.4.1 Institutional Context

Before the British ruling period, there was no formal architectural education in the Indian subcontinent. The professional training in architecture was introduced during the colonial regime. Architectural drawings were rendered and altered for existing local systems by British architects who would send drawings from Britain and subsequently this would be adapted by the local draftsmen or foreign engineers according to their regional needs.[441] At first, the latter were trained by assisting European engineers in architectural projects. However, as the demand for draftsmen and architectural assistants grew, formal training programmes were necessary to train skilled people to assist European architects and engineers.

There were two arts and craft schools: Sir Jamsethji Jijibhai (J. J.) School of Art in Mumbai established in 1857 and the Mayo School of Art in Lahore established in 1875. The curricula of these schools were devoted to art and art history. To establish a formal training programme for architectural education, these two schools were accredited by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) in London.[442] Hence, by the early

[441] Afroza Parvin and Steven Moore, "Educational Colonialism and Progress: An Enquiry into the Architectural Pedagogy of Bangladesh," *Pedagogy, Culture and Society* 28, no. 1 (2020): 95, https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2019.1599996.
[442] RIBA was also guided by the notion of architecture as a universal discipline. Established in 1834 as a professional body for architects in Britain - shaping their relation to the state and other professions, acting as a learned society, increasingly defining the terms of entry into the profession

twentieth century, both the art schools of Mumbai and Lahore had established architectural programmes that were placed within the curriculum set by the RIBA to prepare draftsmen and architectural assistants.[443] By the end of British rule in 1947, there were three institutions of architecture in India and one in Pakistan: Delhi Polytechnic in Delhi, the J. J. School of Art in Mumbai, Maharaja Sivajirao University in Baroda and the Mayo School of Art in Lahore.[444] Afterwards, the five-year programme in architecture was established in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh (then East Pakistan), Sri Lanka and Nepal in 1945, 1958, 1961, 1965 and 1992 respectively.[445] These newly founded architectural schools were modelled mainly on British or American pedagogies or were collaborations with accredited Western universities.

Architectural education in Pakistan was initiated for the rapid need of development in the newly-built nation. It was recognised by President Khan that 'the concept of education [was] a vital national investment and a major determination of the nation's economic growth.'[446] Hence introducing education in different fields including architecture became a part of the Second Five Year Plan (1960-65). After the Mayo School of Art in Lahore, the PWD School of Architecture was established in Karachi. However, neither of the institutes offered anything beyond training draftsmen and

---

and therefore actively shaping architectural education - the RIBA inevitably came to assume the same functions for British Empire at the turn of the new century just as architects began to take on a more prominent role in shaping the empire. See, Crinson, *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire*, 45-47.

[443] Anyone who completed the Matriculation exam (tenth grade) was eligible to apply for the course. By 1930, a three-year Diploma in Architecture programme was arranged that was equivalent to RIBA's Intermediate exam. Even though controlled by RIBA, the courses did not aim to produce professionals who would be able to work in Britain or anywhere else in Europe. See, Jyoti Hosagrahar, "South Asia: Looking Back, Moving Ahead-History and Modernization," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 61, no. 3 (2002): 46.

[444] Hosagrahar, "South Asia: Looking Back, Moving Ahead-History and Modernization," 356.

[445] Hosagrahar, "South Asia: Looking Back, Moving Ahead-History and Modernization," 356.

[446] Bengali, *History of Educational Policy Making and Planning in Pakistan*, 5.

architectural assistants.[447] When the Mayo School of Art in Lahore was upgraded to the National College of Art (NCA) in 1958, it attempted to offer a decent five-year architectural programme that could barely run its first batch of students as it was shut down in 1962. Around this time the Moghulpara Engineering College was upgraded to the West Pakistan University of Engineering and Technology in Lahore with a department of architecture.[448] Despite foreign aids and assistance available for both wings of Pakistan, no record of any association with a Western university for establishing West Pakistani architectural institutions has been found until the 1960s. Although there were expatriate architects working in Pakistan, the architectural educational sector in West Pakistan remained in charge of more local architects as several pupils trained from the J. J. School of Art received further training abroad either in the UK or in the USA. These officially recognised architects later formed the Institute of Architects Pakistan. It had eleven members, including two foreigners working in Pakistan namely M. A. Ahed, Tajuddin Bhabani, Minoo Mistry, Pir Mohammed, R. S. Rustumjee, H. H. Khan, M. A. Mirza, Bloomfield, Peter Powell, A. H. Thariani and Zahiruddin Khawaja.[449]

In contrast, Muzharul Islam was the only local architect in East Pakistan who was trained as an architect in the USA. Apart from Islam, most of the architectural projects were designed by expatriate architects who were working locally in the region. Whilst West Pakistan was setting its own course in the sector of architectural education, East Pakistan was assisted by the United States Agency for International Development

[447] Mumtaz, *Architecture in Pakistan*, 168.
[448] Mumtaz, *Architecture in Pakistan*, 169.
[449] Mumtaz, *Architecture in Pakistan*, 164.

(USAID) to set up the first architectural department. The main goal of USAID was to help newly-built independent nations be self-sufficient in the technical and educational sectors by sending advisors to establish institutions in which locals would be trained and be able to solve their own problems.[450] As a consequence, the architecture department in EPUET was established in 1961 in collaboration with Texas Agriculture and Mechanical (A&M) University based in the USA.

The first architectural department in East Pakistan was established in the context of post-WWII settings. One the one hand, the Second World War devastation was focused on re-building Europe and on the other, newly independent nations were largely 'in need of assistance to develop their infrastructure and education system.'[451] Whilst the Marshall Plan was assigned to aid European nations, there was another alliance formed to help the developing countries. The International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) Congress was held in Paris in 1954 and sought to technically assist developing countries on a co-operative basis. As an extension to that, another conference was held in 1956 specifically to manage aid with interested countries from South-East Asia. The latter conference agreed to establish a permanent Secretariat in South-East Asia which came into final agreement in the ICA Congress held at Stockholm in 1957. In 1960, a regional office of the ICA was established in New Delhi.[452]

---

[450] Qazi A. Mowla, "Architectural Education in Bangladesh: An Exclusive Interview with The Delegate," (2015), 2. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342010721_Architectural_Education_in_Bangladesh_An_exclusive_Interview_with_The_Delegate.

[451] Rafique Islam, "Overhead View," in *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka*, ed. Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham (2011), 7.

[452] Islam, "Overhead View," 7.

Whilst this co-operative plan was exploring its horizons, the world was divided into individual powers and influential organisations for segregated blocks of countries. The USA had established a NATO alliance with countries in Western Europe, Russia initiated the Warsaw pact alliance with Eastern European countries and remaining countries formed a group of non-aligned nations.[453] This was the era when the USA became very suspicious about the nuclear development in the Soviet Union. Geo-placement of Pakistan was an advantage as it was in the south-eastern side of Russia. Therefore, an alliance with Pakistan would have been a strategical advantage for the USA to observe Russia. This resulted in converting the Marshall Plan into USAID with the help of the Foreign Assistance Act in 1961. This provided a separation in funding from the military aid to assist and administrate economic programmes in the other parts of the world. The main objective was to help the developing countries to be self-sufficient by introducing them to programmes such as the Development Loan Fund, Export-Import Bank and Food for Peace schemes.[454] The USAID scheme continued the ICA exchange and co-operation initiatives that had been established since 1954.

USAID then initiated a visiting teacher and student programme with the Agriculture College in Mymensingh and then later with EPUET and Texas A&M University.[455] When the Pakistani Government issued a scheme to establish a Technical University in each wing, Ahsanullah Engineering College in Dhaka was converted into a university in 1962. The scheme that had been in progress in the background between

[453] Islam, "Overhead View," 7.
[454] Islam, "Overhead View," 7.
[455] Mowla, "Architectural Education in Bangladesh: An Exclusive Interview with The Delegate," 3.

Ahsanullah Engineering College (AEC) and Texas A&M University since 1954 now finally started to create a base for a separate faculty of architecture and planning at EPUET (fig. 123-124).[456] The Director of Texas A&M Office of International Programmes, Dr Jack D. Gray selected some teachers to set up the new Department of Architecture. Aid was already provided as the initial plan was to educate and train some students from the Agriculture College and Ahsanullah Engineering College in the field of architecture. The teachers would design a curriculum, conduct entrance exams, and select suitable students to enrol in the university. Richard Edwin Vrooman and a few of his colleagues led this challenging job to establish an architecture department in Dhaka.



Figure 123: Site of Architecture Department in EPUET, Dhaka. Source: Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham, eds., *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka* (Dhaka: 2011), 7.

[456] Islam, "Overhead View," 7.

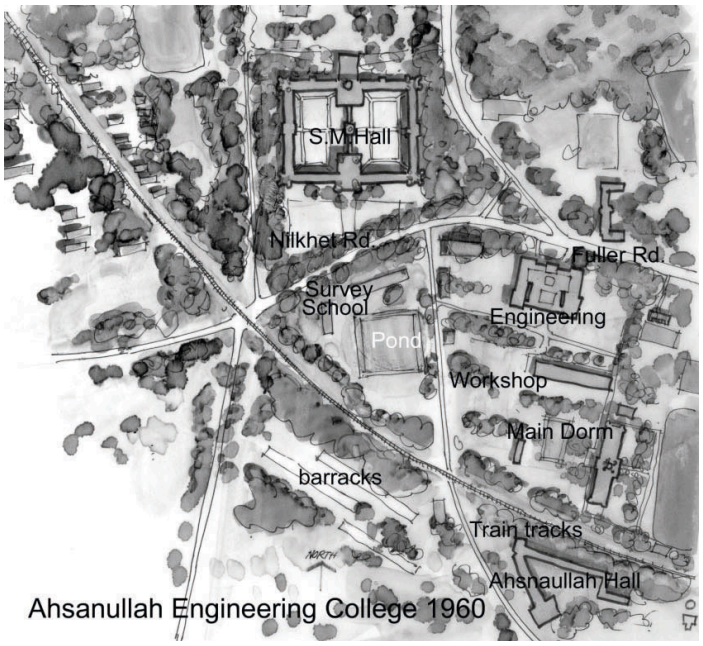


Figure 124: Ahsanullah Engineering College in 1960. Source: Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham, eds., *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka* (Dhaka: 2011), 8.



Figure 125: Richard Edwin Vrooman. Source: Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham, eds., *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka* (Dhaka: 2011), 99.

Richard E. Vrooman was born in Cleveland, Ohio. He was a graduate from Oberlin College (1941) and received a B. Arch degree from Western Reserve University (1949) in Ohio (fig. 125). In 1952, he pursued his master's degree in architecture from

Texas A&M University. Later, he taught architecture at Texas A&M University for forty-five years. He also practiced architecture and in his early career, Vrooman designed the existing All Faiths Chapel on the main campus of the university. He also produced a book about the guidance of colour in architecture whilst working at Texas A&M. Vrooman served as a captain in the US Army Air Corps during World War II and was a part of the invasions of Africa and Italy. In the next phase of his life, from the 1960s, Vrooman spent seven years of his teaching career in East Pakistan as a part of the USAID contract with Texas A&M University. In 1961, Dhaka was a small city and 'the way of conducting business was reminiscent of [the] postcolonial hierarchical system of bureaucracy.'[457] Amidst this environment, setting up a new architectural school was challenging for Vrooman. However, his dedication rewarded him with establishing an education system that was suitable for students and teachers.

This would not have been possible if Vrooman had not built a team for the department. Over the years, there were five American architecture professors who contributed their knowledge to set up a suitable curriculum. In 1962, Daniel Dunham from Berger Consultant joined the school and Vrooman's former employee James C. Walden from his Texas office also joined. Sam T. Lanford and Jack Yardley were recruited in 1963 and 1966 respectively (fig. 128).[458] Amongst the five founding teachers, Dunham was the only one who was brought into the team locally. Although Dunham was not experienced in teaching, nonetheless, his familiarity with the country, culture and people made him an obvious candidate for the job.[459] Additionally, Dunham was a

[457] Islam, "Overhead View," 8.
[458] Jack Yardley was a designer from Caudill Rowlett Scott Architects.
[459] Dunham and Dunham, *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967, Part II: Our Days*, 27.

practicing architect which was mutually helpful in setting up the curriculum as well as implementing his local construction experience with the students.

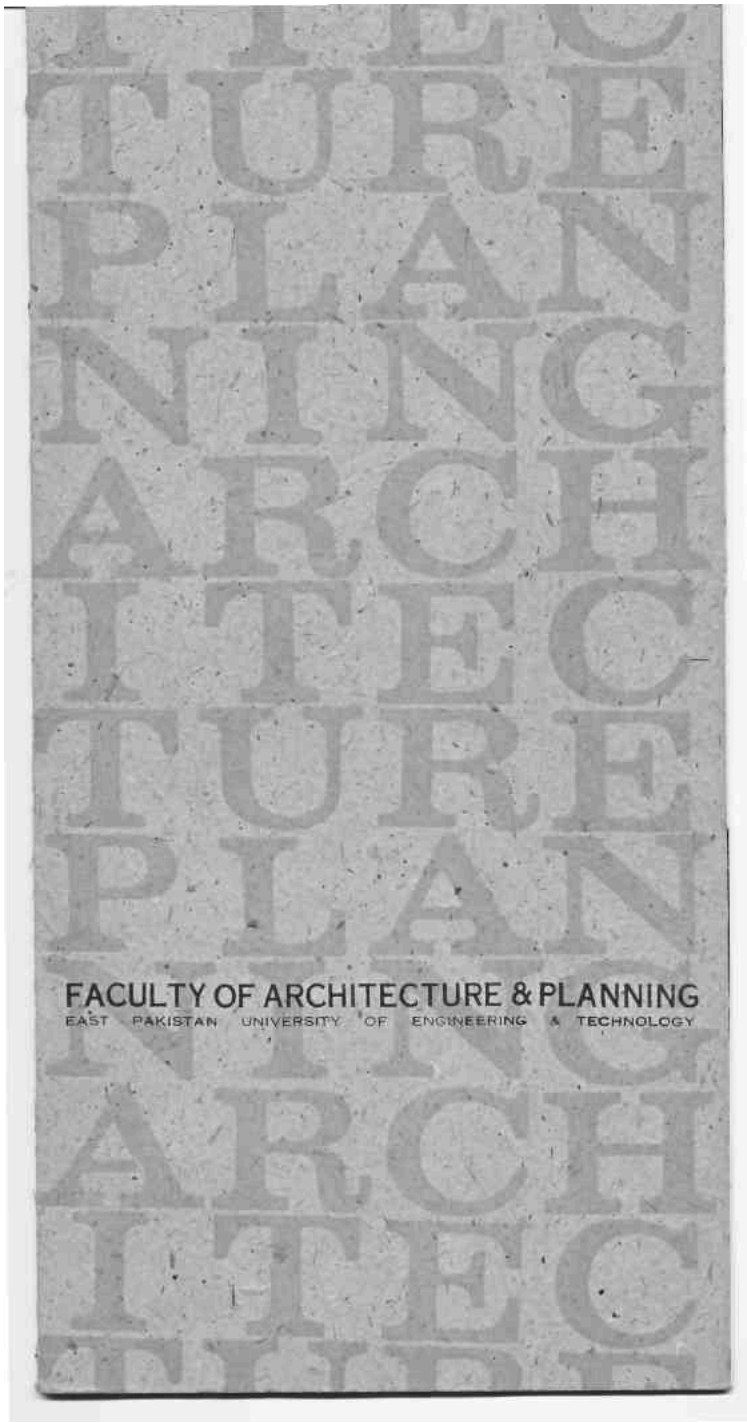


Figure 126: The Brochure of Department of Architecture, EPUET, 1964. Source: Katherine Dunham

4.4.2 The First Architectural Department: Curriculum

Setting up the five-year programme curriculum for the founding teachers was a big challenge as there were no pre-existing formats available. Almost everything written and published about the establishment of EPUET mentions the challenges and struggles of the team in setting up the department. In his two essays about the architecture department in Dhaka, Walden emphasises three difficulties during the job: setting up the curriculum, giving women students the opportunity to study architecture and the ongoing political turmoil that relatively obstructed the educational continuity.[460] Walden outlines the initial struggle of setting up the department alongside Vrooman and Dunham. He writes,

> When Dik, Dan, and I landed in Dacca in early 1961, we had nothing except our enthusiasm: no classrooms, offices, curriculum, or students. The vice chancellor, an MIT graduate from Bengal, quickly found space for us in existing undistinguished buildings. We then set about devising a curriculum for a five-year undergraduate program.[461]

Therefore, their first challenge was to determine what to teach and to whom they would teach. Walden also mentions that as there was no guided handbook on starting the architectural school, they therefore decided to start with the classical modernism of the United States. However, on proposing the curriculum the American academics were then instructed to include Islamic architecture. In another memoir 'Planting the Seeds' Walden recalls,

---

[460] Walden, "Memoir: My Dacca Days."; James Walden, "Planting the Seeds," in *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka*, ed. Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham (Dhaka: 2011).
[461] The nickname of Vrooman and Dunham are Dik and Dan respectively. See, Walden, "Memoir: My Dacca Days," 30.

> As I remember it there were lengthy discussions concerning the courses of study we should offer. There was much discussion about integrating what we were to do in the new and different culture of East Pakistan. There was a lot of discussion around determining whether or not there was an Islamic architecture that we should advocate.[462]



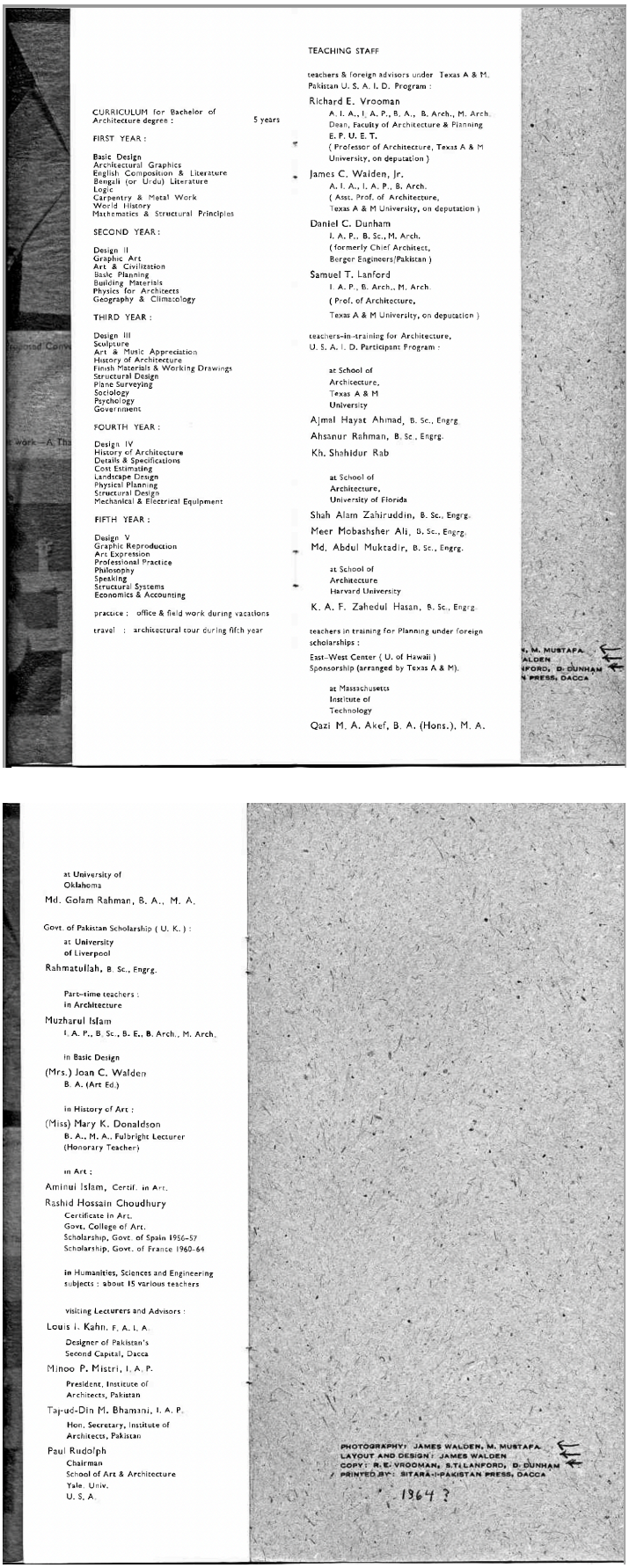
Figure 127: Students in Classroom at EPUET in the 1960s. Source: Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham, eds., *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka* (Dhaka: 2011), 23.

Later, they took counsel from local architects about the curriculum conundrum. Walden mentions Muzharul Islam as one of the key local architects to advise them on this matter.[463] In terms of the dilemma of classic Modernism and Islamic architecture, the visionary foreign architects thought 'would we be violating sensitive elements of the local culture?'[464] This statement from Walden's memoir manifests the risks of creating an education system in a fragile state still in conflict to establish its identity.

[462] Walden, "Planting the Seeds," 19.
[463] Walden, "Planting the Seeds," 19.
[464] Walden, "Planting the Seeds," 19.

The teachers also considered evaluating their qualifications in order to develop a curriculum based on Islamic architecture. Walden writes, 'None of us could even define it. We struggled with these difficult questions but did not have answers.'[465] There were two versions of the ultimate decision made by Vrooman, Dunham and Walden. Firstly, Walden mentions that they developed a curriculum based on what they knew and what was radical in architecture of that time.[466] Therefore, the curriculum was focused on classical Modernism and some model courses on Tropical Architecture from the Architecture Association (AA) in London. Secondly, they did not completely eliminate the idea of teaching Islamic architecture. Rather they developed design studio activities which were broadly inspired by the culture of East Pakistan.[467] The method of teaching included understanding the principle of architectural design and developing skills that incorporated local materials and methods. Islam argued that the imported and imposed system of the colonial past had changed, and people started seeking independent ideas 'to control their own destiny and find their own identity.'[468] Thus the architectural education in East Pakistan was organised with the principles of the USAID programme, a teaching system that would help the locals to solve their own design and construction challenges in the near future (fig. 128).

[465] Walden, "Planting the Seeds," 19.
[466] Walden, "Planting the Seeds," 19.
[467] Walden, "Memoir: My Dacca Days," 30.
[468] Islam, "Overhead View," 9.



CURRICULUM for Bachelor of Architecture degree : 5 years

FIRST YEAR :

Basic Design
Architectural Graphics
English Composition & Literature
Bengali (or Urdu) Literature
Logic
Carpentry & Metal Work
World History
Mathematics & Structural Principles

SECOND YEAR :

Design II
Graphic Art
Art & Civilization
Basic Planning
Building Materials
Physics for Architects
Geography & Climatology

THIRD YEAR :

Design III
Sculpture
Art & Music Appreciation
History of Architecture
Finish Materials & Working Drawings
Structural Design
Plane Surveying
Sociology
Psychology
Government

FOURTH YEAR :

Design IV
History of Architecture
Details & Specifications
Cost Estimating
Landscape Design
Physical Planning
Structural Design
Mechanical & Electrical Equipment

FIFTH YEAR :

Design V
Graphic Reproduction
Art Expression
Professional Practice
Philosophy
Speaking
Structural Systems
Economics & Accounting

practice : office & field work during vacations

travel : architectural tour during fifth year

TEACHING STAFF

teachers & foreign advisors under Texas A & M, Pakistan U. S. A. I. D. Program :

Richard E. Vrooman
A. I. A., I. A. P., B. A., B. Arch., M. Arch.
Dean, Faculty of Architecture & Planning
E. P. U. E. T.
(Professor of Architecture, Texas A & M University, on deputation)

James C. Walden, Jr.
A. I. A., I. A. P., B. Arch.
(Asst. Prof. of Architecture, Texas A & M University, on deputation)

Daniel C. Dunham
I. A. P., B. Sc., M. Arch.
(formerly Chief Architect, Berger Engineers/Pakistan)

Samuel T. Lanford
I. A. P., B. Arch., M. Arch.
(Prof. of Architecture, Texas A & M University, on deputation)

teachers-in-training for Architecture, U. S. A. I. D. Participant Program :

at School of Architecture, Texas A & M University

Ajmal Hayat Ahmad, B. Sc., Engrg.

Ahsanur Rahman, B. Sc., Engrg.

Kh. Shahidur Rab

at School of Architecture, University of Florida

Shah Alam Zahiruddin, B. Sc., Engrg.

Meer Mobashsher Ali, B. Sc., Engrg.

Md. Abdul Muktadir, B. Sc., Engrg.

at School of Architecture Harvard University

K. A. F. Zahedul Hasan, B. Sc., Engrg.

teachers in training for Planning under foreign scholarships :

East-West Center (U. of Hawaii) Sponsorship (arranged by Texas A & M).

at Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Qazi M. A. Akef, B. A. (Hons.), M. A.

at University of Oklahoma

Md. Golam Rahman, B. A., M. A.

Govt. of Pakistan Scholarship (U. K.) :

at University of Liverpool

Rahmatullah, B. Sc., Engrg.

Part-time teachers : in Architecture

Muzharul Islam
I. A. P., B. Sc., B. E., B. Arch., M. Arch.

in Basic Design

(Mrs.) Joan C. Walden
B. A. (Art Ed.)

in History of Art :

(Miss) Mary K. Donaldson
B. A., M. A., Fulbright Lecturer (Honorary Teacher)

in Art :

Aminul Islam, Certif. in Art.

Rashid Hossain Choudhury
Certificate in Art, Govt. College of Art.
Scholarship, Govt. of Spain 1956–57
Scholarship, Govt. of France 1960–64

in Humanities, Sciences and Engineering subjects : about 15 various teachers

visiting Lecturers and Advisors :

Louis I. Kahn, F. A. I. A.
Designer of Pakistan's Second Capital, Dacca

Minoo P. Mistri, I. A. P.
President, Institute of Architects, Pakistan

Taj-ud-Din M. Bhamani, I. A. P.
Hon. Secretary, Institute of Architects, Pakistan

Paul Rudolph
Chairman
School of Art & Architecture
Yale Univ.
U. S. A.

PHOTOGRAPHY: JAMES WALDEN, M. MUSTAFA
LAYOUT AND DESIGN: JAMES WALDEN
COPY: R. E. VROOMAN, S. T. LANFORD, D. DUNHAM
PRINTED BY: SITARA-I-PAKISTAN PRESS, DACCA
1964 ?

Figure 128: The Final Curriculum and Teaching Staff names from the Brochure | Source: Katherine Dunham

Another challenge was to generate an admission test that could determine the best-suited applicants for the architectural profession. Mary F. Dunham recalls the initial format of the admission test that was tailored to select the pupils. She writes,

> They devised a new kind of exam. Instead of the typical format that tested for memorised answers, they created open-ended questions to determine creative potential and abilities. James Walden remembers that the last question on the exam "asked candidates to fold a blank piece of paper into an interesting shape and leave it on their desk."[469]



Figure 129: First Female Students of EPUET: Nazeema Habib, Shaheen Chowdhury and Wajeda Rab. Source: Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham, eds., *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka* (Dhaka: 2011), 126.

The first batch of architecture started with only six students although in the later years the subject became popular to include more. The challenges were raised when Vrooman and his team decided to give equal chances to everyone. This changed the

[469] Dunham and Dunham, *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967, Part II: Our Days*, 28.

perception of ‘only rich families or men can study architecture’ as many students from poor families or minority groups such as females or aboriginals were selected for admission.[470] Walden recalls,

> Even though it went against the norm, we decided to accept female students. In the end, our inaugural class, in the fall of 1961, comprised 26 men and three women.[471]



Figure 130: Daniel Dunham in Design Class with Wajeda Rab | Source: Katherine Dunham

In the 1960s, it was seldom to encounter women in any institution or profession in East Pakistan due to the conservative Islamic culture. Indeed it was rare to witness any women studying after their high school education. However, the culture of Bengal was

[470] Islam, "Overhead View," 8-10.
[471] Walden, "Memoir: My Dacca Days," 30.

more open to allow anyone to study or work. Consequently, it was in favour of the foreign teachers admitting a few of the women to the architecture department. Another issue was the religion of students (fig. 129-130). One of the former students, Wajeda Rab writes,

> I remember there were three Hindu students in our class who left for Kolkata, in the aftermath of the war. Suddenly our class size shrank from about 22 to 19. I heard Prof. Vrooman gave those three students letter of recommendation to get admitted to Indian schools of architecture.[472]

There was mixture of Hindu and Muslim students in the classes, who later needed to leave for Kolkata in 1965 due to the Indo-Pakistan war. This incident clearly demonstrates how the religious division was actively involved in every sector in East Pakistan. Nonetheless, the student body became diverse with time and the entrance exam known as the 'design test' was the only method to select pupils.

For the first few years, the teachers had to teach multiple disciplines as there were a very limited number of academics. For design classes, several methods were applied. Vrooman was meticulous and 'encouraged each student to excel in their capabilities.'[473] Along with his aforementioned book on guidance of colour in architecture at Texas A&M University, Vrooman also wrote another book on perspective drawings at EPUET. Additionally, being experienced both in teaching and practicing, Vrooman was skilled in dealing with all issues related to architecture such as drafting, designing and construction management.[474] Meanwhile, Dunham would

[472] Islam and Dunham, *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka*, 30.
[473] Islam, "The Teacher," 37.
[474] Islam, "The Teacher," 37.

take students outside of the classroom to introduce them to a materialistic approach in architecture. This included taking the students to one of the first five-star hotels in Dhaka named Intercontinental to teach them how western hotels and restaurants were designed and functioned.[475] Additionally, Dunham included his students in a vernacular housing study of the living situation of male labourers in Dhaka.[476] This research enabled the students to be engaged in thinking about 'actual urban housing needs and challenges from observing the world around them.'[477] There were not many supplies for drawing or model-making in Dhaka in the early 1960s. As a solution, Vrooman ordered studio supplies from the USA which would take couple of months to arrive and a storeroom was arranged to store the finest materials and equipment. In the meantime, Dunham decided to find local resources for which he went to the Islampur-Chawkbazar area of Old Dhaka and found regular thin cardboard sheets and local bookbinders who used boiled flour glue.[478] Also, to resolve the issue of model-making knives, Dunham went to the Tataribazar blacksmith area and asked them to make several.

[475] Dunham and Dunham, *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967, Part II: Our Days*, 38.
[476] Dunham called the shared housing pattern 'messing' – a term from British times based on the military name for a group of men who live and eat together. See, Dunham and Dunham, *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967, Part II: Our Days*, 37.
[477] Dunham and Dunham, *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967, Part II: Our Days*, 37.
[478] Dunham and Dunham, *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967, Part II: Our Days*, 38.



Figure 131: Daniel Dunham with his students at EPUET. Source: Katherine Dunham

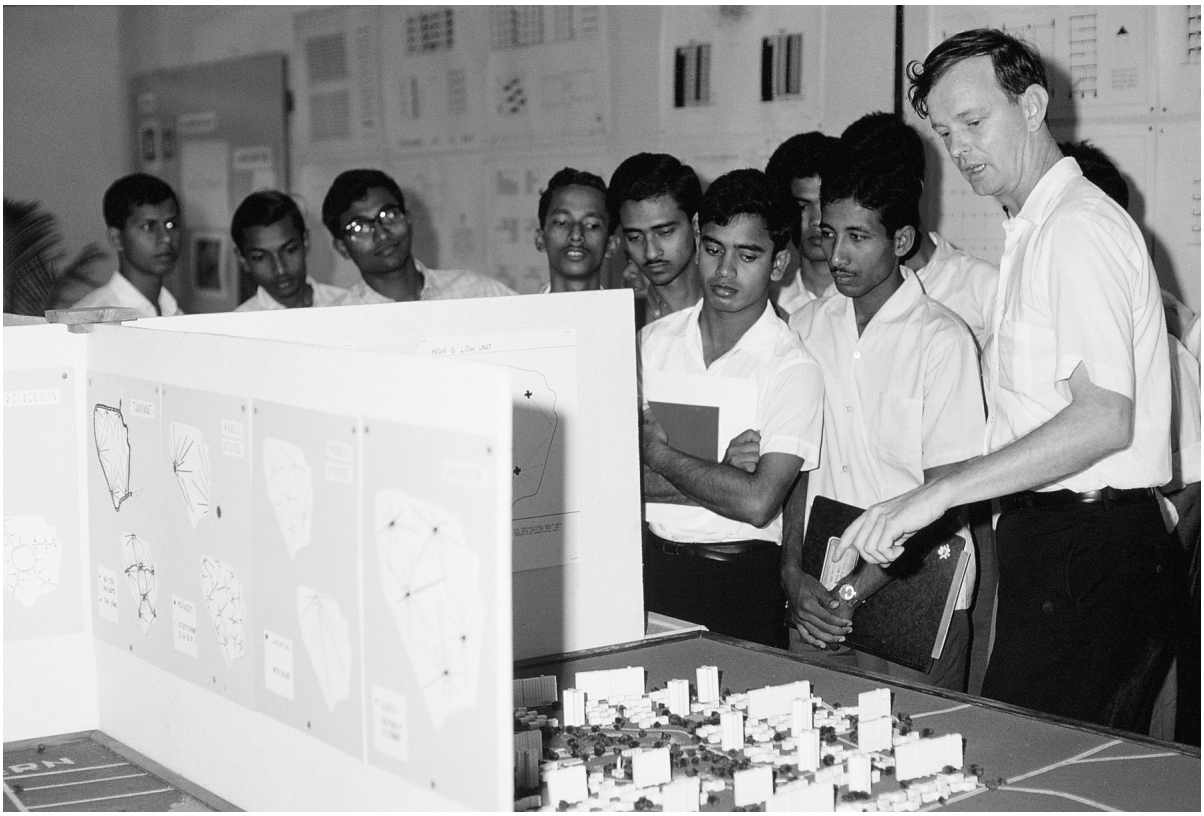


Figure 132:Daniel Dunham with his students at EPUET. Source: Katherine Dunham



Figure 133: Joan Walden taking Design Class. Source: Katherine Dunham

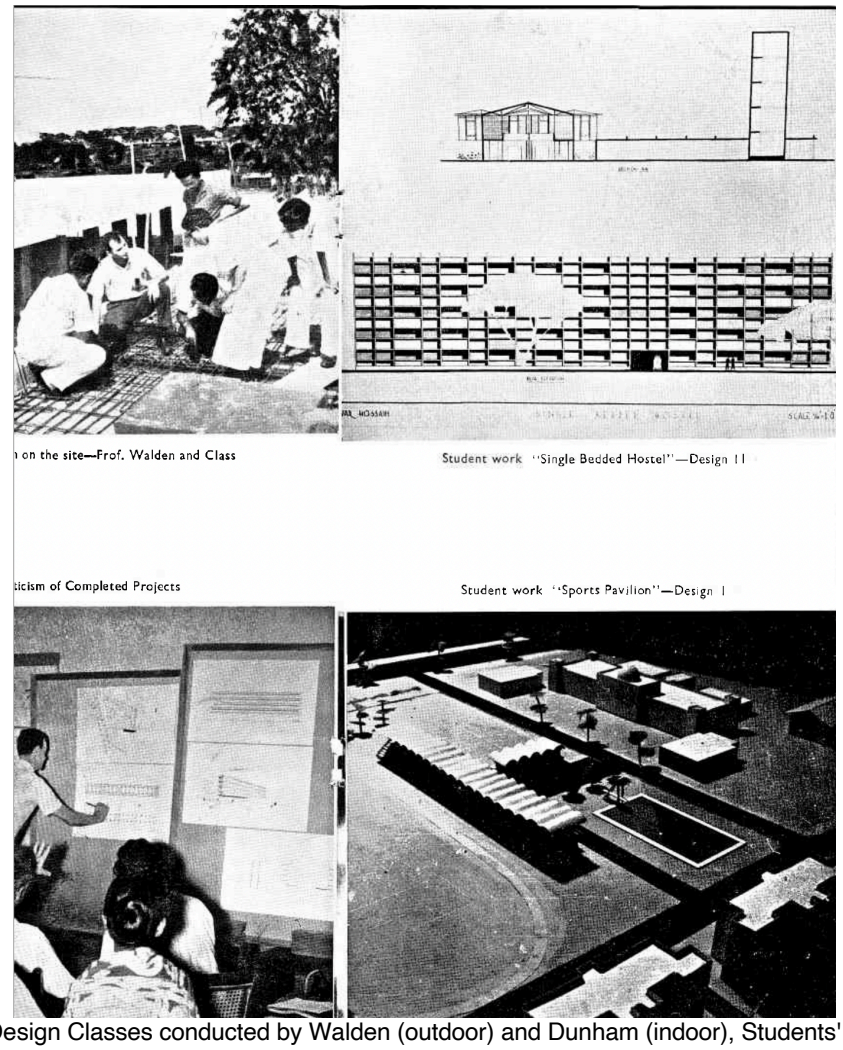


Figure 134: Design Classes conducted by Walden (outdoor) and Dunham (indoor), Students' drawings and models prepared for Design class. Source: Katherine Dunham

Gradually the department started to grow as more teachers were hired to teach other subjects. In order to distinguish the architecture school from the existing engineering curriculum, Vrooman and his team decided to include subjects from the humanities and arts. This would create a diverse environment in which both local and foreign professors would be teaching together. The Vice Chancellor of the Engineering University started to take the structure class and more tutors were enlisted under the USAID programme to join the faculty.[479] Mary F. Dunham reminisces that from his local contacts with foreigners, Daniel Dunham invited a number of scholars to teach courses such as art history and music appreciation.[480] There were some short-term visiting professors who also covered many subjects, such as, Jaques Koek in city/regional planning and Edward Romieniec, Robert White and John Exeley in Landscape Architecture. Roy Vollmer who was working with Louis Kahn at Dhaka worked as a part-time teacher alongside C. Gustaf Langford and Khadem Ali.[481] The arts and humanities classes were covered by some of the active foreign women teachers, namely Joan C. Walden, Mary Kay Donaldson, Mary F. Dunham and Ann W. Werkheiser. There were notable practicing architects who performed visiting lectures in the department, such as Muzharul Islam, then the president of the Institute of Architects Pakistan, Paul Rudolph from Yale University, Stanley Tigerman from Chicago, Angelo Lucia from Michigan, Aptulla Kuran from Middle Eastern Technical University (METU) and Helmut Borcherdt from Germany. Visiting lectures from these notable architects provided the students with the vision of real-life and world-wide architectural trends. Around the same time, Louis I. Kahn was designing the Sher-E-

[479] Islam, "Overhead View," 10.
[480] Dunham and Dunham, *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967, Part II: Our Days*, 32.
[481] Islam, "Overhead View," 10.

Bangla Nagar which was the iconic and most ambitious project ongoing in Dhaka. This massive project enabled the students to witness a landmark construction which was designed with the methods suited to the local climate by using local materials. This project also gave opportunities for students to work part-time in Kahn's office in Dhaka providing them with valuable experience.

As the department was setting up with admitting students, it sometimes became difficult when the foreign members of the architectural department faced continuous political obstacles. As the country was long dependant on foreign assistance (USAID), the political unrest instigated more hinderance. There were continuous riots and strikes during the 1960s due to the continuation of the Bengali Language Movement of the 1950s. Often the teachers would find their classrooms empty as the students were out on active strikes. The Indo-Pakistan War of 1965 even forced a lot of foreigners, including the teachers of the architecture department, to evacuate to safe cities for a while. Walden recalls,

> In those early days there was a lot of political turmoil in and around Dacca. Students at the university where frequently on strike over some issue or another and this was a periodic disruption of our teaching efforts. Additionally at some point India and Pakistan became embroiled in armed conflict and our families were all evacuated to Manila leaving all the [local] men to continue our programmes.[482]

[482] Walden, "Memoir: My Dacca Days," 30.

Eventually, the goal of creating the architecture department was achieved. The programme was designed to phase out American teachers and planned to be run by the local teachers. Thus, by the end of 1968, Vrooman had left Dhaka to continue his job at the Texas A&M University. The department was fully staffed with a local Dean and teachers. Shah Alam Zahiruddin was appointed the new Dean whilst Vrooman would continue working as the Chief Advisor from abroad. Additionally, many students who had graduated from the first and second year classes of architecture joined the department as teachers.[483] According to Walden's statement, 'we were just trying to start something.'[484] The USAID operation was successful in adopting a pedagogical approach that developed skills to draft, design and construct buildings; and motivated students to identify local problems and design their own with the basis of local needs. Sponsored by USAID, the framework of architectural education established by Vrooman and his team achieved a standard system inseparable from the present Bangladeshi architectural context.

4.4.3 The First Architectural Department: The Building

Whilst the architecture school was steadily running its course, Vrooman was requested by the Vice Chancellor of EPUET, Prof Dr M. A. Rashid, to design and construct the architecture department building and adjoining administration buildings on the campus (fig. 138).[485] Additionally, the Vice Chancellor also requested Dunham to work on a master plan for the campus in order to assess the 'growth pattern and

[483] Ajmal Hayat Ahmad, Abdul Muktadir, Meer Mobashsher Ali, Shahidur Rab and K.A.F Zahedul Hasan joined as new staff in the department. Art classes were taken by Prof. Razzaque, Aminul Islam and Rashid Chowdhury. See, Islam and Dunham, *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka*, 13.
[484] Walden, "Memoir: My Dacca Days," 30.
[485] Wajeda J. Rab, "In Gratitude to Professor Richard E. Vrooman," in *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka*, ed. Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham (2011), 124.

area requirement.'[486] Dunham produced a conceptual study of the site plan to evaluate this growth pattern but this plan was never implemented.[487]

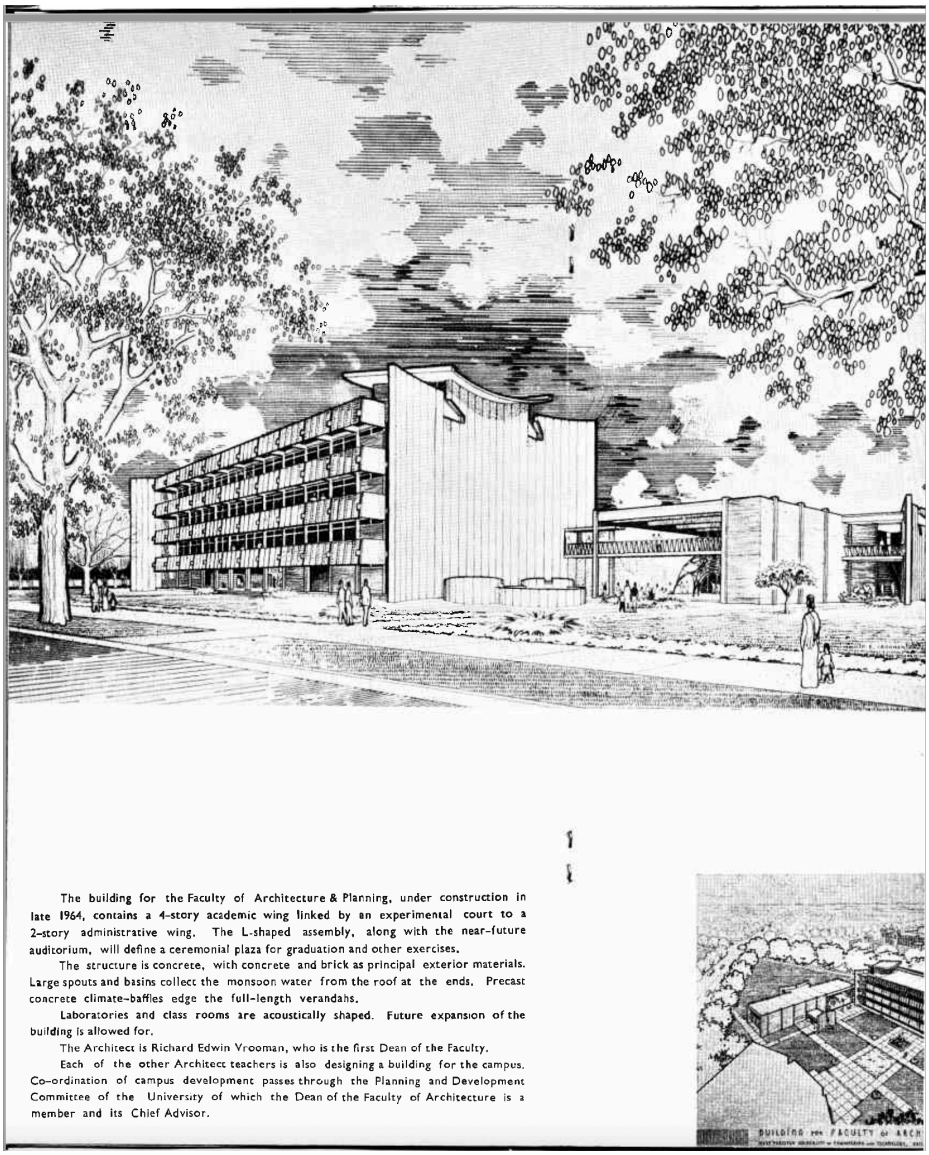


Figure 135: Architecture Department Building, Dhaka. Source: Author



Figure 136: First Classroom and Corridors. Source: Katherine Dunham

[486] Islam, *A Man for All Reasons: Daniel C. Dunham 1929-2000*, 85.
[487] Islam, "The Building," 85.



The building for the Faculty of Architecture & Planning, under construction in late 1964, contains a 4-story academic wing linked by an experimental court to a 2-story administrative wing. The L-shaped assembly, along with the near-future auditorium, will define a ceremonial plaza for graduation and other exercises.

The structure is concrete, with concrete and brick as principal exterior materials. Large spouts and basins collect the monsoon water from the roof at the ends. Precast concrete climate-baffles edge the full-length verandahs.

Laboratories and class rooms are acoustically shaped. Future expansion of the building is allowed for.

The Architect is Richard Edwin Vrooman, who is the first Dean of the Faculty.

Each of the other Architect teachers is also designing a building for the campus. Co-ordination of campus development passes through the Planning and Development Committee of the University of which the Dean of the Faculty of Architecture is a member and its Chief Advisor.

Figure 137:Vrooman's rendering of the Architecture Department Building. Source: Katherine Dunham

Meanwhile, Vrooman was handed a site on the west side of the Engineering University campus which had housings for the Survey School.[488] The site was located between the railway tracks on the south, a street lined with trees on the north and a pond in the middle (fig. 138).[489] Vrooman took the challenge to design and build the architecture department from the scratch in that he not only considered the form, function and aesthetics, but also took into account the hot and humid climate by elongating the

[488] Islam, "Overhead View," 11.
[489] Islam, "The Building," 55.

structure in an east-west orientation (fig 135).[490] The building became one of most recognisable built-forms on campus with its ideal modern and tropical characteristics. The form and mass were honestly expressed with a structural system, materials, framing and other functional elements.[491]

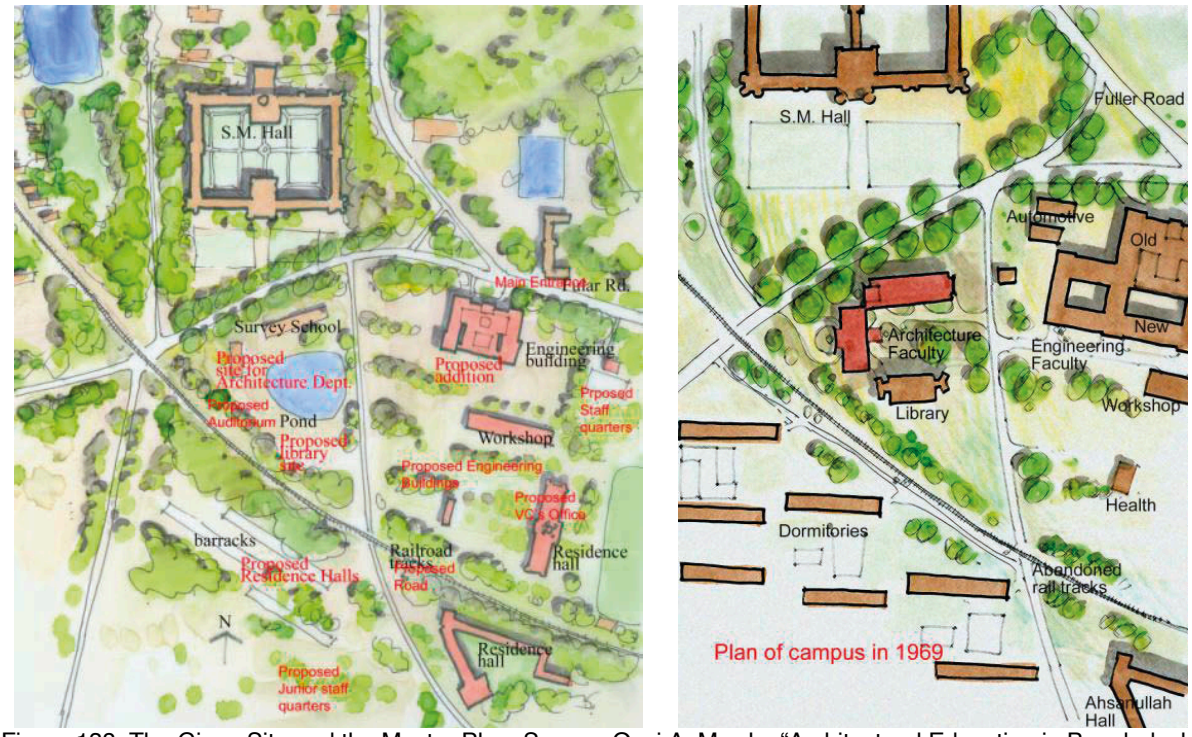


Figure 138: The Given Site and the Master Plan. Source: Qazi A. Mowla, “Architectural Education in Bangladesh: An Exclusive Interview with The Delegate," (2015), 2.

As a teacher in the newly-built department, Vrooman planned his building so that it would not only provide proper functions for the school but would also ‘serve as a textbook example of how buildings are to be planned, designed and constructed.’[492] Islam has compared the Bauhaus Building in Dessau to Vrooman’s design of the architecture building in Dhaka as the administrative and classroom wings of the two

[490] Rab, "In Gratitude to Professor Richard E. Vrooman," 124.
[491] Islam, "Overhead View," 11.
[492] Islam, "The Building," 55.

structures are linked to each other (fig. 139).[493] The architecture department building took some inspiration from the concept of the Bauhaus building as Vrooman designed each building according to its 'own scale and identity' but connected them together.[494] Nonetheless, as Nizamuddin Ahmed has argued, the complex also demonstrated a plaza space that recalls local functionality. The space created by linking the buildings forms a courtyard which reflects the *uthan* (courtyard) culture of rural houses of Bangladesh.[495] The main entrance was placed at the junction of the two buildings. The four-storied classroom wing was bracketed by semi-circular facades on each side alongside the large circular plant holders (fig. 140). In the classroom building, a strict structural grid of columns and beams was installed to allow non-bearing internal walls to divide and lay out the classrooms. The layout of the classrooms and studios was designed to be functional for both day and night. Alongside the spacious arrangement of the studios, the exterior louver on each side of the building also assured 'filtered sunlight at daytime and [a] view at night.'[496] The railing panels were designed with louvers to provide cross-ventilation as the classrooms were not air-conditioned. The wide-open deep balconies behind the cast-in-place concrete louvers served as corridors for the classrooms (fig. 143).[497] The adjoining two-storied administrative wing included staff offices, a library and a double height exhibition space for conducting juries and displaying models. Vrooman succeeded both as a mentor and a designer during his project to construct the architecture department (fig. 139). He shared his drawings and designs for the building with the students and discussed the concepts

[493] Islam, "The Building," 55.
[494] Islam, "The Building," 55.
[495] Nizamuddin Ahmed, "Vrooman's Faculty: Overcoming the Test of Time," in *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka*, ed. Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham (2011), 74.
[496] Ahmed, "Vrooman's Faculty: Overcoming the Test of Time," 74.
[497] Rab, "In Gratitude to Professor Richard E. Vrooman," 124.

behind them (fig. 137). This provided the students with a learning experience of actually constructing a building very closely.

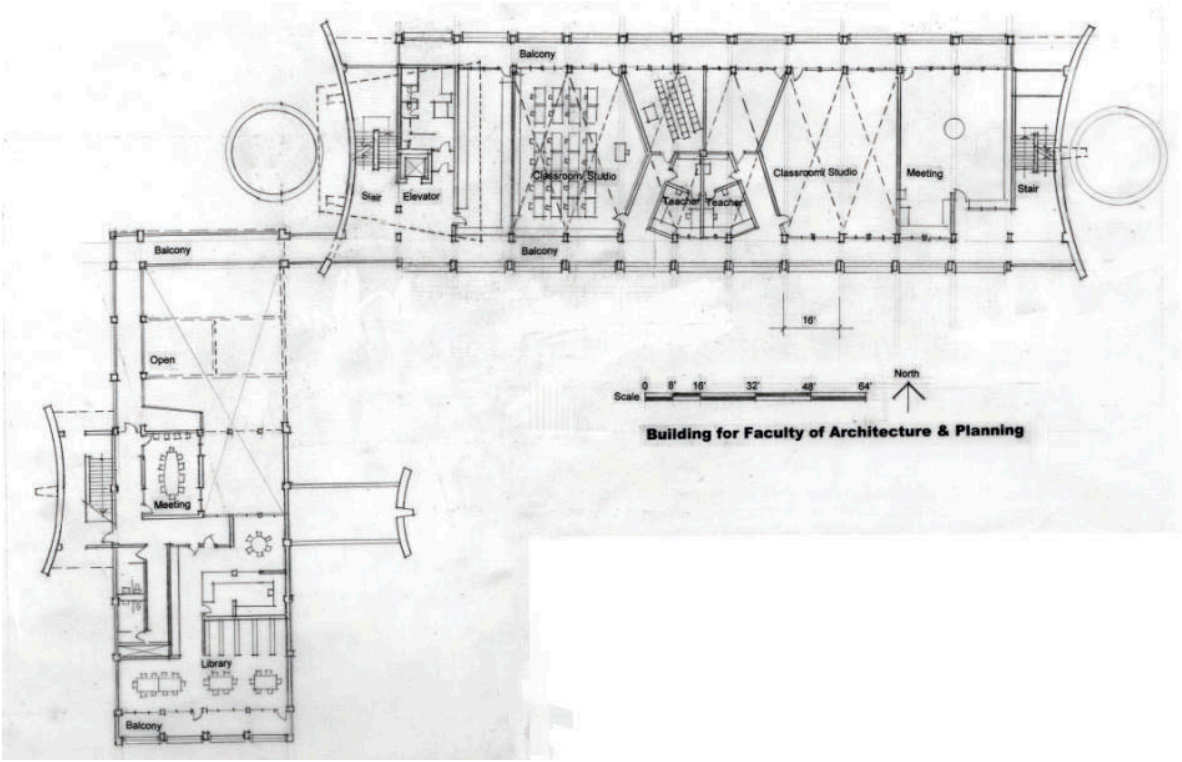


Figure 139: Plan of the Architecture Department Building designed by Richard Vrooman. Source: Department of Architecture, BUET


Figure 140: Semi-circular Facades with Large Circular Plant Holders. Source: Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham, eds., The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka (Dhaka: 2011), 59



Figure 141: Bamboo Scaffolding for Construction. Source: Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham, eds., *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka* (Dhaka: 2011), 63-69.



Figure 142: Jury Space in the Administrative Building. Source: Author



Figure 143: The Classroom Corridors. Source: Author

After the completion, Vrooman held a meeting forum with his staff and students to critique the building. One concern was how the building would expand in the future. In answer to that, Vrooman explained how the structure was designed to expand vertically.[498] One complication which arose was the problem of being able to keep the circular drop off with the front entrance as the military authorities decided to erect boundary walls for safety. This discontinued the access from the main street to the buildings. Eventually, the natural tree-lined street became the backside of the building and the circular arrival point was never realised. Nonetheless, the building was aesthetically praised and ideally functioned for its purpose. As Rafique Islam describes:

> To its credit, the building has provided a much needed space for architecture students and staff away from the stuffy quarters of the Engineering Department. It has given the department its distinct identity. Students find studio spaces are very user friendly and use them day and night. The collaborative nature of architecture and open flow of ideas are enhanced by such spaces. Festivals, parties and celebrations are held in the building and spill out into the courtyard. It is indeed a building to celebrate and celebrate in. The gift of Mr. Vrooman to the generations of architects continues to live on an encourage, educate and enrich.[499]

In due course, the EPUET staff members grew in numbers including local teachers. As a government university, the department required faculty housing and student accommodation. Dunham designed the teachers' housing for the department. Also,

[498] Islam, "The Building," 56.
[499] Islam, "The Building," 69.

Walden and Boughey designed more faculty housings and student dormitories on campus.[500]

Dunham's design of the EPUET faculty housing followed a straightforward plan (fig. 144-145). During the design, Dunham was mindful about the local culture and religious traditions. He studied the future tenants' household needs and visited different homes to understand a Bengali family's daily routine. The apartment layout was flexible to provide separate spaces for women and servants yet functioned well as a unified apartment.[501] Additionally, Dunham integrated himself with more local domestic activities such as the idea of hanging wet *saris* out for drying in the balconies and windows.[502] He was inspired by the colourful pattern of the local *saris* and decided to implement the concept in the design of the building facades. Dunham therefore positioned the balconies on the southern side to enable maximum exposure to air and light (fig. 147). Furthermore, he 'spaced the balconies vertically according to the dimension of a standard *sari*, so that each *sari* would hang in its own space without overlapping the [other] *saris* from the floors above or below.'[503]

---

[500] Walden, "Memoir: My Dacca Days," 30; Islam, *A Man for All Reasons: Daniel C. Dunham 1929-2000*, 85.
[501] Dunham and Dunham, *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967, Part II: Our Days*, 42.
[502] *Sari* is the traditional women's garment wore in the Subcontinent.
[503] Dunham and Dunham, *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967, Part II: Our Days*, 42.

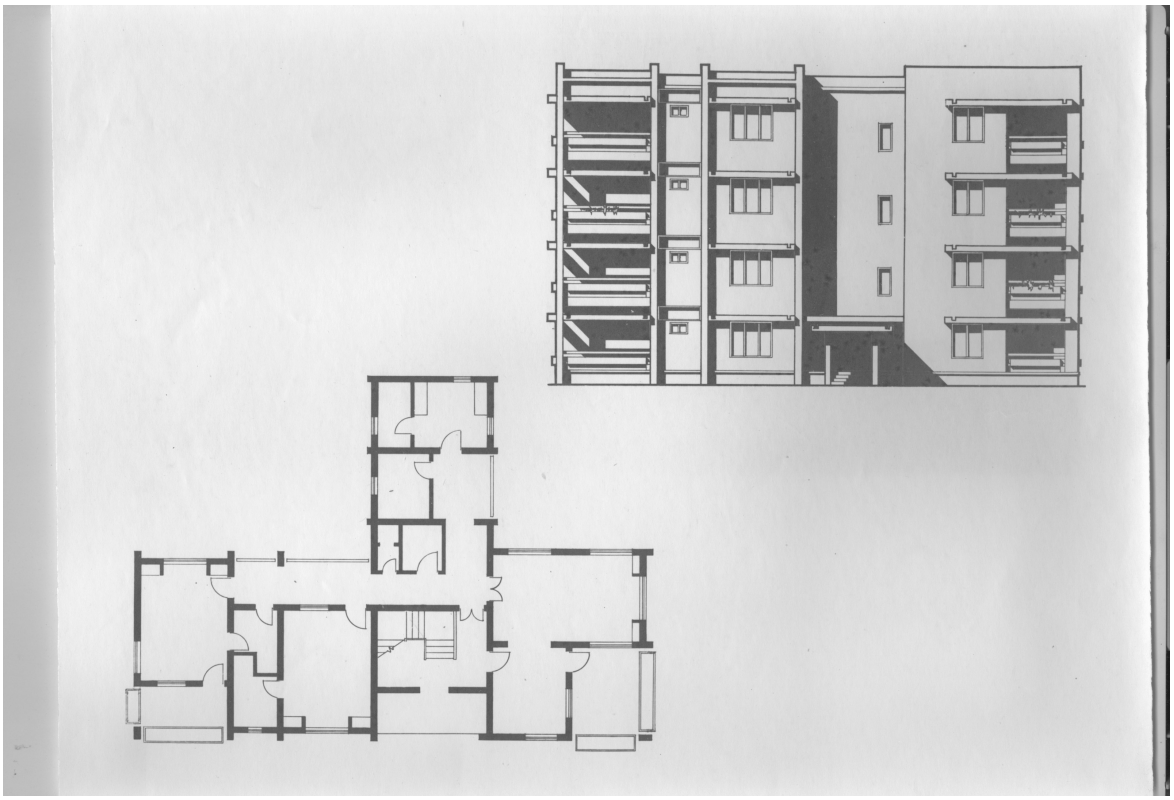


Figure 144: Plan and Elevation of EPUET Faculty Housing, Daniel C. Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham

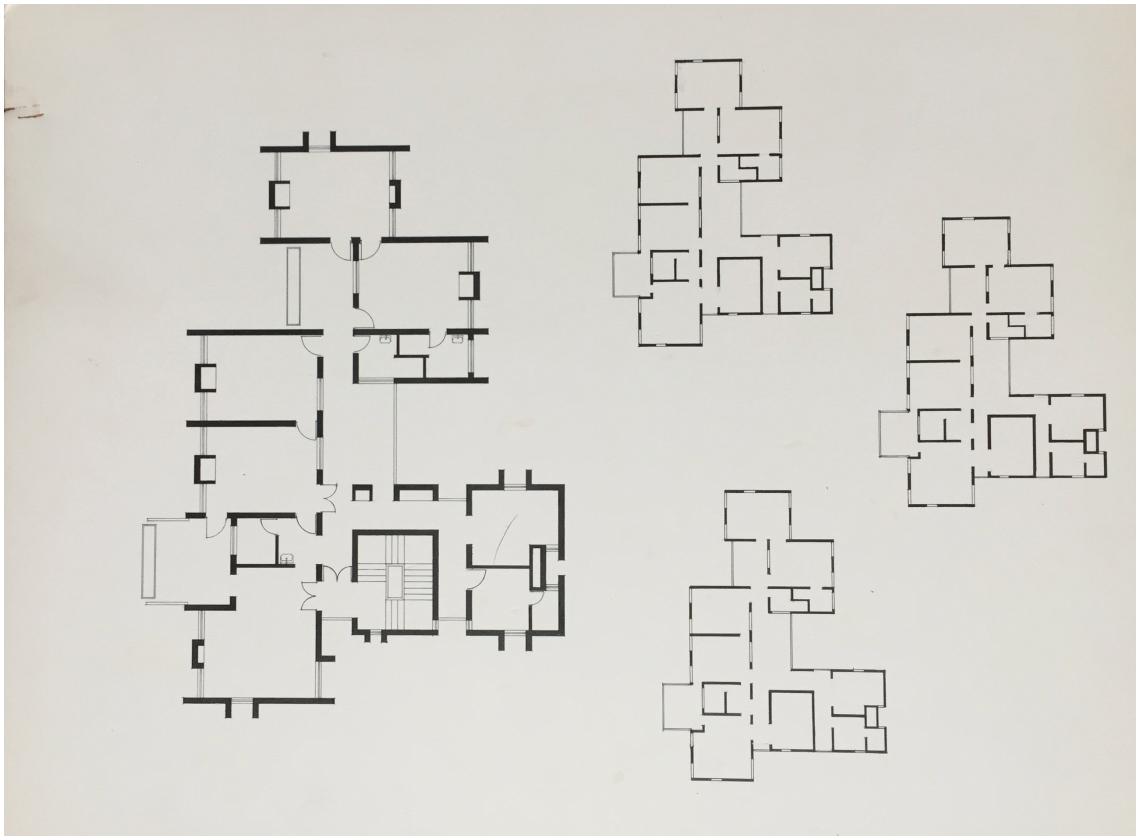


Figure 145: Plan of EPUET Faculty Housing, Daniel C. Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham

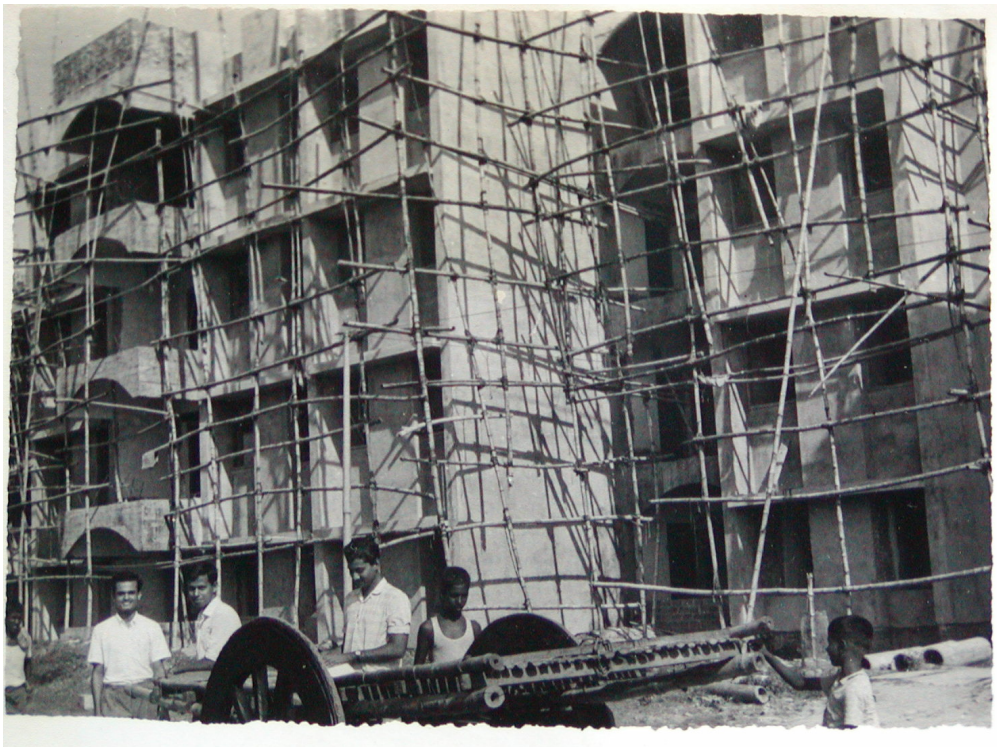


Figure 146:Construction of EPUET Faculty Housing, Daniel C. Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham



Figure 147: EPUET Faculty Housing, Daniel C. Dunham. Source: Katherine Dunham

Boughey, then the Chief Architect of Berger Associates, designed three identical male-student hostels in the south-western part of EPUET: Titumir Hall, Suhrawardy Hall and Sher-E-Bangla Hall; all three of the hostels are still functioning in a similar way to the architecture department building and faculty housing today (fig. 148). The hostels consist of accommodation, a canteen, common-rooms, and prayer spaces. Each complex has two indistinguishable residential buildings separately placed. In between the buildings, there is a canteen block and a common room block with a prayer space. The residential wings mediated by the two blocks create a courtyard for outdoor gatherings for students. In a similar way to Vrooman and Dunham, Boughey also considered the tropical climate by aligning the structure in the east-west axis to provide exposure from the north and south (fig. 149). The exterior of the residential wings is transparent as the outer layers serve as balconies and corridors on each side, and the internal spaces are rooms with windows on both sides. Boughey included shadings for passive cooling in the corridors which also functioned as an elevated informal space for student interaction. The residential structure is designed in a symmetrical order with the staircase at its centre and with a toilet block at the two opposite ends. Fatema Tasmia observes,

> The series of dwelling cells with operable transparent screen-like window walls are sandwiched with two transparent layers of semi-outdoor space on both sides, one of which is the common circulation corridor, and the other is a series of more private balconies. The residential wings of each hostel block look at the central courtyard through corridors.[504]

[504] Tasmia and Riyaad, "Sensitivity Towards Context and Climate: An Understanding of Robert G. Boughey's Architectural Works in Bangladesh," 35.

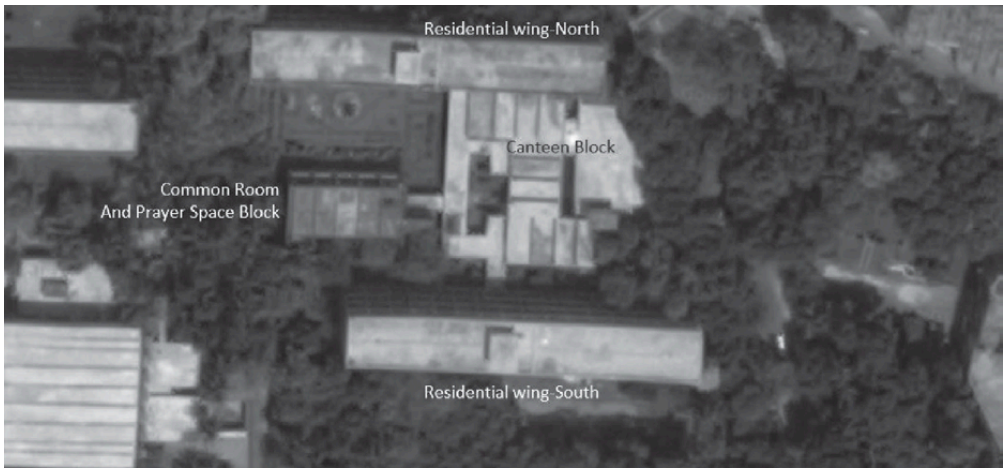


Figure 148: Site Plan of the complex of Titumir Boys Hostel. Source: Google Map

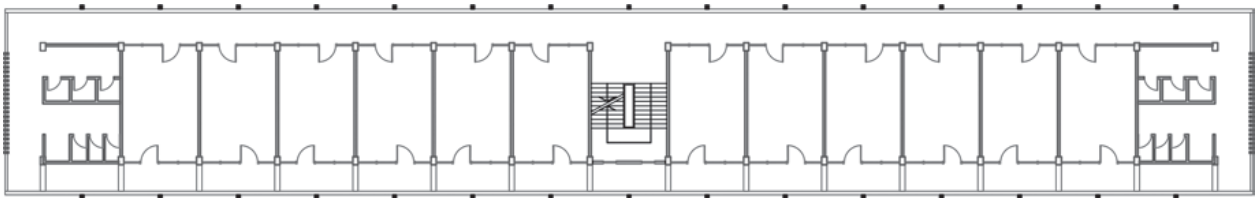


Figure 149: Typical Floor Plan of Residential Wing of Boys Hostel. Source: Fatema Tasmia and Mahmudul Anwar Riyaad, "Sensitivity Towards Context and Climate: An Understanding of Robert G. Boughey's Architectural Works in Bangladesh," Journal of Architecture 18, no. 1 (2021): 37.

Despite the dominant horizontality, the building has a well-composed vertical expression. Boughey rationally designed the exterior façade with climate consideration by including cantilevered beams (fig. 150). These beams support the corridor and balconies equipped with linear lintels which 'adds a dimension in visual composition.'[505] Boughey also designed a series of rainwater downspouts in light of the heavy monsoon weather of the region (fig. 151). The rainspouts are positioned 'to collect the rainwater from the roof and discharge them to the ground through the vertical concealed shafts.'[506] Although Boughey was concerned with the tropical

[505] Tasmia and Riyaad, "Sensitivity Towards Context and Climate: An Understanding of Robert G. Boughey's Architectural Works in Bangladesh," 35-36.
[506] Tasmia and Riyaad, "Sensitivity Towards Context and Climate: An Understanding of Robert G. Boughey's Architectural Works in Bangladesh," 36.

climate, he also implemented traditional features within his modern building. He used a *jali* (perforated) brick screen as a translucent façade for the staircases. The other two blocks containing canteen and common room were also designed with post-lintel concrete frameworks with a cantilevered roof (fig. 152).[507]

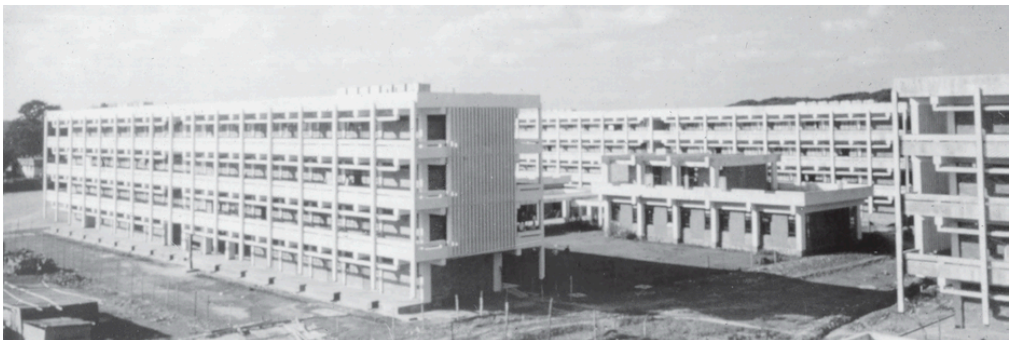


Figure 150: Boys Hostel Complex in 1964. Source: Fatema Tasmia and Mahmudul Anwar Riyaad, “Sensitivity Towards Context and Climate: An Understanding of Robert G. Boughey’s Architectural Works in Bangladesh,” *Journal of Architecture* 18, no. 1 (2021): 35.



Figure 151: Rainwater Downspouts and Devices. Source: Fatema Tasmia and Mahmudul Anwar Riyaad, “Sensitivity Towards Context and Climate: An Understanding of Robert G. Boughey’s Architectural Works in Bangladesh,” *Journal of Architecture* 18, no. 1 (2021): 36.

[507] Tasmia and Riyaad, "Sensitivity Towards Context and Climate: An Understanding of Robert G. Boughey’s Architectural Works in Bangladesh," 36.



Figure 152: View towards the Southern Wing of the Building. Source: Fatema Tasmia and Mahmudul Anwar Riyaad, “Sensitivity Towards Context and Climate: An Understanding of Robert G. Boughey’s Architectural Works in Bangladesh,” *Journal of Architecture* 18, no. 1 (2021): 36.

All the aforementioned designs involved in the setting up of the architecture buildings demonstrate Modern architectural features with climatic solutions. Each of the designs generates a simple rhythm that delineates the modern and rational expressions of Vrooman, Dunham and Boughey. Considering the climate, all the architects who worked in East Pakistan wisely implemented specific architectural features in their designs. These included the orientation of the building, post and lintel construction, shading devices, rainspouts and porous railings with overhanging balconies.

4.5 Conclusion

The historical and empirical findings in this chapter reveal that the construction of institutional and public buildings reflected a widespread expression of modernisation in East Pakistan. Although Ayub Khan had his own vision of nation building in relation to religion or US alliance, nevertheless, these architects manifested individuality in

their designs which was both modern as well as contextual. The buildings examined in this chapter can be referred to a similar approach of design demonstrated in Regional or Tropical Architecture which was being constructed in most of the 1960s postcolonial countries. The designs of the foreign architects in East Pakistan were indeed introducing Modernism with careful consideration to tradition and climate. However, the transformation of architecture was perhaps not so much a matter of style rather it was an altered vision of building a nation that contrasted with Khan's vision of nation building.

Doxiadis did not fully implement modernisation, rather he attempted to create an 'irreconcilable opposition between progressive democracy and regressive traditionalism.'[508] For a fact, in his earlier projects in Pakistan, he was not aware of the many detailed aspects of the religious and traditional culture of the people. Tigerman and Islam visited Doxiadis' housing project in the Old Town of Dhaka.[509] According to Tigerman, the project was compelling with its composition of 'alternative disposed one-story solid and voids' but the proportion of courtyard or air flow techniques for building orientation were non-existent.[510] The kitchens and baths were situated on the wind flow side and the squatting slabs of the toilets faced towards Mecca which was certainly not respectful to the Muslim society.[511] However, in due course, Doxiadis did acquire knowledge of the native culture and in his later projects, he advocated a hybrid expression that created a concept of topography with ideal schools, ideal training

[508] Karim, "Between Self and Citizenship: Doxiadis Associates in Postcolonial Pakistan, 1958-1968," 154.
[509] Tigerman, *Designing Bridges to Burn: Architectural Memoirs*, 132-33.
[510] Tigerman, *Designing Bridges to Burn: Architectural Memoirs*, 132-33.
[511] Tigerman, *Designing Bridges to Burn: Architectural Memoirs*, 132-33.

institutes, ideal research centres and so forth. The architecture of Doxiadis is an abstraction of the social and cultural traditions of Bengal combined with modernity.

Amongst all of these architects, Dunham spent the most time in East Pakistan which led him to experience the culture deeply and it helped him to understand the requirements the natives needed. Dunham designed his buildings with simple forms and rational functions, something that was economically sustainable. Indeed his engagement with the dwellers and his students in the designs for EPUET Faculty Housing or for Thana Housing that reveal a sincere concern for the opinion of the natives. The authorities required the Kamalapur Railway Station to be highly Islamic in form, however Dunham abstracted the required Islamic features and designed the roof with his 'dome umbrella scheme.' The architecture of Dunham offers real and rational experience in which modernism is used as a tool for sensible design.

In the establishment of the department of architecture, the intention of Vrooman and his team was to provide Bengali pupils with the basic education of architecture. However, what they actually achieved was establishing a rigid curriculum for the students who would be able to identify and conceptualise community predicaments following the modern trends of solving issues. These notions were been pointed out by Stanley Tigerman who highlighted how the teachers of the newly established department of architecture at EPUET (presently BUET) did not involve themselves with any local architectural educators or practitioners.[512] The faculties also designed and erected their dwellings as Western-style housings and did not engage with the

[512] Tigerman, *Designing Bridges to Burn: Architectural Memoirs*, 132.

native people.[513] Parvin and Moore argue that the modern trends to resolve community problems that the students were taught in architecture were technological and decontextualising.[514] They also argue that the USAID mission of serving society with a proposed 'technology-biased pedagogy' in fact served the 'interests of universal, rational and standardised superstructure.'[515] Parvin and Moore's arguments can be taken into consideration as the foreign teachers did teach modern design techniques that would in fact prove contextually futile for East Pakistan. The teaching method Vrooman and his team conducted was simply from what they knew, however success was really achieved when the students themselves came to be in charge, filling the gap of a traditional involvement in architecture. Rafique Islam observes that this was a humble beginning for architecture in East Pakistan that eventually allowed local architects to be in the service of their nation without being dependent on Western countries.[516] The architectural pedagogy introduced by Vrooman and his team produced a new generation of architects who were taught architecture estranged from the contextual thought and community they were to serve.[517] Apparently, both provider and recipient assumed Western pedagogy to be the natural and neutral form of knowledge and the ideal doctrine to spread across the world.

The consequences of imported architecture and architectural pedagogy resulted in two outcomes. Firstly, the source of gaining real experience in design and construction

---

513 Tigerman, *Designing Bridges to Burn: Architectural Memoirs*, 132.
514 Parvin and Moore, "Educational Colonialism and Progress: An Enquiry into the Architectural Pedagogy of Bangladesh," 101.
515 Parvin and Moore, "Educational Colonialism and Progress: An Enquiry into the Architectural Pedagogy of Bangladesh," 101.
516 Islam, "Introduction," 3.
517 Parvin and Moore, "Educational Colonialism and Progress: An Enquiry into the Architectural Pedagogy of Bangladesh," 101.

was through the modern buildings designed by expatriate architects. This method activated the 'neo-colonial bias towards the abstraction of modernist architecture,' which is also significantly a universal concern.[518] Secondly, the Western methods of teaching and curriculum administered a focussed system for architectural education. However, the focus abetted an academic disconnection from the place, people and culture of Bangladesh. Even decades later, the newly-founded private and Government schools of architecture are still based on the BUET curriculum. The expatriate architects and educators had a very difficult time in East Pakistan due to ongoing political turbulences. The continuous tension of a raging civil war hindered their works. Nonetheless, they produced buildings that reflected a new identity for Bangladeshi architecture and they developed a well-structured practice and teaching community that provided scope and ambition for the people.

[518] Parvin and Moore, "Educational Colonialism and Progress: An Enquiry into the Architectural Pedagogy of Bangladesh," 101.

Chapter 5: Architecture of Independence

The previous chapters traced themes and tropes related to Modernism with Bengali identity and Tropical and Regional architecture that involved the individual or group endeavours of architects. Particular attention was paid to the emergence and evolving conceptions of lingual and cultural barriers such as the paradoxical issues of Bangla and Urdu language during the 1950s. This chapter extends those ideas in a centralised political setting in which architecture will be discussed in the discourse of multidisciplinary aspects that include shifts from Modernism to Postmodernism, dualism of nation-building that resulted in a civil war and a transition of a monumental structure from a secondary built-form to a nation's icon. Throughout this section, my focus will be on the National Assembly Building which is the central structure of the Capitol Complex of Dhaka, Bangladesh (1962-83) designed by American architect Louis I. Kahn (1901 – 1974) (fig. 153-154). Ironically, this complex was never intended to be the capitol for Bangladesh, rather it was meant to be built as the second capitol for East Pakistan commissioned by President Ayub Khan as a political strategy to secure his position. In the study of the individual building, the masterplan of the complex alongside other structural elements will be mentioned, however, the analysis will remain central to the Assembly Building in order to understand its nuanced and distinctive narrative. This will reflect Kahn's attempt to invest monumentality into architecture amidst a raging political situation that changed not only the purpose of its creation but also the fate of an independent Bangladesh.

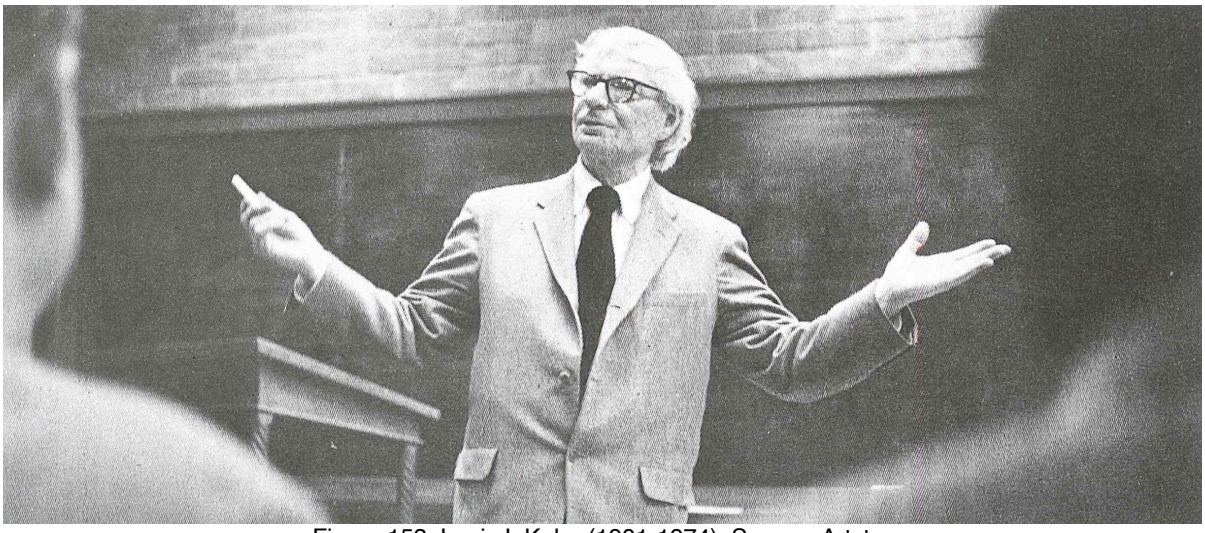


Figure 153: Louis I. Kahn (1901-1974). Source: Artstor



Figure 154: The National Assembly Building, Dhaka, Bangladesh (1962-1984). Source: Artstor

5.1 Introduction

In the history of postcolonial architecture, the National Assembly Building is considered to be a strong example. Built in a non-Western newly independent context, this building engages with the turning-point of a nation's identity and a Western

architect's career. The project encounters cross-cultural disciplinaries in mainly three sections: East and West; Bangladesh and Pakistan; and Modernism and Postmodernism. Embedded within these categories, the Assembly Building has been explored numerous times in scholarly studies, either as an architectural oeuvre of Kahn, as an instance of American Modernism or as a postcolonial transition to postmodernism manifested in a new nation. However, what has failed to be explored is the deeper connotations of this edifice in which the core concern consists of the relationship between the monument and the city in a cultural setting of dominance and submission. Drawing attention to recently published research as well as continuing studies of the National Capitol Complex of Dhaka, this chapter will attempt to unravel the discursive turbulences and misalignments that shed light on this project from a broader historical and cross-disciplinary perspective. A key purpose of this analysis is to develop a framework from existing research in order to understand the relationship between the National Assembly Building and the political situation it was constructed in. Most scholarly analyses are vastly focussed on Kahn's relationship to the complex, identifying the greatness of his creation or diagnosing its misconnections and flaws. For example, some scholars have pointed out intense discontinuity between Kahn's philosophies and the social, political and environmental reality of East Pakistan/Bangladesh. Furthermore, the building has been criticised as an 'orientalist' stereotype in a postcolonial context. Despite contradictory criticisms, however, scholars have nevertheless agreed the following: namely that the Capitol Complex started as a political strategy initiated by President Khan to declare power and control through space, but it emerged as a site of public gathering symbolising the struggles of Bengalis for independence. Rather than analysing the design development of the

complex, this chapter will explore the design method in relation to the architectural proposition associated with tradition and highlight the multiple interpretations of the building within the frame of its historical and philosophical background.

5.1.1 Existing Literature

Research on Kahn and his architecture has been dominated by American scholars since the 1960s. Bangladeshi scholars meanwhile involved themselves in research after Kahn was particularly engaged in the Dhaka commission. Focussing on only the Capitol Complex, both American and Bangladeshi scholars have nevertheless contributed to the study of Kahn's architectural masterpiece, providing an opportunity to explore this building from various horizons. Scholars have researched from two major perspectives. Firstly, the common theme has been evaluating Kahn's understanding of architecture and how he implemented the ideologies and influences developed throughout his career concentrating on the Capitol Complex despite the vulnerable context of Pakistan. Although, the context has been mentioned, the study has always been focussed on Kahn's architectural journey. This theme is explored by the majority of Western scholars in contrast to the second theme initiated by Bangladeshi scholars, who attempted to study the complex within a more vernacular and political environment, to define the National Assembly Building as a trajectory for a developing country. Although there are exceptions, not all Western scholars only explored the building from the perspective of Kahn's design ideograms; rather some scholars pursued the edifice from different angles, combining this perception to demonstrate the Capitol Complex as a functional architectural entity that may- or may

not- only be a remarkable structure but also one profoundly intertwined with the modern architectural and political history of Bangladesh.



Figure 155: Model of National Assembly Building at the exhibition 'Louis I. Kahn' in MoMA, April 26-May 30, 1966. Source: The Museum of Modern Art Archive. IN797.10. Photograph by George Cserna

The first comprehensive review of Kahn's architectural career was demonstrated by Sterling Professor and Art Historian, Vincent Scully from Yale University. Focussing on selected works by Kahn, Scully's *Louis I. Kahn* published in 1962, traced the design history and development of his key projects.[519] In 1966, between 26 April and 30 May, the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) arranged an exhibition of Kahn's architectural works by displaying models, photos and slides. This was one of the earliest public events to exhibit a three-dimensional model of the National Assembly Building (fig. 155). August E. Komendant, Kahn's long-time associate as a structural engineer, published his own experiences and opinions about his colleague in *18 Years with Louis I. Kahn* (1975). Furthermore, the book provides with personal narratives

[519] Vincent Scully, *Louis I. Kahn* (New York: George Braziller, 1962).

revealing the environment and situations Kahn was working in during his various projects.[520] Scully established a background for Kahn's architectural endeavours, MoMA administered a wider exposure of his works and Komendant demonstrated a professional attitude with his colleagues. However, the analysis of both Kahn's built and unbuilt projects really took up pace in the 1980s, with a new generation of scholars. During the 1980s, several articles featured the Capitol Complex and published writings in relation to its background, construction and economic history, as a part of the urban development of *Sher-e-Bangla Nagar* (City of the Bengal Tiger). These articles were written by several of Kahn's scholars and colleagues, who were involved in the Dhaka commission and who would subsequently be working either on other projects in the subcontinent or who were interested in how this complex was shaping the economy and international status of Bangladesh after independence.[521]

The National Assembly Building became a profound subject of research in the 1990s when a two-day symposium was held at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) organised, by the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture (AKPIA) in October 1991 (fig. 156).[522] Nominated for the Aga Khan Award for Architecture (AKAA) in 1989,

---

[520] August E. Komendant, *18 Years with Louis I. Kahn* (Englewood, N.J.: Aloray, 1975).
[521] Anupam Banerji, "Learning from Bangladesh," *The Canadian Architect* 25, no. 10 (1980); Fred Langford, "Concrete in Dacca," *Mimar 6: Architecture in Development* (1982); Brian Brace Taylor, "Vision of Grandeur," *Mimar 6: Architecture in Development* (1982); William J. R. Curtis, "Authencity, Abstraction and the Ancient Sense: Le Corbusier's and Louis Kahn's Ideas of Parliament," *Perspecta* 20 (1983), http://www.jstor.org/stable/1567073; Bruno J. Hubert, "Kahn's Epilogue: National Capital, Dacca, Bangladesh," *Progressive Architecture* 65 (1984); Aminul Haq Khan, "Sher-E-Banglanagar, Dhaka," in *Continuity and Change: Design Strategies for Large-Scale Urban Development* (Cambridge: The Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, 1984); Mehmet Doruk Pamir, "Sher-E-Banglanagar, Dhaka," in *Continuity and Change: Design Strategies for Large-Scale Urban Development* (Cambridge: The Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, 1984); Ashraf, "Muzharul Islam, Kahn and Architecture in Bangladesh."
[522] Kahn Collection at the University of Pennsylvania has a full recording of this symposium. A detailed written review of the symposium is published by Imran Ahmed and Samuel Isenstadt, "The Ontological Centaur: Louis Kahn and the Capitol Complex in Dhaka," *AKP Newsletter* 4, no. 2 (Spring 1992): 1,6. http://web.mit.edu/akpia/www/newsletterAKP1992spring.pdf

the Capitol Complex prompted some controversial responses that were highlighted in the symposium, underlining the importance of this building not only as a most remarkable example of Kahn's architecture but also as a manifestation of Modernism in a non-Western region. Assistant Professor of Architecture at the MIT and symposium coordinator, Francesco Passanti structured the presentations according to two themes: discussions of how the complex related to Kahn's larger body of work and the multicultural qualities that shaped the production of the edifice. Invited speakers included both American and Bangladeshi scholars who were the second generation of experts working between the late 1980s and early 1990s on a revised reflection of Kahn's architecture and other related disciplines.[523]

The opening of the Aga Khan symposium was initiated by two professors from the University of Pennsylvania, David Brownlee and David De Long who demonstrated a historical overview of Kahn's early work tracing various influences through classical architecture, his Beaux Arts education and other formal vocabulary of architecture - and the state of affairs of the Dhaka commission was discussed within this context. Following the presentation, Brownlee and De Long co-curated a major exhibition and published a monograph, both entitled *Louis I. Kahn: In the Realm of Architecture* (fig. 157-158).[524] The exhibition and the book both demonstrated Kahn's professional

[523] David Brownlee, David De Long, Sarah William Ksiazek (Goldhagen), Stanford Anderson, Meer Mobashsher Ali, Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, Saiful Haque, Peter Reed, Lawrence Vale, Zeyned Celik and Neil Levine presented in this symposium. See, Ahmed and Isenstadt, "The Ontological Centaur: Louis Kahn and the Capitol Complex in Dhaka."

[524] Initially the exhibition was held at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and later travelled to Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris (spring 1992), MoMa in New York (summer 1992), the Museum of Modern Art of Gunma in Japan (fall 1992), Museum of Contemporary Art (MoCA) in Los Angeles (spring 1993), Kimbell Art Museum in Forth Worth (1993) and concluded at Wexner Center for the Arts at Ohio State University (1993-94). Arata Isozaki designed an installation in the exhibition based on Kahn's unbuilt design for the Mikveh Israel Synagogue. David Bruce Brownlee and David Gilson De Long, *Louis I. Kahn: In the Realm of Architecture* (Los Angeles, Calif: Museum of Contemporary

trajectories from an early stage to his mature phase. The Capitol Complex in particular was regarded as one of Kahn's mature projects. Drawing references from Scully, who first advanced Kahn's sojourn of Europe, Brownlee and De Long explored his experiences in Rome, Greece and Egypt that consequently influenced the design development of the National Assembly Building.



The Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture
at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Spring 1992
Volume 4, Number 2

AKP newsletter

The Ontological Centaur: Louis Kahn and the Capitol Complex in Dhaka

A symposium entitled "Sher-e-Banglanagar: Louis Kahn and Dhaka" was organized at MIT by the Aga Khan Program from October 26 through October 27, 1991. Imran Ahmed and Samuel Isenstadt, both graduate students in the History, Theory and Criticism program at MIT's Department of Architecture, attended the symposium and prepared the following report.

The Sher-e-Banglanagar project by Louis Kahn was built just after the era of colonial domination had ended and before national empowerment had triumphed. The project illustrated an effort to combine Western "know-how" with indigenous social and political organizations. Francesco Passanti, assistant professor of architecture at MIT and the symposium coordinator, focused the proceedings around this theme with individual papers selected to evaluate the project both within the context of Kahn's own work and within the tradition of Western architectural production in non-Western countries. The project, commissioned as the capitol complex for East Pakistan in 1962, was finished twelve years later as the capitol complex for the by then newly-independent Bangladesh.

Kahn's own evolution as an architect was outlined by David Brownlee of the University of Pennsylvania in "The Adventures of Unexplored Places: Early Themes in the Work of Louis I. Kahn." Brownlee traced the various formal influences on Kahn's early work from the academic classicism of the University of Pennsylvania under Paul Cret, through the modernist experiments with public housing in the 1940s, to a rejection of functionalism at Yale in the 1950s in favor of a more evocative geometry drawn from the past. David

Louis Kahn's Capitol Complex in Dhaka

De Long, also of the University of Pennsylvania, presented a study, "The Mind Opens to Realization: Conceiving a New Architecture, 1951–1963," that picked up where Brownlee left off. De Long saw the later productive phase of Kahn's career as an inspired revitalization of his Beaux Arts education: a mature formal vocabulary of mass, spatial differentiation, juxtaposed geometry, and richly-layered architectural definitions.

Broader cultural dimensions of Kahn's work were explored by Sarah William Ksiazek of Columbia University. Her paper, "Monumentality, Regionalism and the New

Continued on page 6

Figure 156: Front Page of the Aga Khan Program Newsletter, Vol. 4, No. 2, Spring 1992. Source: The Aga Khan Foundation Archive

Art, 1991). For review of the exhibition and book see, Richard Ingersoll, "Louis I. Kahn: The Last Master," *Design Book Review* 21 (Summer 1991): 7-8; Fikret K. Yegul, "Review of Louis I. Kahn: In the Realm of Architecture by David B. Brownlee and David G. De Long," *Journal of Society of Architectural Historians* 52, no. 1 (March 1993): 115-18.



Figure 157: Exhibition Entrance of 'Louis I. Kahn: In the Realm of Architecture,' 14 June - 18 August 1992. Source: The Museum of Modern Art Archive. IN1627. Photographed by Mali Olatunji



Figure 158: Model of the National Assembly Building displayed in the exhibition. Source: The Museum of Modern Art Archive. IN1627.19. Photographed by Mali Olatunji

Another scholar associated with *In the Realm* was Peter Reed, who had recently graduated from the University of Pennsylvania during the exhibition and publication. Advised by Brownlee, Reed's PhD dissertation was one of the earliest examples of doctoral research on Kahn to illustrate a critical study of the architect's work in relation

to its context.[525] Reed's symposium paper 'Professor Kahn's Great Game: Building Dhaka's National Symbol' and his essay 'Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Capital of Bangladesh' featured in *In the Realm* and represented a sequential analysis of the Capitol Complex by focussing on Kahn's conceptual development in which a generic masterplan was developed and particularised.[526] Alongside the tectonic construction of the building, Reed demonstrated how it was combined with traditional built strategies and adjusted to local climatic conditions. Furthermore, Reed's studies provided new insights into the relationship between Kahn's architectural firm and the Public Works Department (PWD) of Pakistan. Despite differences of opinions, Reed's research illustrated how the architects and engineers of the PWD developed a great respect for Kahn and his architectural vision which consequently safeguarded him from the central Government of Pakistan, and enabled him to further acquire an exceptional level of architectural freedom. Reed analysed the intertwined events of political, social and professional relationships that shaped Kahn's project in Dhaka and revealed how these permitted the architect unimaginable possibilities for architectural propositions that had previously only been considered in theories or polemical debates.

A more precise and detailed political implication of the Capitol Complex is represented in the scholarship of the urban historian and critic from MIT, namely Lawrence J. Vale. From cross-disciplinary perspectives, Vale developed a discourse on nationalism and

[525] Peter Reed, "Toward Form, Louis I. Kahn's Urban Designs for Philadelphia, 1939-62" (Doctor of Philosophy, University of Pennsylvania, 1989).
[526] Peter Reed, "Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Capital of Bangladesh," in *Louis I. Kahn: In the Realm of Architecture*, ed. David Bruce Brownlee and David Gilson De Long (Los Angeles, Calif: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1991).

national identity that explored beyond the field of architectural history. In *Architecture, Power and National Identity* (1992), Vale reviewed a range of capitol complexes in certain capital cities, analysing social values of each of the countries through their political and architectural networks; the Capitol Complex of Dhaka was a major case study.[527] Vale categorised his case studies from the aspects of political history and organised them according to their vital functions. For example, the US Capitol in Washington D. C. demonstrated a legislative function, New Delhi could be seen as having an executive function and Canberra's assembly building exhibited a 'plaza-centred' function. Vale suggested the Dhaka Capitol as having a combination of legislative and plaza-centred typology. In Vale's opinion, this hybrid function was a result of a continuous negotiation between the client's preference and Kahn's romanticised vision for the National Assembly Building. Vale identified misconnections between the architecture of the Assembly and its socio-political conditions. Vale's scepticism regarding the Assembly Building is evident in his letter to the editor of *The Architectural Review,* published in 1987. Vale wrote,

> The building may have its 'servant' and 'served' space within it, but how does it serve Bangladesh? At this point, it still serves as a reminder of the Pakistani government that commissioned it and against whom a war was fought. […] The high drama of its form and high-mindedness of Kahn's rhetoric stand in contrast with the weakness of the institution is housed. Ironically, it seems that monumentality in parliament buildings may be directly proportional to the fragility of the regime that promotes it.[528]

[527] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*.
[528] Lawrence J. Vale, "Doubts about Dacca," *The Architectural Review* 181, no. 1082 (April 1987): 5.

This was resolutely outlined in the chapter entitled 'The Acropolis of Bangladesh' in *Architecture, Power and National Identity,* in which Vale implied that Kahn's monumentality of 'transcendent nature,' his attempt to regionalise an American Modernist design, his amalgamation of spirituality and secularity and his idealisation of democracy through public engagement were all based on a personal preoccupation with architecture and had little involvement with its urban context, people and their culture. Despite Vale's detailed criticism of the Capitol Complex, his final verdict broadly emphasised how the completed project resulted in a successful integration with its urban and cultural settings, as the southern plaza adjacent to the lake and park became a popular gathering space within the congested city of Dhaka.

Parallel and competitive analyses related to the National Assembly Building are demonstrated in a range of doctoral theses. Whilst Reed was developing an analysis of the complex in his thesis, Sarah Williams Ksiazek's dissertation was also taking shape at the Columbia University. Ksiazek's analysis broadly focussed on Kahn's evolving post-war ideas and influence on institutional architecture, and a meticulous study of the Capitol Complex was one of the main case studies of her research. Ksiazek's article published in 1993 entitled 'Architectural Culture in the Fifties: Louis Kahn and the National Assembly Complex in Dhaka' formed a basis for further exploration of the complex in the concluding chapter of her PhD Dissertation completed in 1995.[529] Afterwards, the thesis was developed and published as a book

[529] Sarah Williams Ksiazek, "Architectural Culture in the Fifties: Louis Kahn and the National Assembly Complex in Dhaka," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 52, no. 4 (1993), https://www.jstor.org/stable/990866; Sarah Williams Ksiazek, "Changing Symbols of Public Life: Louis Kahn's Religious and Civic Projects 1944-1966 and Architectural Culture at the End of the Modern Movement" (Doctor of Philosophy, Columbia University, 1995).

entitled *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism* (2001), in which Sarah Williams Goldhagen demonstrated a radical criticism of the existing scholarship on Kahn, pointing out several series of claims, flaws and myths and shaping her study by demonstrating rational aspects through the historical trajectories.[530] Goldhagen framed Kahn as an enthusiastic modernist, illustrating how his social faith was transformed into architecture. Paying particular attention to the Dhaka Capitol, Goldhagen's research largely reflected on Kahn's previous designs of public buildings and how the former resemblances were subsequently portrayed in the Assembly Building. For example, Goldhagen compared the drawings of the National Assembly Building with the plan of the First Unitarian Church in Rochester and the the interlocking diamond shaped forms of Erdman Hall Dormitories in Bryn Mawr College and Fisher House in Pennsylvania. Akin to Brownlee and De Long, Goldhagen also examined the influence which Kahn took from ancient structures, further expanding the investigation to include his subcontinental travels in order to explore a connection between the implementation of East and West. In contrast to Scully's narrative of Kahn, Goldhagen considered him simply as an American architect whose designs evolved with his surroundings. In Goldhagen's analysis, the Capitol Complex was comprehended as the climax of Kahn's career and the project was recognised as a successful American adaptation in the making of new democratic country.

Whilst previous scholarship in relation to the Capitol Complex of Dhaka explored the building against a broader study of Kahn's architecture, it has also been the subject of

[530] By this time, the author was known as Sarah Williams Goldhagen. Sarah Williams Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).

a more focussed research for some scholars. Completed in 2013 from the University of New South Wales, Maryam Gusheh's PhD dissertation focussed on the complex in relation to Kahn's perception of ruins as a design methodology.[531] Gusheh argued the National Assembly Building to be a civic monument and an American proposition in the shift from modernism to postmodernism, either as an example of neo-colonial practice or as an expression of Bangladeshi modernism. Alongside a critical engagement with Scully's writings, Gusheh demonstrated a close reading of other recent scholars, underlining a subtle transition in design strategies from one cultural setting to another. Gusheh's analysis developed in three broader areas of research: critical revision of Kahn's architecture before the Dhaka commission, the relationship between the urban context and the complex; and the connection between 'centre and periphery' as a mediation of architectural threshold.[532] Gusheh's interpretation of the Capitol Complex through the study of ruins synthesised multidisciplinary subject areas with political and architectural analysis.

The Capitol Complex was constructed in a way that it can be perceived according to diverse architectural interpretations. On the one hand, Gusheh's thesis unravels the complex from a viewpoint of ruins and on the other hand, Labib Hossain's investigation seeks out the connection between the landscape and the Assembly Building. Hossain, a doctorate fellow from Cornell University, is currently researching the landscape architecture of the Capitol Complex specifically in relation to the waterbody that was designed considering Bengali monsoon weather and the floods this can cause. In his

[531] Gusheh, "Louis Kahn in Dhaka: Ruin as Method."
[532] Gusheh, "Louis Kahn in Dhaka: Ruin as Method," 249.

recent article published in the edited book entitled *Rethinking Global Modernism: Architectural Historiography and the Postcolonial* (2022), Hossain explores Kahn's various inspirations from his travels around India and East and West Pakistan during his commission of the complex.[533] He deliberately focuses on two aspects of Kahn's inspiration – nature and the ruins. By examining Kahn's sketches of boats and waterbodies when he travelled to the Buriganga river of Dhaka, Hossain argues that the former are devoid of human presence, revealing instead an 'obsession with floating forms' which are isolated from the surrounding nature.[534] In *Pundranagar to Sher-E-Bangla Nagar: Architecture in Bangladesh* published in 1997, Ashraf and Haque claim that the Assembly Building's monumental expression was inspired by the eighth century Paharpur Buddhist Complex situated at Naogaon; Hossain however argues that there is no evidence that Kahn ever visited the northern part of East Bengal.[535] In a documentary created by Art Historian Sundaram Tagore (2019), it is implied that Kahn might have been inspired by the postcards of the Paharpur Complex which he apperantly sent to his associate Pattinson.[536]

Contrary to the theses of Goldhagen, Gusheh and Hossain, which observe the Capitol Complex from diverse architectural dimensions, Bayezid Ismail Choudhury's PhD dissertation positions the National Assembly Building in a paradoxical cultural setting

---

[533] Labib Hossain, "Representing Landscape, Mediating Wetness: Louis Kahn ay Sher-e-Bangla Nagar (East Pakistan/Bangladesh)," in *Rethinking Global Modernism: Architectural Historiography and the Postcolonial*, ed. Vikramaditya Prakash, Maristella Casciato, and Daniel E. Coslett (London, New York: Routledge, 2022).
[534] Hossain, "Representing Landscape, Mediating Wetness: Louis Kahn ay Sher-e-Bangla Nagar (East Pakistan/Bangladesh)," 193.
[535] Ashraf, "Wind, Water and Clay: The Architecture of Bangladesh," 21; Hossain, "Representing Landscape, Mediating Wetness: Louis Kahn ay Sher-e-Bangla Nagar (East Pakistan/Bangladesh)," 194.
[536] Sundaram Tagore, "Louis Kahn's Tiger City," (United States, 2019).

incorporating local and global politics. Completed in 2015 from the University of Sydney, Choudhury's thesis explores the deeper sentimental values related to East Bengal, East Pakistan and Bangladesh that connect architecture with a wider ranger of issues rather than focussing on the spatial qualities of the Assembly Building.[537] Developing his thesis through several published articles, Choudhury has unfolded a subjective meaning to the Assembly Building derived from several aspects related to the following: Bengali social values and national identity, the ethical approach of the client and architect and the relationship between the United States and Pakistan, involving enormous funding during both global and local ongoing coldwars.[538] Choudhury's analysis provides a new insight into the socio-political dilemma in the spatiality of the National Assembly Building by investigating it from a different angle that considers Kahn's idealisations secondary; this is in contrast to other scholars have argued about the complex. In a similar way to Choudhury, Bangladeshi architect and scholar, Meer Mobashsher Ali has also analysed the relationship between the National Assembly Building and the city of Dhaka, principally in his book *Shamatate Shangshad* published in 2006. Ali suggests that the rapid urban change of Dhaka is a consequence of its long political history of shifting power and that the National

[537] Choudhury, "The Genesis of Jatio Shangsad bhaban at Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka."
[538] Bayezid Ismail Choudhury and Graham Bell, "The Engagement of Kahn and Khan in Jatio Sangsad Bhaban," *Architecture+Design* (April 2011); Bayezid Ismail Choudhury, Peter Armstrong, and Paul Jones, "JSB as Democratic Emblem and Urban Focal Point: The Imagined Socio-Political Construction of Space," *Journal of Social and Development Sciences* 4, no. 6 (2013); Bayezid Ismail Choudhury and Peter Armstrong, "The Geopolitics of Jatio Sangsad Bhaban in the Cold War Era," *International Journal of Engineering Technology* 2, no. 1 (May 2013); Bayezid Ismail Choudhury and Peter Armstrong, "The Duality of Jatio Sangsad Bhaban and the Notion of Nationalism," *Journal of Social and Development Sciences* 4, no. 9 (2013); Choudhury and Armstrong, "Monument and Architecture in Shaping Bangladeshi National Identity."

Assembly Building provided an opportunity to emerge as an iconic emblem creating an identity climax in independent Bangladesh.[539]

5.1.2 Chapter Argument

Despite the Capitol Complex having been studied from numerous different and diverse perspectives, few research have in fact focussed on how self-evaluation of Bangladeshi national identity connects to the Assembly Building. Therefore, the questions remain: How does this building represent as an 'architecture of independence' when it was indented to be built in order to unify the two wings of Pakistan? How was it decided that it would become a national symbol of Bangladesh? How did the National Assembly Complex generate a value of identity when it was re-used by the Government of Bangladesh as their own iconic symbol? Does this not contradict the moment when the construction started, and thousands of people chanted 'Long live Ayub Khan' or 'Pakistan *Zindabad*?' Is there any indignity attached to it as the building was funded by the government against whom the civil war was fought? And what does it reveal about the relationship between the American modernism and its non-western context? Rather than seeking to provide direct answers to the aforementioned questions, this chapter aims to provide a better understanding of the spatial representation of the National Assembly Building which was built in a culture enduring a duality of identity. There are some bipolarities related to both its construction and context that complicate the connection between the architecture and its function as an institution. In this chapter, I demonstrate this

[539] Meer Mobashsher Ali, *Shamatate Shangshad [National Parliament]* (Dhaka: Intercon Associates, 2006).

architectural ambiguity through political and design-related historiographical narratives. I will attempt to understand the development of the Capitol Complex as it emerged as a national icon for Bangladesh within existing paradigms of political instability and a civil war.

5.2 Architecture and Power

Despite the grandeur, it is important to remember that a legislature building is not only about design, concept and art, but also about authority, power and other social issues.[540] The history of constructing the Capitol Complex also deals with these phenomena. Whilst the edifice surrounding the hostels is one of the most remarkable of Kahn's project, nonetheless, it was also supposed to be one of the most important works for its client, President Ayub Khan. As much as Kahn's concepts and intentions were interwoven in the creation of this complex, Khan's prudent motive must also be considered. In their article entitled 'The Engagement of Kahn and Khan in Jatio Shangshad Bhaban,' Choudhury and Graham Bell attempt to understand these two actors' rationale according to Adam Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759).[541] They examine the National Assembly Building from the ethical perception of both client and architect in two categories from Smith's theory: self-love and prudence. On the one hand, for Khan, who rose from being 'supreme commander' to self-proclaimed President of Pakistan, building a second capitol was an important agenda to maintain his political power. On the other hand, for Kahn, it was an opportunity to exercise his deeper concepts through architecture with the hopes of

[540] Paul Hirst, *Space and Power: Politics, War and Architecture* (Cambridge, Malden: Polity Press, 2005), 180.
[541] Choudhury and Bell, "The Engagement of Kahn and Khan in Jatio Sangsad Bhaban."

getting international recognition by working in a foreign land. Both Khan and Kahn were sitting on a risky throne and were not without prurient self-interest, paradoxically creating what is now known as one of the iconic buildings of late twentieth century. This segment will attempt to analyse Kahn and Khan related to the complex in order to understand their motives and approach towards the creation of the National Assembly Building. The main two protagonists are definitely client and architect, however, they will be explored through others associated with the project either as a mediators or as associates.

5.2.1 The Client and The Architect

Whilst Kahn was dealing with the frustration of being dismissed by the Foreign Buildings Operations (FBO) from the design of the US consulate at Luanda, Angola in 1959, he received two important commissions in the Indian subcontinent. First, the representatives of the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) in Ahmedabad contacted Kahn to ask him to design a graduate school of business administration on 6 June 1962. Within less than three months, Kahn received a telegram from the PWD of Pakistan with an offer to design a legislative building as a second capitol for East Pakistan on 27 August.[542] Despite these sites being located halfway around the world, Kahn knew that these new commissions were a turning point for his career. Kahn perceived that architecture would 'go beyond the limitations imposed by individual

[542] Kahn made a major achievement in the community of American architecture by early 1962 with the designs of the Trenton Bathhouse in New Jersey (1959-), Richards Medical Research Laboratories in Philadelphia (1957-1965) and the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in La Jolla, California (1959-1965). These successes increased the number of commissions as well as the load on his firm. Just after expanding his office to have adequate space for new projects on the top two floors of a building located in downtown Philadelphia, Kahn received these two important commissions. See, Carter Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2007), 136.

buildings.'[543] For the second Capitol Complex of Pakistan, Kahn foresaw to 'change the world,' an ideology he shared in his youth with his friends and later associates, Oscar Stonorov and George Howe.[544]

With the opportunity to design this complex, Kahn's long exploration for a new modernity transforming 'monumentality into a symbolic vehicle' came into a reality that associated with the community as well as manifesting an authenticity connecting with the individual self.[545] In the respective years, he worked tirelessly to complete two major parts of the Capitol Complex, the Assembly Building and the adjacent hostels.[546] Kahn produced more 10,000 conceptual sketches and drawings and envisioned the complex to such a scale that the design process and construction continued for seventeen years, finally being completed in 1983.[547] This was nine years after Kahn's death in 1974 and almost a decade after the civil war between the two wings of Pakistan and East Pakistan renamed as Bangladesh.

Ayub Khan, the military dictator of Pakistan found himself in a more intense political situation. As Pakistan suffered a series of unfortunate political events from the

---

[543] Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style*, 137.
[544] Kahn's aspirations to design for democratic life was evident either it is a city hall, a civic centre or a parliament building. He believed that all institutions were constructed by government was for common citizens. These beliefs made Kahn yearn to work on a governmental institution for years. Kahn's yearning for being involved in a governmental project or his belief to design a vibrant public space symbolising democracy are also routed to his participation in protests at the University of Pennsylvania with his colleagues during the American Cold War in the 1960s.See, Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style*, 137; Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 165.
[545] Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 162.
[546] In her dissertation Goldhagen noted, 'Louis Kahn could hardly hide his pride and excitement.' For more details see, Ksiazek, "Changing Symbols of Public Life: Louis Kahn's Religious and Civic Projects 1944-1966 and Architectural Culture at the End of the Modern Movement."
[547] See, Louis I. Kahn, *The Louis I. Kahn Archive : Personal Drawings. 3, National Capital of Bangladesh, Dacca* (New York: Garland, 1987).

beginning of its creation, the seat of government changed three times: from Karachi (1947–1958) to Rawalpindi (1958–1962) and then finally in Islamabad; all cities located in West Pakistan. The western part of the country received multiple advantages whereas East Pakistan was less privileged and did not even hold a seat of active government. Political circumstances started to change when Khan seized power from Iskander Mirza in 1958, imposed martial law and declared himself as the Supreme Commander.[548] From 1960, under continuing martial law, Khan ran the country in collaboration with small elite groups and had full control of the parliament. His reign made little or no differences on East Pakistan apart from some of the developments from the Basic Democracies which were also helping to keep his political position. Despite the economic and cultural discrimination, Khan always aimed to keep the two wings of Pakistan united. As tensions were growing from East Pakistan, Khan set up a committee consisting of members from both East and West Pakistan to develop a constitution that would benefit the entire country.

On 8 June 1962, President Khan introduced a new constitution for Pakistan. The National Assembly met its first session at Ayub Hall in Rawalpindi. Khan announced that after almost forty-four months the martial law has been terminated. The Constitution of 1962 was prepared and reviewed for approximately two years and presented in the assembly as a progressive framework for both wings of the country. Urdu and Bangla both were recognised as national languages and each wing would have a provincial government run by a governor. The most distinctive feature of the 1962 Constitution was the presidential re-election which would come into effect after

[548] Ziring, *The Ayub Khan Era: Politics in Pakistan, 1958-1969*.

the current president completes his five-year term of presidency. Therefore, Khan's presidency for five-years started from 1960 and mandated that the first democratic election of Pakistan would be held in 1965. It is surprising that the then 'supreme commander' Khan agreed for a democratic re-election. However, it is assumed that Khan knew that the presidential form of government could ensure a united Pakistan and there should be no tampering with the features of the constitution. However, this event made Khan concerned for his own re-election because he knew that his victory was dependent upon East Pakistani voters as the majority of the Pakistani population resided in that territory.

Grinceri argues that 'politics involves the social management of a population, whereby certain practices like health, law and education are passed to government who presume to act in the interests of the people.'[549] These objectives are associated with certain representative tools such as institutions and architecture in order to 'portray, represent and preserve an imagined sense of identity.'[550] In order to fulfil these objectives, a government does not necessarily need to force upon these actions, however, these representative forms produce values or systems of belief which act as a product of trust for the people. Similarly, to secure his political position for the future and to convince the people of East Pakistan of his concern about their well-being, Khan decided that alongside Islamabad, there should also be a National Assembly in the capital of East Pakistan, in which meetings would take place twice a year.[551] There

[549] Daniel Grinceri, *Architecture as Cultural and Political Discourse: Case Studies of Conceptual Norms and Aesthetic Practices* (London, New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2016), 11.
[550] Grinceri, *Architecture as Cultural and Political Discourse: Case Studies of Conceptual Norms and Aesthetic Practices*, 11.
[551] Ziring, *The Ayub Khan Era: Politics in Pakistan, 1958-1969*.

were ongoing development projects as well as a few governmental buildings inherited from the British period in Dhaka, but no buildings could house an assembly chamber of parliamentary proceedings.[552] Thus Khan decided to build a grand governmental complex hoping that the people of East Pakistan would repay him with their votes after witnessing a large expenditure on a monumental edifice constructed solely for them.[553] Thus the commissioning of the Capitol Complex in Dhaka was an election stunt in which Khan only thought of his own political benefit.

5.2.2 The Mediator

After Khan made the decision to build the second Capitol Complex in Dhaka, his employees from the PWD initially approached Muzharul Islam for the job as he was the only local practicing architect.[554] Islam was aware of the Islamic identity politicism and was more engaged in promoting cultural and secular styles in his architecture (discussed in Chapter 3). Therefore, Islam sought for a positive and effective solution in building the capitol. Knowing that the designs of Le Corbusier in Chandigarh were having a great impact on India from the international architectural community, Islam hoped that 'his own country should have a comparable monument to help establish its new status in the world.'[555] Thus he would propose to Khan and the PWD authority that they should give the commission to an architect of an international standard. Islam's decision to involve an international architect was not appreciated by the Pakistani governmental officials. A lot of time was lost in negotiating on which foreign

[552] Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 163.
[553] Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 164.
[554] Wares, interview.
[555] Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style*, 152.

architects they should approach and how the commission would be handed over. However, Islam was committed on his decision and when Khan reluctantly agreed he recommended three major western practitioners: Corbusier, Alvar Aalto and Kahn.[556] All three of them were telegrammed by the PWD with an offer to design the second Capitol Complex of Pakistan. Corbusier declined immediately as he was already occupied with the design for the masterplan and capitol buildings of Chandigarh. Aalto became sick.[557] Therefore, Kahn received the opportunity by default which he also accepted swiftly. Kahn was agreed to be paid approximately six times more than what Islam would have been remunerated as a local architect.[558] Nevertheless, Islam was so determined that this important project should be done by Kahn that he even turned down the opportunity to be the local supervisor when he was asked by the government, despite knowing he would be the most capable for this job.[559]

As Kahn was hired as the principal architect, the PWD appointed a Western-trained West Pakistani namely Kafiluddin Ahmad as the chief engineer for the project, who would locally supervise the design and construction of the project.[560] Ahmad, who developed a great respect for Kahn, continuously overlooked the latter's reluctancy for deadlines and schedules. Amidst these situations, as the project progressed, on the one hand, Kahn gained more control and his process of developing a design was

[556] Wares, interview; Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style*, 152.
[557] See, Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 164. There are verbal anecdotes that Aalto might have accepted the offer. However, before the day of his flight, he drank heavily and missed his plane. Information was given in, Tagore, "Louis Kahn's Tiger City."
[558] Wares, interview.
[559] Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style*, 152.
[560] Kafiluddin Ahmad was already working as an engineer in the PWD. See, Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 164.

slow.[561] On the other hand, as the election year was closer, Khan became desperate to commence the construction. This was evident in Duncan Buell's telegram to Kahn in the late 1963, in which he mentioned that Khan has demanded to Ahmad to 'start anything – build a shed.'[562] The client-architect relationship can be understood distinctly from the letter Roy Vollmer sent to Kahn from Dhaka:

> We've got a real political bull by the tail […] right now they couldn't be happier if we told them to build a ladder to the moon and hang the cost. Kafiluddin told me confidentially that he will spend as much money as he must, disregarding the budget. He will justify it by having buildings to show.[563]

This was Kahn's most unusual commission in which the client did not care about the design or character of the project he was investing in. Furthermore, Khan never mentioned about the second Capitol Complex in his long self-congratulatory autobiography.[564] Yet the architect of the complex had access to ample and unlimited funding with a freedom to design anything on an enormous site. Such unique circumstances allowed Kahn to explore his abilities in a broader range and to design the complex with both creative and economic freedom.[565]

5.2.3 The Sojourns

Before the Dhaka commission, Kahn had already travelled to India in the summer of 1962 to design the IIM in Ahmedabad (1962 – 1974). Subsequently, Kahn's travels to

---

[561] Kahn was known for his dilatoriness in work. It is assumed that due to his slow process in design development, he was removed from the Angola project.
[562] Duncan Buell to Louis Kahn, November 1963, unmarked file, box 116, Kahn Collection.
[563] Roy Vollmer to Louis Kahn, November 1964, "PACCAP Vollmer Reports," box 122, Kahn Collection.
[564] Ayub M. Khan, *Friends Not Masters* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967).
[565] Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 164.

the subcontinent were frequent as he accepted a number of commissions that included the Capitol Complex in Dhaka, the presidential complex in Islamabad which was rejected by the Pakistani government and the Family Planning Services (1970 – 1975) in Kathmandu, Nepal which was partially completed. Kahn would travel extensively on some of his trips. He developed friendships with many architects from the subcontinent, most prominent amongst them being Balkrishna Doshi and Muzharul Islam. To understand the local condition, Kahn was assisted by them during his visits to India and Pakistan in 1962 and 1963 respectively. In November 1962, when Kahn first travelled to India to visit the site of IIM, he also went to visit the complexes of Chandigarh designed by Corbusier as these buildings were most esteemed during that era. Wiseman acknowledges that Kahn had been both fascinated and haunted by Corbusier since he was a resident in the American Academy in Rome (1950-1951) and considered the Swiss-French architect an idol.[566] After visiting Chandigarh, Kahn described Corbusier's work as 'beautiful' but also 'out of context' to the radio broadcaster of the US namely Voice of America.[567] By studying Corbusier's work, Kahn might have considered to design and build something which would complement the context. Despite his strong motive to develop something unique, Kahn was aware that it had to be expressive in an accessible and acceptable language not only for his clients but also for the people who would be the users of the buildings.

Kahn also made extensive visits to the Mughal palaces, forts and mausoleums of Pakistan and northern India. Kahn was intrigued with the orientation and positioning

[566] Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style*, 138.
[567] Quoted in, Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style*, 138.

of the structures in the Mughal forts of Lahore. He also travelled to India with his chief site architect Carles Vallhonrat to explore Mughal complexes in Jaipur, New Delhi and Fatehpur Sikri.[568] Islam introduced Kahn to the deeper sub-culture of Bengal which was different from Pakistan when he first visited the region in late January 1963 and stayed for six days.[569] Islam made sure that Kahn received a good knowledge of Bengali local cultures, settlements and the environment in which they travelled by motorcars, boats and on some occasions by helicopter.[570] In these tours with Islam, Kahn was acquainted with Mughal structures in Dhaka such as the Lalbagh Fort, the river-based ways of the deltaic regions and Bengali ethnicities which were different from West Pakistan. Kahn was guided by Islam about the local construction techniques of a sea-level country that experienced hot and humid weather half of the year with the another half being monsoon season. According to many sources, Islam was instrumental in Kahn's design development as they became friends and would discuss the complex over a cup of tea; this included details of the Mughal style of outdoor gathering spaces, central structures within a symmetric landscape and the idea of Dhaka's colourful and cacophonous Old Town.[571] Goldhagen observed that these visits had a large impact on Kahn, not only changing the architectural language for him, but also his manner of locution.[572] These travels allowed Kahn to consider both the climate and religion of Bengal territory and West Pakistani culture.

---

[568] Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 180.
[569] Wares, interview.
[570] Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style*, 152.
[571] See, Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style*, 153; Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*; Brownlee and De Long, *Louis I. Kahn: In the Realm of Architecture*; Henry Wilcots, "Kahn for Dacca," interview by Richard Saul Wurman, July 1975; Wares, interview.
[572] Kahn remains well known for his poetic and mystical terms in architectural realm.

5.2.4 The Dilemma of the Other Capitol

In contrast to Kahn's visits with Islam, his meeting with the Pakistani Government was not promising. Alongside the Dhaka commission, Khan asked Kahn to design his presidential palace and an assembly building in Islamabad which had to make an Islamic statement with its architectural features. Kahn initially accepted the offer and provided a masterplan in which he deliberately ignored the Islamic concepts (fig. 159-160).[573] Kahn wrote, 'the insistence of Islamic touch is plaguing.'[574] Eventually Kahn was withdrawn from the Islamabad project leaving him only with the Dhaka commission. Some of Kahn's associates criticised him for not understanding what was required for the Islamabad project, possibly because he was Jewish.[575] Nevertheless, the conflict stemmed not from Kahn's personal religion, but rather what religion Khan wanted to imprint on the identity of the nation. For an instance, the assembly and presidential complex of Islamabad required a strict Islamic appearance, in contrast to the Dhaka Capitol in which President Khan himself instructed to 'build a shed.' Despite being first and second capital of 'one' country, Islamabad was matter of religious concern, but Dhaka was not. Eventually in 1966, the Islamabad project was commissioned to Edward Durell Stone, who dedicatedly designed a complex consisted of a presidential palace and an assembly building with domes and pointed arches. This demonstrated emulated Islamic identity, however it did not manifest any iconic national image for a country (fig. 161-162).[576]

---

[573] For a detailed discussion on the Presidential Complex of Islamabad, see, Farhan S. Karim, "Sculpted Landscape: The Unbuilt Public Square of Islamabad," in *Contemporary Urban Landscapes of the Middle East*, ed. Mohammad Gharipour (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 88-117.
[574] Cited in, Brownlee and De Long, *Louis I. Kahn: In the Realm of Architecture*, 62.
[575] Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style*, 153.
[576] For more information on unbuilt Islamabad project designed by Kahn and later design and construction of Stone, see, Mumtaz, *Architecture in Pakistan*; Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*; Karim, "Sculpted Landscape: The Unbuilt Public Square of Islamabad."

Similar to the Islamabad project, the higher officials and bureaucrats of Pakistan offered Kahn different opinions of Islamic architectural features for the Dhaka Complex. However, as Wares recalls, Kahn had Islam as a skilled protector, who was not only a trained architect but also an activist, who was continuously designing his buildings relating to Bengali identity.[577] Wiseman notes, 'Islam shielded Kahn from the bureaucrats and insisted that the architect be left alone to develop the Dhaka design without [any] sort of interference he had suffered in Islamabad.'[578] Furthermore, as the project was in East Pakistan, the pressure from the central government was also less intense. But Islam could not avoid the larger political agenda of Khan in which 'the government must have communicated the message clearly to the architect to do everything at monumental scale, as an eyewash. The scale was conceived to impress the people of Eastern Pakistan that the big brothers of the West care and have great plans for them.'[579] Despite the political manoeuvring, everyone who were involved in the design and construction of the complex was well-managed by Ahmad resulting in the project's progress.

[577] Wares, interview.
[578] Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style*, 154.
[579] Quoted in, Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style*, 154.

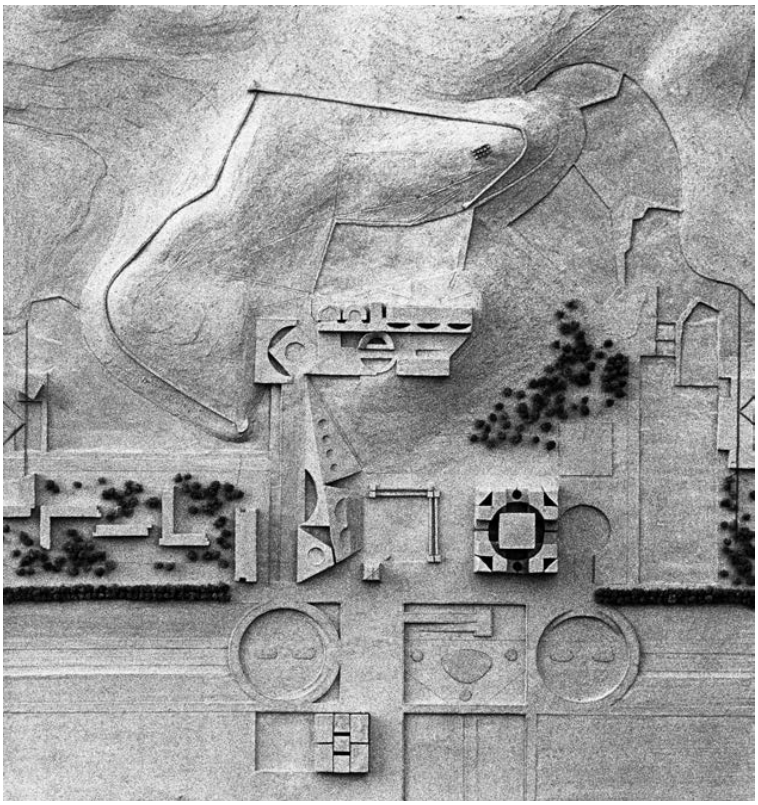


Figure 159: Proposed Master Plan for the Presidential Estate by Louis Kahn for Islamabad. Source: Farhan S. Karim, “Sculpted Landscape: The Unbuilt Public Square of Islamabad,” in *Contemporary Urban Landscapes of the Middle East*, ed. Mohammad Gharipour (Abingdon, Oxon, 2016), 97.

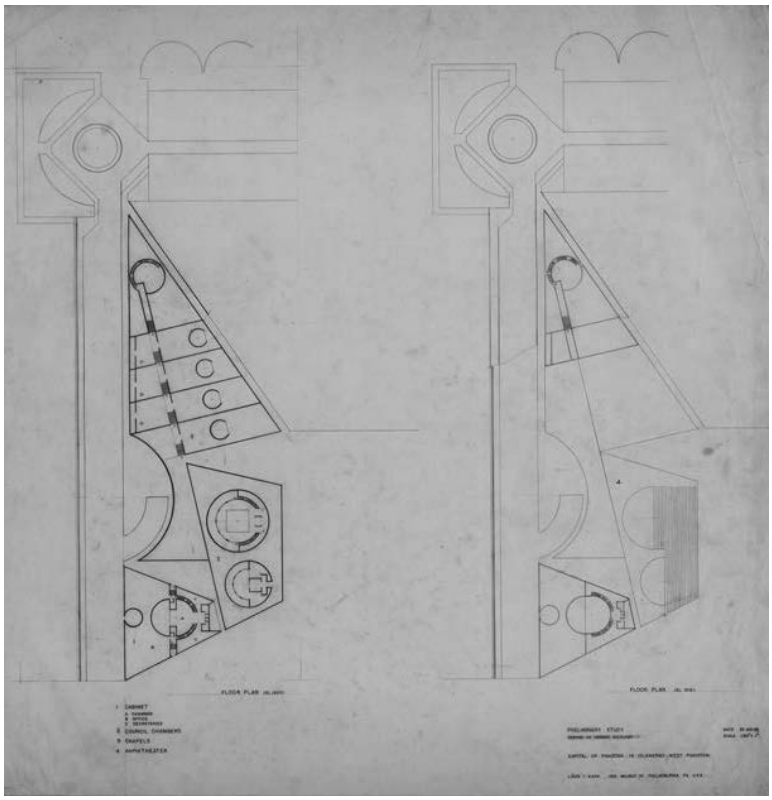


Figure 160: Plan for the Triangular Building by Louis Kahn. Source: Farhan S. Karim, “Sculpted Landscape: The Unbuilt Public Square of Islamabad,” in *Contemporary Urban Landscapes of the Middle East*, ed. Mohammad Gharipour (Abingdon, Oxon, 2016), 107.



Figure 161: Model of Presidential Complex for Islamabad by Edward Durell Stone. Source: Farhan S. Karim, "Sculpted Landscape: The Unbuilt Public Square of Islamabad," in *Contemporary Urban Landscapes of the Middle East*, ed. Mohammad Gharipour (Abingdon, Oxon, 2016), 108.

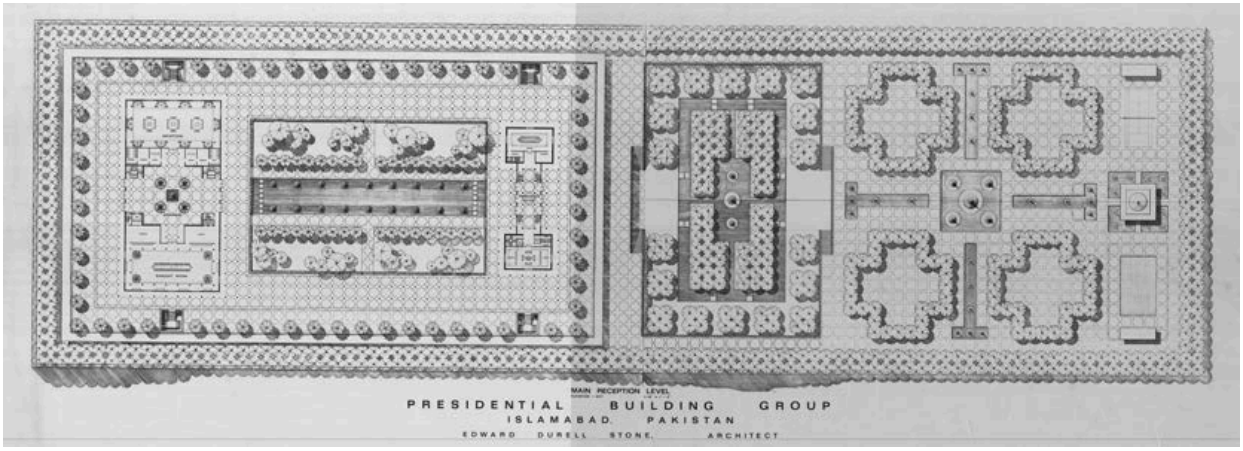


Figure 162: Initial Plan of Presidential Complex by Edward Durell Stone. The plan demonstrates the relationship between landscape and main buildings. Source: Farhan S. Karim, "Sculpted Landscape: The Unbuilt Public Square of Islamabad," in *Contemporary Urban Landscapes of the Middle East*, ed. Mohammad Gharipour (Abingdon, Oxon, 2016), 109.

5.3 Monumentalism, Religion and Architecture

Designing a building for a national government is not only associated with architecture but also the scale of the structure represents the power of the political authority.[580] The location of a Capitol Complex is positioned in relation to the neighbouring environment as well as in connection to the city and the country as a whole.[581] The emplacement of an Assembly Building is an 'exercise in political power, a spatial declaration of political control.'[582] Kahn was commissioned to design an explicit political group of buildings. These buildings were required to be arranged not only to house the Pakistani Government, but also needed to consider the religion that built the nation. The National Assembly Building displays strong connections to four elements: firstly, emplacing a gigantic structure as a 'transcendent object' to depict monumentalism; secondly, an exaggerated attempt in an ever evolving masterplan to connect the mosque and the assembly building in a society where the role of Islam (as religion) was disputable (discussed in Chapter 2); thirdly, the climate considerations that were partially in effect to achieve the monumentality; and lastly, the inconsistency of democracy in a political context which was shaping its development. Rather than diving into various details of the architectural process, this segment will attempt to analyse the National Assembly Building from a broader perspective relating to these connections.

[580] Murray Edelman, "Space and the Social Order," *JAE* 32, no. 2 (November 1978): 7.
[581] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 10.
[582] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 10.

5.3.1 Placing the Citadels

The initial programme for the complex suggested by the PWD was ambiguous. There are two interpretations of the programme brief. Firstly, numerous writings on the complex and Kahn himself mentioned that he was advised to design a masterplan that would include offices and housing for assembly members, ministers and secretaries; residences for the president, the speakers and the secretary of the assembly; an assembly building and a mosque. The programme extended demanding a hotel for the state officials.[583] Secondly, Vale referred to his interview with former Chief Architect of Bangladesh, namely Abul Bashar, who stated that initially 'Kahn was not given a written programme at all.'[584] Vale cross-checked and found that the only programme brief ever written is placed in an undated file at Louis I. Kahn Collection in the University of Pennsylvania. However, it seemed to be written after Kahn had already begun to work on the project. Analysing the two interpretations, it can be assumed that Kahn may not have received any initial programme list when he was being telegrammed with the offer of the commission. Perhaps, the briefing might have been an on-site discussion Kahn had with the PWD when he travelled to Dhaka for the first time. Kahn was taken for a site survey which revealed a spacious and flat terrain and situated near a military airport in the outskirts of the city. The site included with a small agricultural school and a minor brickmaking plant.[585] Emphasises was given to the religious facilities which needed to be accessible from the parliament for daytime prayers. The requirements for the residences were also comprehensive as

---

[583] See, Louis I. Kahn, "Remarks," *Perspecta* 9/10 (1965), https://www.jstor.org/stable/1566926; Brownlee and De Long, *Louis I. Kahn: In the Realm of Architecture*; Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*; Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style*.
[584] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 311.
[585] Ashraf, interview; Wares, interview; Ali and Mallick, interview.

most of the members of the parliament were expected to be travelling from West Pakistan and would therefore needing accommodations during legislative sessions. Alongside the principal programme, Kahn was also asked to develop a masterplan for the entire site which was approximately between 800 and 1,000 acres. Within this ample amount of land, the government initially planned to build a Supreme Court, offices, residences, markets, schools, a hospital, a library, a museum, and recreational areas for the public.[586]

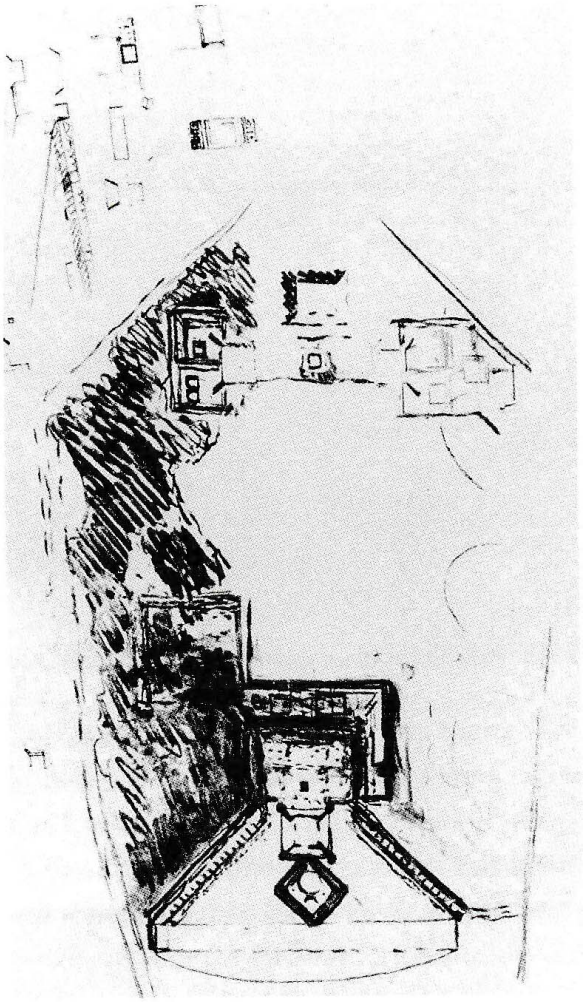


Figure 163: Site plan sketch by Kahn. The sketch shows distance between the Citadel of Assembly (bottom) and Citadel of Institutions (top). Source: Sarah Williams Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism* (New Have, Yale University Press, 2001), 174

[586] Kahn, "Remarks," 306.

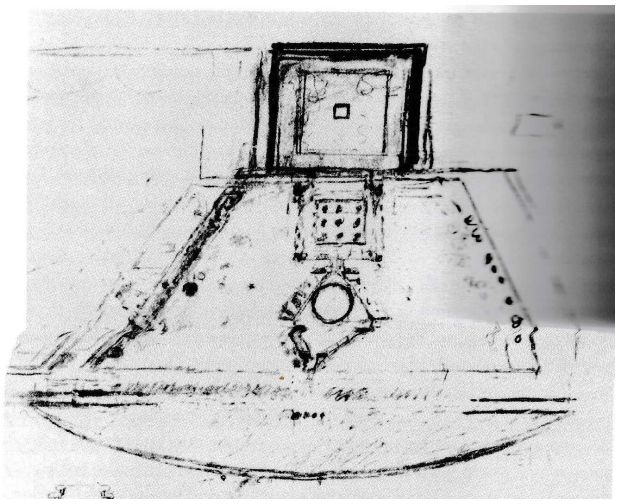


Figure 164: Sketch of Citadel of Assembly by Kahn. This early site plan shows National Assembly Building (bottom centre), mosque (centre) and Supreme Court (top) with hostels on each side. Source: Sarah Williams Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism* (New Have, Yale University Press, 2001), 175

The commission required the design of a city within a city, as Goldhagen described it, as Kahn's attempt to feel 'a world within a world.'[587] Kahn assessed that the second Capitol Complex would have three spectators: the international architectural community, the PWD of Pakistan and the dwellers of Dhaka city. With an aim to create a design that could communicate with all three, Kahn developed his design harmonising ruins and past structures of Europe and the Indian subcontinent, securing a place between both cultures of east and west. He immediately rearranged the programmes that were given to him by the PWD and divided these into two zones: 'Citadel of Assembly' included the Assembly, Supreme Court, mosque and residences of the president and higher officials; and 'Citadel of Institutions' included public, commercial and recreational functions (fig. 163-164). The scale he chose for the Citadel of Assembly was so enormous that some of Kahn's early sketches and perspectives depict humans as mere dots (fig. 165). For the Citadel of Assembly Kahn

[587] Cited in, Ksiazek, "Changing Symbols of Public Life: Louis Kahn's Religious and Civic Projects 1944-1966 and Architectural Culture at the End of the Modern Movement," 332.

had to make a decision about how to merge the Supreme Court and the mosque with the position of the Assembly. The 1962 Constitution did not place as much emphasise on the Supreme Court as it did for the Assembly Building. Therefore, for Kahn's notions of transcendence were focussed on the Assembly Building and the Supreme Court was given secondary importance.

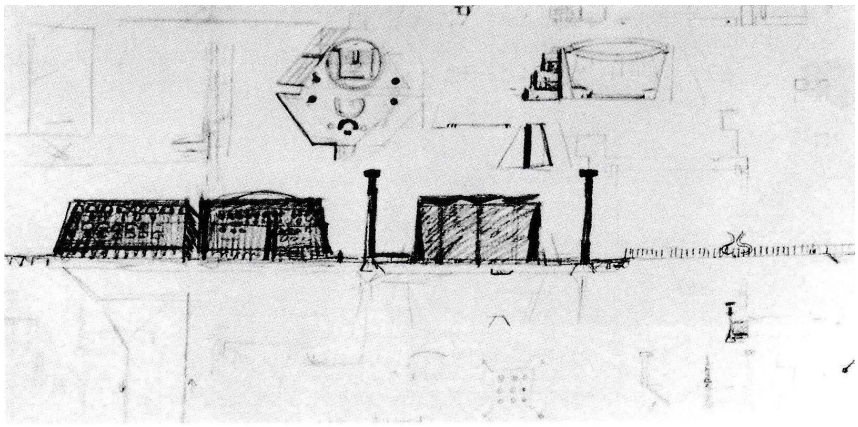


Figure 165: Elevation sketch by Kahn showing the massive scale of the building complexes of Citadel of Assembly with a dot depicting human scale in between the mosque's minaret and the Assembly Building. Source: Sarah Williams Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism* (New Have, Yale University Press, 2001), 176

In the site plan of 12 March 1963, the Supreme Court, the Assembly Building and the mosque were placed on the same axis to emphasise on the importance of these institutions (fig. 166). However, as Vale disputes, 'the justice was interested in maintaining a social as well as spatial distance,' which was evident in the conversation between Kahn and the Chief Justice of Pakistan when they met to discuss the design of the Supreme Court within the complex.[588] The Chief Justice made it very clear to Kahn that he did not want his institution near the assembly.[589] Thus over a period of

[588] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 256.
[589] For a detailed conversation between Kahn and the Chief Justice of Pakistan, see, Richard Saul Wurman, ed., *What Will Be Has Always Been : the Words of Louis I. Kahn* (New York: Access and Rizzoli, 1990), 172; Kahn, "Remarks."

time, there were multiple transformations in the masterplan (fig. 167-168). Kahn's idea of having an insulated mosque within the court and assembly was revoked by adding the mosque into the assembly in the site plan of 10 May 1964 (fig. 169). Within a year, by February 1965, the axis remained only for the Assembly Building with an adjacent prayer hall and the Supreme Court building was shifted to one side. (fig. 170) Eventually in January 1973, the final published version of the masterplan shows Kahn having placed the Supreme Court behind the Secretariat Complex which neither connected with the axis nor with the assembly functions (fig. 171). To this date, the Supreme Court remained unbuilt, as the independent Bangladesh decided to use a previously existing building which was centrally located in the city. Furthermore, the secretariat and the civil sector of the masterplan, which Kahn planned as the Citadel of Institutions were never realised. The dramatic divisions of the Capitol Complex were subverted and the Citadel of Assembly as it stands today only can be seen, as Vale labels it, as 'a Citadel of Bureaucracy.'[590]

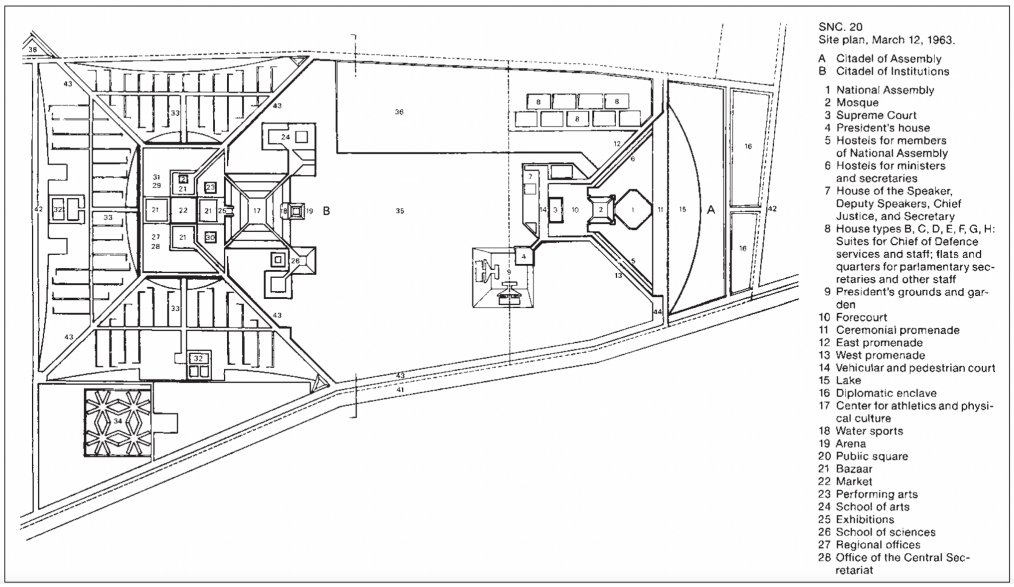


Figure 166: Early Site Plan of the Capitol Complex showing Citadel of Assembly (right) and Citadel of Institutions (left), 12 March 1963. Source: Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 297

590 Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 256.

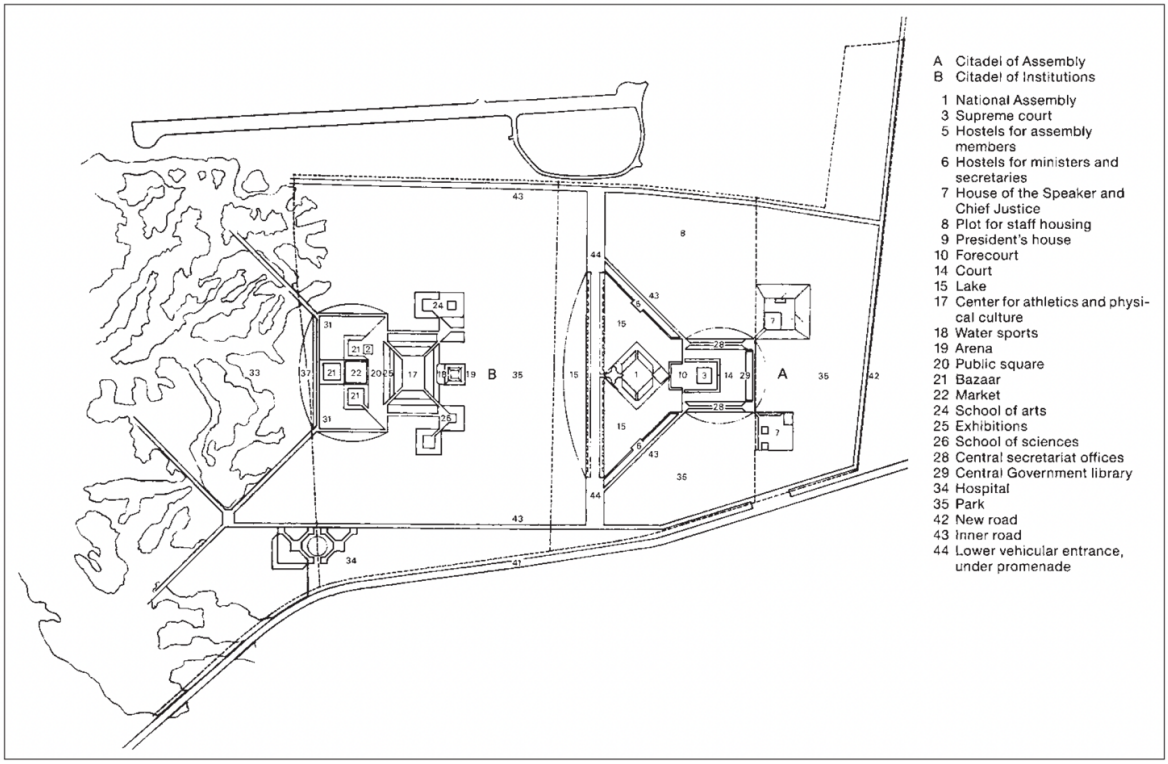


Figure 167: Masterplan of 3 May 1963. Source: Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 298

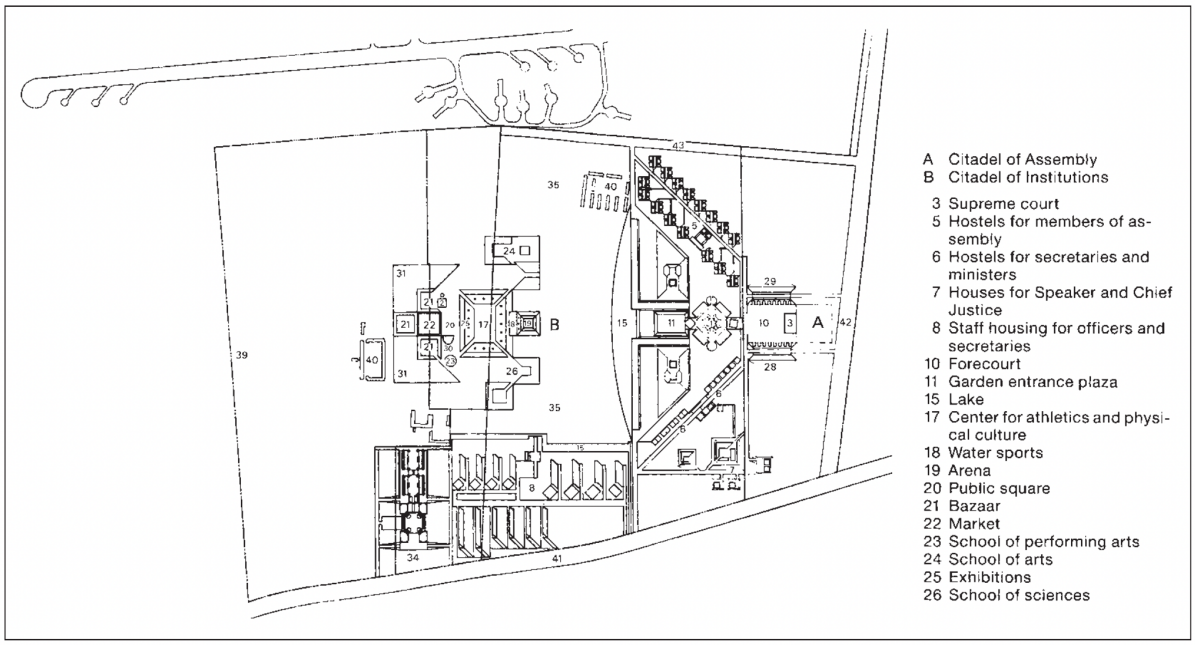


Figure 168: Masterplan of 21 December 1963. Source: Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 298

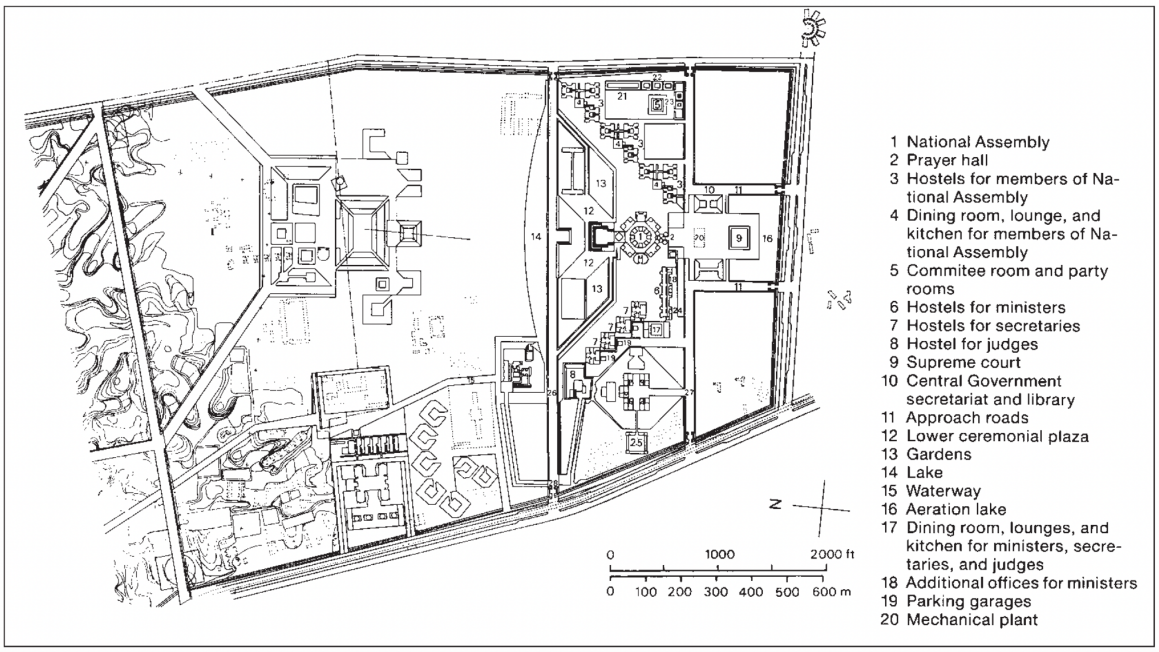


Figure 169: Masterplan of 10 May 1964 showing small scaled prayer hall and Supreme Court have no insulation. Source: Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 299

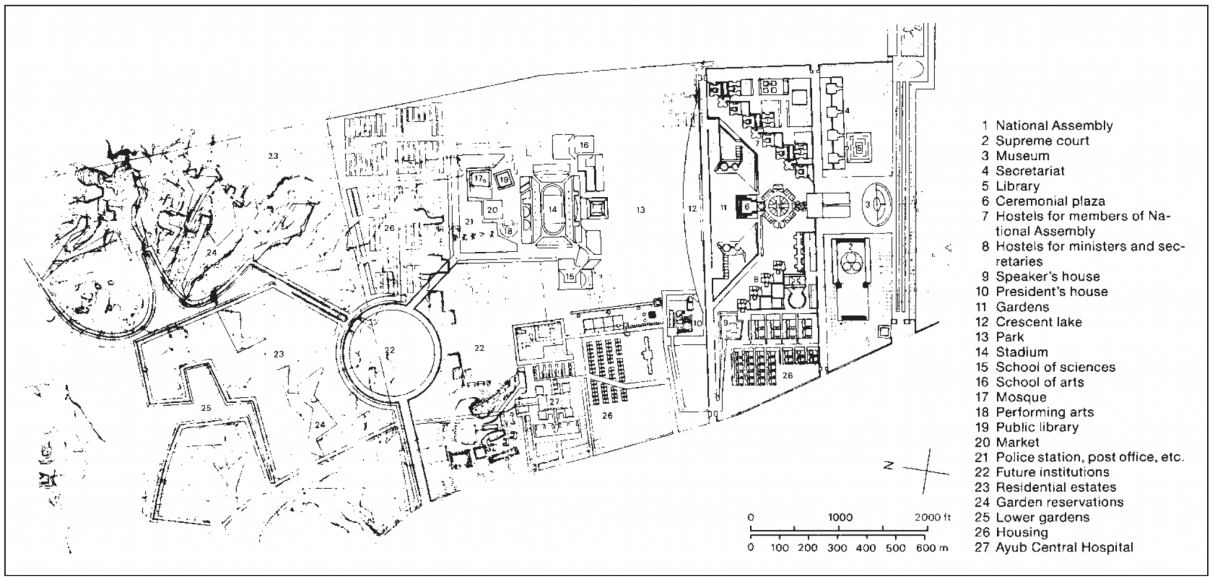


Figure 170: Masterplan of February 1965 showing the Supreme Court no longer in the same axis as the National Assembly Building. Source: Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 300.

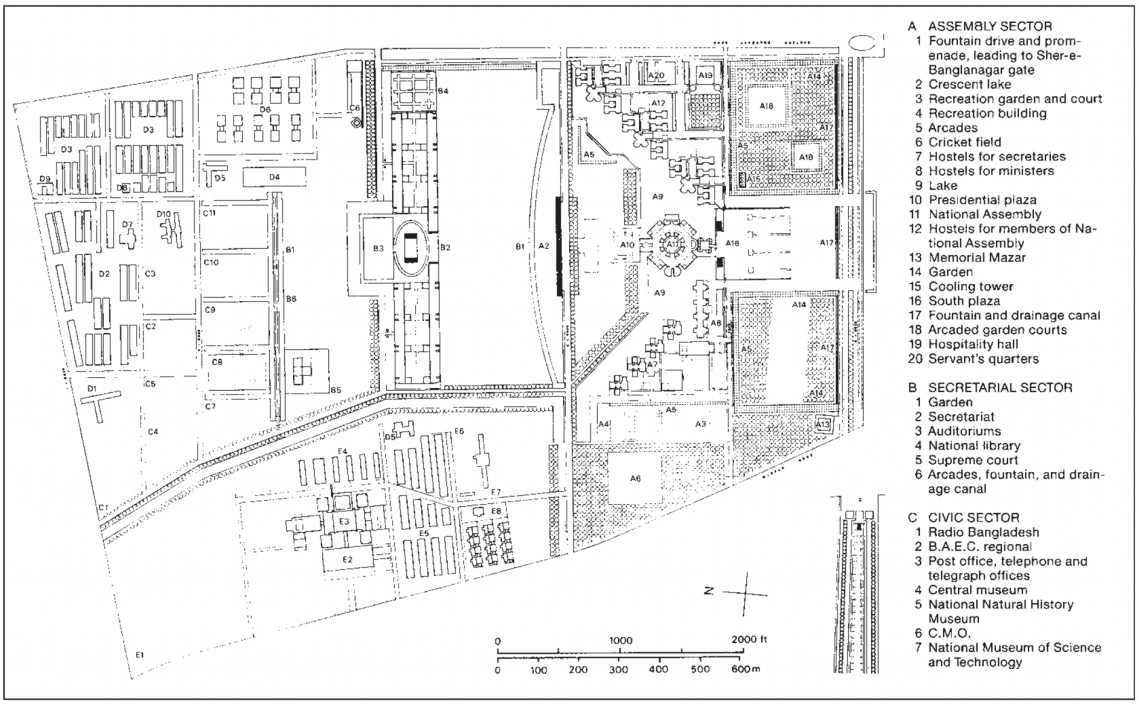


Figure 171: Published Masterplan of January 1973. B5 showing Supreme Court has been included as a part of Citadel of Institutions I Source: Source: Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 300.

Ali and Vale both investigated why exactly Kahn chose to name his zonal divisions as 'citadel'; it is unclear as the word has no connotations with either 'assembly' or 'capitol.'[591] On the contrary, 'citadel' has been often associated with either from the structures of monarchy or autocratic societies. Then, why would Kahn choose to build an association with such concepts, especially, when his commission was initiated from the growing political turbulence? Was he trying to capitalise on the tensions of his client by providing a greater view of the society with his ideas of democracy? Or was he just implementing his personal interests in a place where he was given an opportunity of utter freedom both creatively and financially? Goldhagen has argued that Kahn sought to create an institution that 'evoked a "sense of loyalty," a sense of the "inevitable responsibility" of "civic living," to encourage free individuals to

591 Ali, *Shamatate Shangshad [National Parliament]*, 163; Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 270.

participate actively in self-governance.'[592] This demonstration initiated from what Kahn expressed as 'they need things they never knew they needed.'[593] He did not even deny that the 'needs' may be expensive and modestly stated that his Dhaka complex 'cost more because I reveal the truth in those buildings.'[594] But, what truth was Kahn trying to reveal through a second capitol for a country and one which was meant to be used only two times a year? Being aware of the civil war situations, how did Kahn anticipate the actual usage of his edifice? In any case, Kahn's attempt to achieve an expression of 'a world within a world' is undeniably evident in the National Assembly Building which separates itself from the rest of the city.

5.3.2 Form, Design and Monumentalism

Kahn's design process was highly personalised beginning with 'form' and developing with 'what the building wants to be.' Only after Kahn sensed an essence of a form, he would proceed with his design. He viewed 'form and design' as an interplay of 'constant excitement of architecture.'[595] In the case of National Assembly Building, the process of developing form was a point of departure rather than the programme itself. Vale argues that even Kahn claimed his inevitable choice of form, a design methodology for such huge building, was concerned with 'a great deal of latitude for idiosyncrasy and intuition.'[596] Vale continued to dispute that Kahn was willing to allow

[592] Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 167.
[593] Wurman, *What Will Be Has Always Been : the Words of Louis I. Kahn*, 117.
[594] Wurman, *What Will Be Has Always Been : the Words of Louis I. Kahn*, 117.
[595] Louis I. Kahn, "Form and Design (1960)," in *Louis Kahn: Essential Texts*, ed. Robert Twombley (New York, London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2003), 74. Original text from "Voice of America – Louis I. Kahn. Recorder November 19,1960." Folder, Box LIK53, University of Pennsylvania.
[596] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 240.

diverse programme into his 'form' when the client wanted it. But Kahn remained particularly adamant in his concepts, noting,

> What I'm trying to do is establish a belief out of a philosophy I can turn over to Pakistan, so that whatever they do is always answerable to it. I feel as though this plan which was made weeks after I saw the program has strength. Does it have all the ingredients? If only one is lacking, it will disintegrate.[597]

Whichever philosophy Kahn devised, the basis was focussed on the idea of starting with an architecture of 'transcendent nature' that developed in an attempt to achieve monumentality, motivating people to act as members of a collective community.[598] In his essay entitled 'Monumentality' published in 1944, Kahn defined monumentalism by exemplifying the Parthenon and how it conveyed eternal feelings for him, stating that the future of Greek civilisation looked upon the greatness of this temple.[599] He had carried these ideas with himself since 1944 and now attempted to incorporate these in the production of the National Assembly Building, creating a monument on which a future civilisation could rely. Not only the masterplan, but also the detailed plan, scale, massing and spatial sequences of functions were designed by keeping these conceptions in mind.

As a matter of fact, Kahn wanted many things from one of his most important commissions. He wanted the assembly to be of 'transcendent nature,' he wanted the

---

[597] Cited in, Alexandra Tyng, *Beginnings: Louis I. Kahn's Philosophy of Architecture* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1984), 119.
[598] Ksiazek, "Changing Symbols of Public Life: Louis Kahn's Religious and Civic Projects 1944-1966 and Architectural Culture at the End of the Modern Movement," 332; Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 240.
[599] See full essay in, Louis I. Kahn, "Monumentality (1944)," in *Louis Kahn: Essential Texts*, ed. Robert Twombley (New York, London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1960).

form to flow with 'what the building wants to be' and he wanted these to be confirmed and enhanced by his architecture alongside conjectured social ideals of democracy. In the end, he kept claiming he designed the complex following all these notions. Kahn's clarity with words, as Vale argues, rarely matches the finished and realised forms. This raises confusion in 'architectural methodology, metaphysical ideals and social realities.'[600] Vale disputes that Kahn's 'verbal trickery' can be useful to develop a concept, however, undoubtedly he was designing for a society and a culture completely different from his own. Similarly, Goldhagen argues on how Kahn's 'incantatory phrasings' betray the other concerns of communal life.[601] For example, Kahn proposed two massive plazas located at the north and south entrances of the National Assembly Building (fig. 172). These ample areas were named South Plaza and the Presidential Square. The South Plaza is still known to be the largest paved area in Bangladesh, as Kahn envisioned it not only as an axis for the main building, but also as a public gathering space. The Presidential Square was proposed as a large one-storied plinth with an amphitheatre for outdoor events. The plinth is supported by brick arches generating a cool and shadowed space 'dominated by irregular [and] rhythmic vistas' (fig. 173).[602] Kahn designed these plazas with the congregation of citizens in mind, in contrast to the PWD's opinion of having a building with limited access. Kahn contended that this type of plaza could be 'used very well as a museum of independence' or 'for marshalling ceremonial parades.'[603] As a result, these proposed plazas covering areas of more than 800,000 square feet were, as

[600] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 240.
[601] Ksiazek, "Changing Symbols of Public Life: Louis Kahn's Religious and Civic Projects 1944-1966 and Architectural Culture at the End of the Modern Movement," 331.
[602] Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 177.
[603] Quoted in, Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 178.

Goldhagen criticised, 'unprogrammed, unrequested and in functional terms – unnecessary public space.'[604] At any cost, Kahn sought to 'reinforce' the monumentality that he claimed as a design technique from the ancient structures.

The ideas initially implemented in the Capitol Complex can be perceived alongside Western-derived concepts such as modern forms, central plans and an imposed democratic culture. At first, with his Western tradition and training in Beaux Arts education, Kahn developed an appreciation for centralised buildings. This admiration was amplified when Kahn travelled to Europe and explored ancient ruins and structures. From the early masterplan and initial sketches, Goldhagen describes the complex as an 'Versailles-like axes sweeping toward the climactic capitol, separated from the city and reflected in shallow pools' (fig. 169).[605] Curtis observes that the classical inspirations were so embedded in Kahn's mind that it was difficult to single out each of the applications.[606] On the one hand, Curtis claims that Kahn's exterior geometry to be similar to the works of Boullée and Ledoux and on the other, Wiseman emphasises the scale of the National Assembly Building as evoked from sketches of Piranesi, whose drawings Kahn greatly admired (fig. 174).[607] The Beaux Arts tradition had a huge impact on Kahn's design as he directly separated his design spaces between what he described as 'servant' and 'served' spaces. Furthermore, ceremonial axes usage is noticeable throughout and the diagonality demonstrated is almost a

[604] Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 177.
[605] Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 174.
[606] Curtis, "Authencity, Abstraction and the Ancient Sense: Le Corbusier's and Louis Kahn's Ideas of Parliament," 191.
[607] Curtis, "Authencity, Abstraction and the Ancient Sense: Le Corbusier's and Louis Kahn's Ideas of Parliament," 191; Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style*, 155.

homage to the baroque.[608] Kahn's vision of grandeur and massiveness for the complex led him to refer overall to the scale of Hagia Sophia and to the Pantheon for the central chamber's lightwell and the Baths of Caracalla for the masterplan.[609]

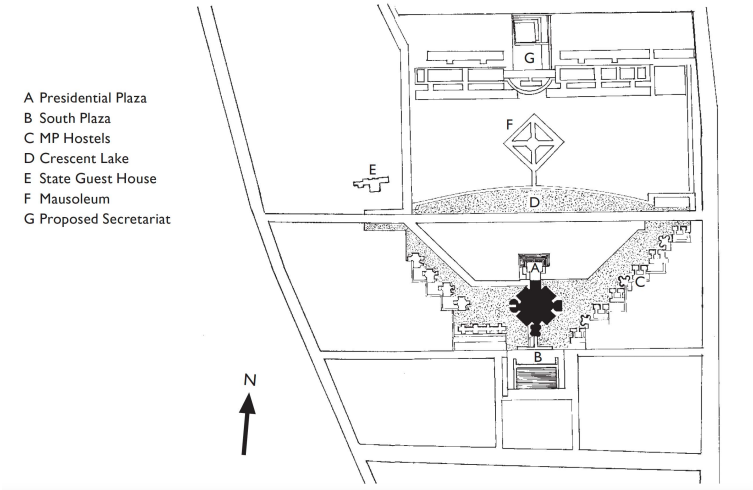


Figure 172: Site plan highlighting the main functions. Source: Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 293.



Figure 173: Brick arches under the Presidential Square. Source: Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania

608 Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 242.
609 Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 175.

Gusheh argues that Kahn attempted to introduce an American Modernism in the Eastern countries such as Ahmedabad and Dhaka.[610] In contrast, Goldhagen argues that Kahn's concepts were neither unique to American characteristics, nor familiar to Pakistan.[611] Perhaps most of Kahn's conceptions do indeed reveal a European attitude. However, alongside the European influences, Kahn advanced his design by combining local traditions as he kept acknowledging that the complex must serve the local place and culture. He attempted to sculpt his design to favour the climate and to the architectural tradition of the Indian subcontinent. His initial central planning of the National Assembly Building echoed the Mughal complexes. Similar to the Taj Mahal in Agra, the National Assembly Building is elevated centrally on an immense platform reflected in the artificial lake (fig. 175). Kahn included the waterbody to be reminiscent of the river-based East Bengal. Goldhagen notes, 'in doing so, he built in a language that was locally comprehensible while remaining modern, laying the ground for citizens to appropriate the complex as an instantiation of their own highest ideals.'[612] Western classical inspiration from historic monuments was the focus of Kahn's early sketches, which were extremely abstract. These abstract sketches would help him develop a design in which to integrate his ideas with their own strong identity.[613] The early site plans of the Salk Institute, for example, resemble Hadrian's Villa, whereas the final plans do not. Similarly, in the design for National Assembly Building, Kahn abstracted his ideas not only from what he knew already, but also from what he had learned from the Mughal and Bengali vernacular architecture whilst travelling across Indian

610 Gusheh, "Louis Kahn in Dhaka: Ruin as Method."
611 Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 178.
612 Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 178.
613 Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 178.

subcontinent.[614] Thus Kahn developed his designs from Western concepts which he concocted with various themes common to the East.

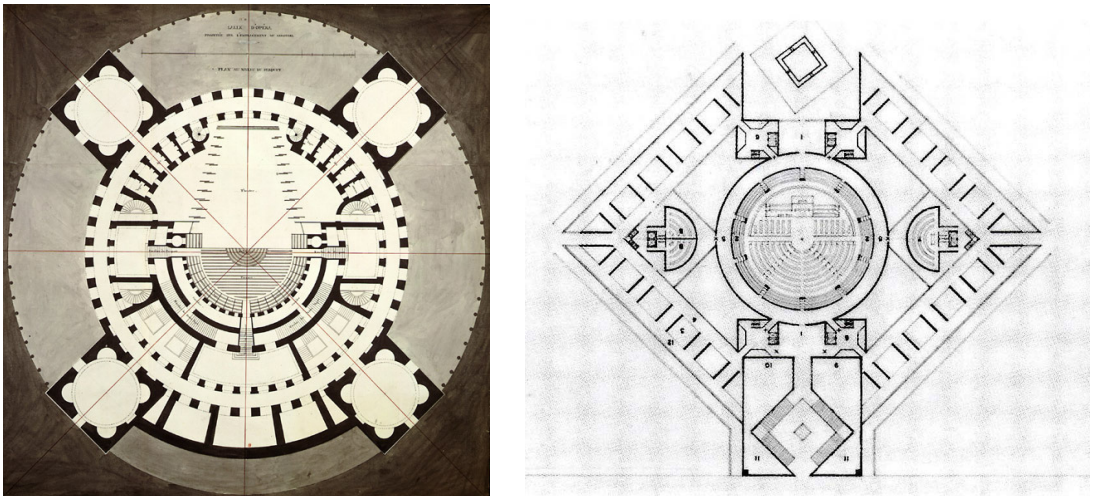


Figure 174: A Comparison of Plan of La Ville de Chaux, 1804, France by Claude-Nicolas Ledoux and Initial Plan of the National Assembly Building. Source: Sarah Williams Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism* (New Have, Yale University Press, 2001), 195.



Figure 175: Taj Mahal at Agra and the National Assembly Building similarly elevated on a plinth reflected in an artificial lake. Source: Artstor

[614] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 242.



Figure 176: Axonometric view of the Citadel of Assembly. Source: Archives of Architecture (Bangladesh)

The National Assembly Building not only exhibits references to ancient structures of both East and West, but also has similarity to Kahn's previous works.[615] Goldhagen argues that Kahn's democratic ideas in his architecture were initiated through his former design of the Unitarian Church in Rochester. A thorough analysis conducted by Goldhagen demonstrates how Kahn's ideology of democracy had been attempted to be implemented in the design of the Unitarian Church, which was extensively explored later in the design of the National Assembly Building. Moreover, the site plan organisation of the church influenced Kahn in his later project of the Assembly Building in the arrangement of the complex in a manner of a 'citadel.' By positioning the Assembly block in the centre surrounded by a lake that would diagonally reach east and west to the two banks of hostels, Kahn attempted to build a 'citadel' which he later sought to fortify with a low pyramidical wall bordering the perimeter of the complex that was never executed (fig. 176). Vale investigates the similarities between the National

[615] Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 169.

Assembly Building and Phillips Exeter Library in New Hampshire (fig. 177-178). Vale specifies how both buildings looked like fortresses, how the interiors are focussed on height and how the exteriors are punched with primary shapes to encourage a play of light and shadow (fig. 179).[616] Vale criticises, commenting, 'for an architect so concerned with discovering the essence of each institution, the resultant designs of these two places are curiously similar.'[617]

The initial elevations of the Assembly Building resembled the Unitarian Church through the blank colonnades with shadowed windows and lightwells above the central chamber (fig. 180-181). The idea of lightwells was criticised by the PWD as they claimed them to diminish the religious aspects. As a solution, Kahn then reduced the height of the lightwells which caused him to eliminate the idea of a Rochester-like two-walled system elevation which was a climate-friendly solution for bright sunlight and tropical rains. Instead, Kahn designed the offices with a glass elevation to provide transparency placing them behind a concrete wall, carved with cut-outs of geometric shapes. Placing the courtyard in between these carved two-layered concrete walls permitted the sharp sun of Bengal to enter softly in the offices during the day. The double-wall system also shared a similar aesthetical advantage to Corbusier's *brise soleil*.[618] As Kahn finalised his design of elevation with carved-out geometric shapes in a double-wall system, this not only created a vertical emphasis with marble banding but also reflected a modern version of Mughal double-arches with stacked porches (fig. 182-183).

---

[616] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 244.
[617] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 244.
[618] Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 181.

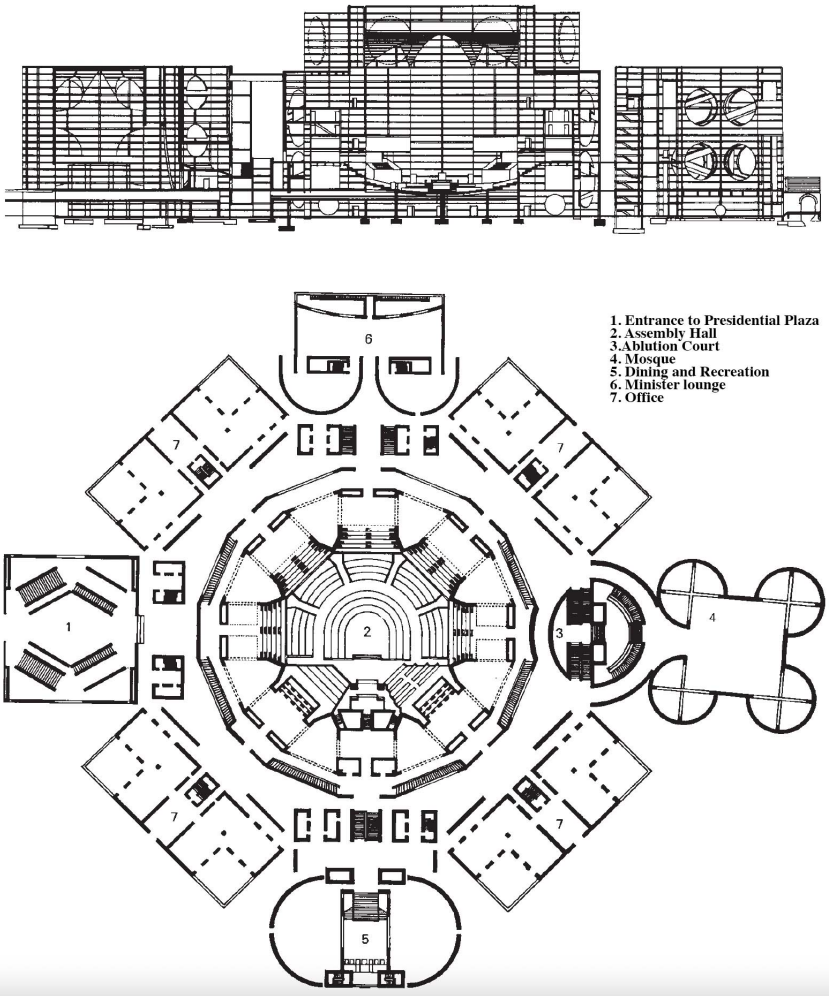


Figure 177: Section (above) and plan (below) of the National Assembly Building. Source: Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 288.

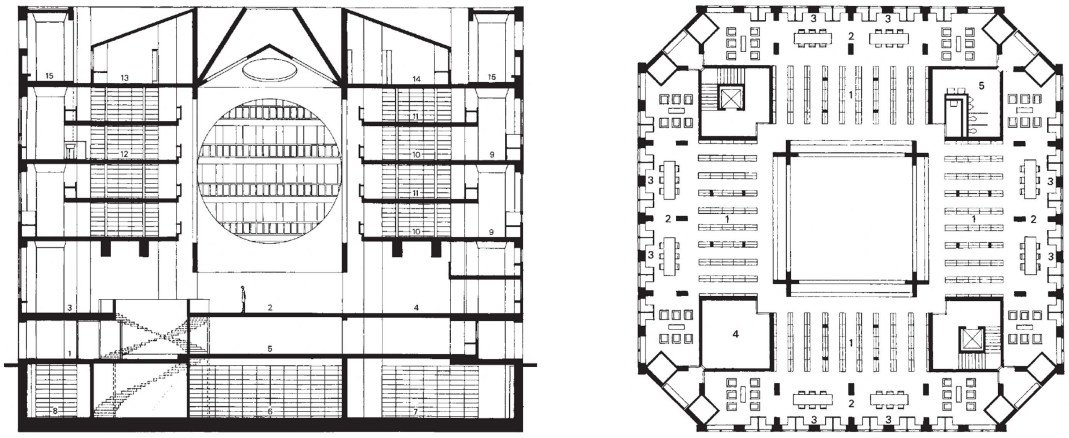


Figure 178: Section (left) and plan (right) of Exeter Library, New Hampshire. Source: Lawrence J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 289.



Figure 179: Elevation of the National Assembly Building punched with primary shapes. Source: MoMA Archive

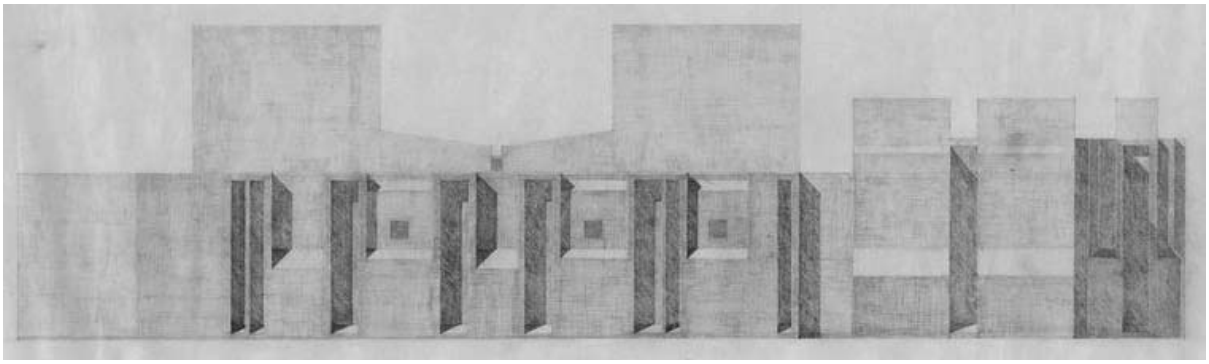


Figure 180: Elevation of First Unitarian Church, Rochester, Louis I. Kahn. Source: MoMA Archive

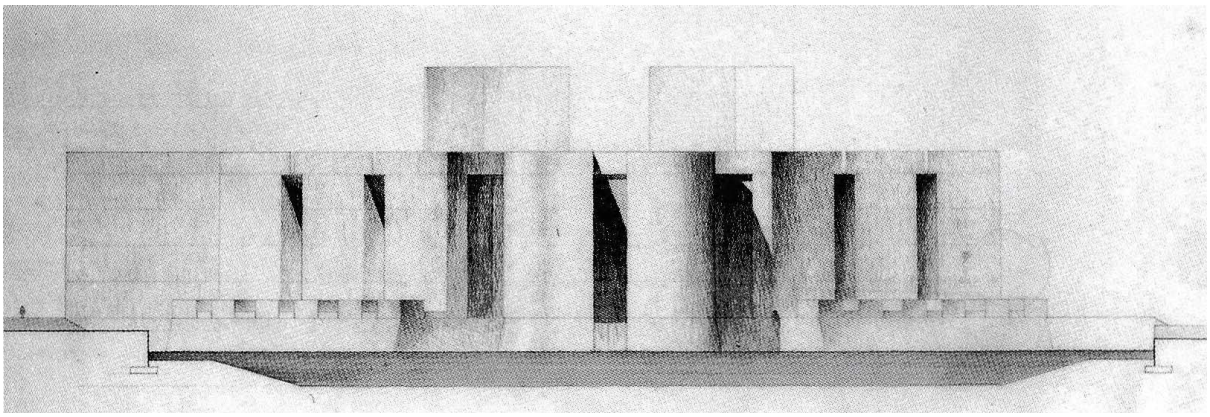


Figure 181: Elevation study of the National Assembly Building. Source: Sarah Williams Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism* (New Have, Yale University Press, 2001), 183.



Figure 182: Office blocks of the National Assembly Building with stacked aperture. Source: Archives of Architecture (Bangladesh)

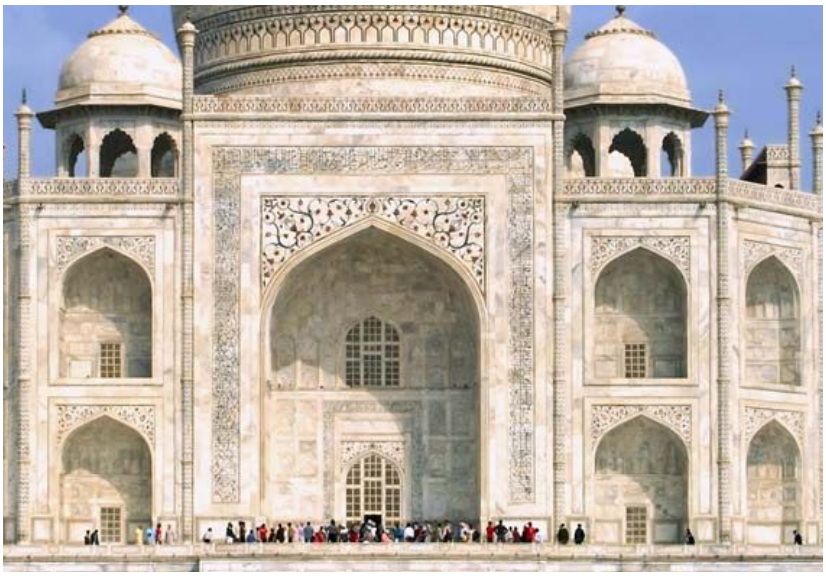


Figure 183: Porches of Taj Mahal similar to the abstract deep facades of the National Assembly. Source: Artstor

Kahn had many concepts and ideologies to develop through his architecture but he was stranded with similar forms in terms of how to express them. The expression of these forms not only evolved from Kahn's 'private vocabulary' but also from the choice of materials he preferred despite the ease of availability.[619]

[619] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 244.

5.3.3 Religion and Legislature

Kahn's initial inspiration for separating the two citadels of the Capitol Complex came from the intention that one was to be spiritual and the other secular. This was apparently, according to Kahn, to symbolise the duality of man's physical and metaphysical nature.[620] Kahn's idea of creating a 'transcendence of assembly' was contradictory to what was mandated in the Constitution of 1962. Kahn's search for a capitol design was a manifestation of spirituality rather than a house of legislation.[621] According to Kahn,

> A house of legislation is a religious place. No matter how much rogue you are as a legislator, when you enter the assembly, there is something transcendent about your view.[622]

The Chief Architect of the PWD between 1965 and 1982, namely Abul Bashar, described the National Assembly as a space in which politicians would be discouraged to tell lies as the building would be surrounded by the Supreme Court (judgement in the world) and the Mosque (judgement by Allah thereafter).[623] In the formulation of anti-colonial nationalisms, Chattarjee introduced the concept of there being two types of social institutions – 'material' and 'spiritual.'[624] The indigenous approach of any practice serves under the 'spiritual' listing, in which nationalism can be used as a political disclaimer with the opposition group (discussed in Chapter 2).[625] In contrast, Vale argues that Kahn's attempt to separate the sacred and the secular was

---

620 Mentioned in, Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 261.
621 Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 262.
622 Wurman, *What Will Be Has Always Been : the Words of Louis I. Kahn*, 24.
623 It is mentioned in an interview with Abul Bashar taken by Vale in 1990. Cited in, Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 262.
624 Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, 6.
625 Hossain, "Representing Landscape, Mediating Wetness: Louis Kahn ay Sher-e-Bangla Nagar (East Pakistan/Bangladesh)," 191.

uncompromising despite knowing the country was breaking up due to religious and cultural issues.[626] Nevertheless, Kahn faced challenges when he attempted to translate his ideas into the architectural drawings.

In the initial masterplan of the Citadel of Assembly, Kahn designed a huge pyramidical-shaped mosque with traditional minarets in four corners (fig. 166). The mosque was an interpretation of how Kahn perceived the Islamic culture of the region. He wrote,

> I was inspired by the devotion of the Muslims to their prayers five times a day and was struck by the anonymity of the mosque. There was no preaching, one simply said prayers. Yet it was a community building, used by all, without any direction.[627]

Kahn's first attempt to create an enormous mosque, as Vale has criticised, 'overreacted to the role of Islam,' 'underestimated the forces of monsoon,' and perhaps misjudged the monumentality of the Assembly Building placed beside it.[628] Furthermore, the role of Islam in relation to East Pakistan was never clear as the social and cultural issues were given similar priority as the religion. Additionally, Kahn, who was raised in a country which separates church and state as well being born as a member of a religious minority, seemed reluctant to notice the sensitive issues which East Pakistan was facing. Therefore, the challenge was to assess if the nation needed a mosque or a place of worship. Even though the majority in East Pakistan and most of the officials were (and still are) Muslim, the region also embraced other religions. Therefore, the PWD thought that a large religious structure might convey an

[626] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 262.
[627] Quoted in, Wurman, *What Will Be Has Always Been : the Words of Louis I. Kahn*, 216.
[628] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 263.

impression that the Pakistani government was dominated by religious belief more than democracy. The mosque's entrance was also a matter of debate for a long time, as Kahn wanted a space open to the public in contrast to the PWD who suggested the access should be only for the officials of the assembly. Komendant highlights how a great deal of controversy arose when Kahn faced the meetings with the Pakistani authorities to discuss the Islamic features, the mosque and the orientation of the building.[629] Despite Kahn being adamant in his design decisions, for this requirement Ahmad and the PWD prevailed. Finally, the solution was to design a meditation space accessible to all religious groups who would be using it; indeed even atheists could do so. The final discussion ended with dramatic irony in which the PWD and Kahn agreeing that the meditation space 'could be oriented toward Mecca but should not look like a typical mosque.'[630]

As a solution, in May 1963, Kahn made some major changes to his second design of the masterplan.[631] At first Kahn changed the orientation of the central chamber and lake to include the mosque into the body of the main building (fig. 167). As the Assembly Building was already aligned with the north-south axis, Kahn decided to rotate the curvilinear corner shafts of the prayer hall slightly off-axis towards the Qibla (angular to the west) (fig. 177).[632] Architecturally, this off-axis solution was a visible break from the massive symmetry of the primary building. Although the slight angular inflection of the prayer hall was a relatively minor visual interval compared to the

[629] Komendant, *18 Years with Louis I. Kahn*, 79.
[630] Komendant, *18 Years with Louis I. Kahn*, 79.
[631] In the second masterplan the site was reduced to six hundred acres and the forms of the citadels were brought closer. See, Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 176.
[632] Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style*, 168.

orthogonal Assembly Building, nevertheless, Kahn handled the shift by creating a 'strong axial symmetry in the adjacent ablution block that revealed a skewed view into the prayer hall beyond.'[633] Kahn stated in his lecture at the Berkeley:

> See, the mosque turns slightly towards the west. I purposely did that, I purposely put this building there like that so I could turn the mosque the other way.[634]

Kahn needed to take a number of rational decisions about the institution which might have been overshadowed by his 'contemplative spiritual nature.'[635] During the design of the whole complex in Dhaka, Kahn's words and actions were contradictory, something which was evident in the placement of the Supreme Court and in the ideological specification of the prayer hall. And even though the assessment or solution was in favour of the worships of all religions, the space was ultimately designated to be designed for Muslims. The space remains as a prayer hall for Muslims to this date (fig. 184).

In relation to the orientation of the prayer hall towards Mecca, several architects in Bangladesh produced discourses which have consequently been explored in the scholarly writing of Vale, Wiseman, Goldhagen and Ali. Some claimed that the prayer hall was misoriented considering it a local embarrassment which also violated the principles of mosque design. Yet the allegations were only based on assumptions. Vale notes, 'Whereas Mecca is located slightly south of due to west from Dhaka, it

---

633 Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 267.
634 Louis I. Kahn, "Berkeley Lecture, 1966 Thoughts on Architecture and Personal Expression; An Informal Presentation to Students at Berkeley," *Perspecta* 28 (1997): 29, https://doi.org/10.2307/1567188.
635 Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 255.

does seem plausible that the orientation of the *qibla* wall of the protruding mosque entrance would look to the visitor to be pointing to the northwest.'[636] This perception is also evident in the plans of the National Assembly Building. After examining the angular shifts, it was clear that because of the orthogonal features of the South Plaza, the entrance of the prayer hall was not oriented cardinally but rather was faced slightly in a southeast direction (fig. 185).[637] Thus Kahn himself did not make any error here, instead it was perhaps the other people who were concerned about how the designer interpreted the role of Islam.

Although Kahn could not achieve the 'gathering of a community' through his prayer hall as it was highly restricted, nonetheless, he was successful in composing a 'dichotomous space' which he implied by positioning the prayer hall adjacent to the Assembly Building.[638] This composition worked well in expressing the different functions of the two institutions by interlocking them side by side. Over the course of the design process, Kahn shifted and modified the mosque or prayer hall as it was one of the main functions requested by the authorities. The initial adoption of a pyramidal-shaped mosque sharply contradicted the diamond-shaped form of the assembly. Nonetheless, the final composition resulted in an interlocking block with rotated axis towards Mecca (fig. 177). The tilted shift in the two-dimensional drawings for the prayer hall reveal Kahn's intention of creating the aforementioned 'dichotomous space' between the prayer hall and the assembly building. This 'dichotomous space' with two

[636] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 263.
[637] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 263.
[638] The first dichotomous space idea was employed in the Salk Institute when Kahn separated the functions of the offices and the laboratories. See, Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 193.

functions might suggest the connection of Bengal's past to its present that ultimately took a complete shape in its future.

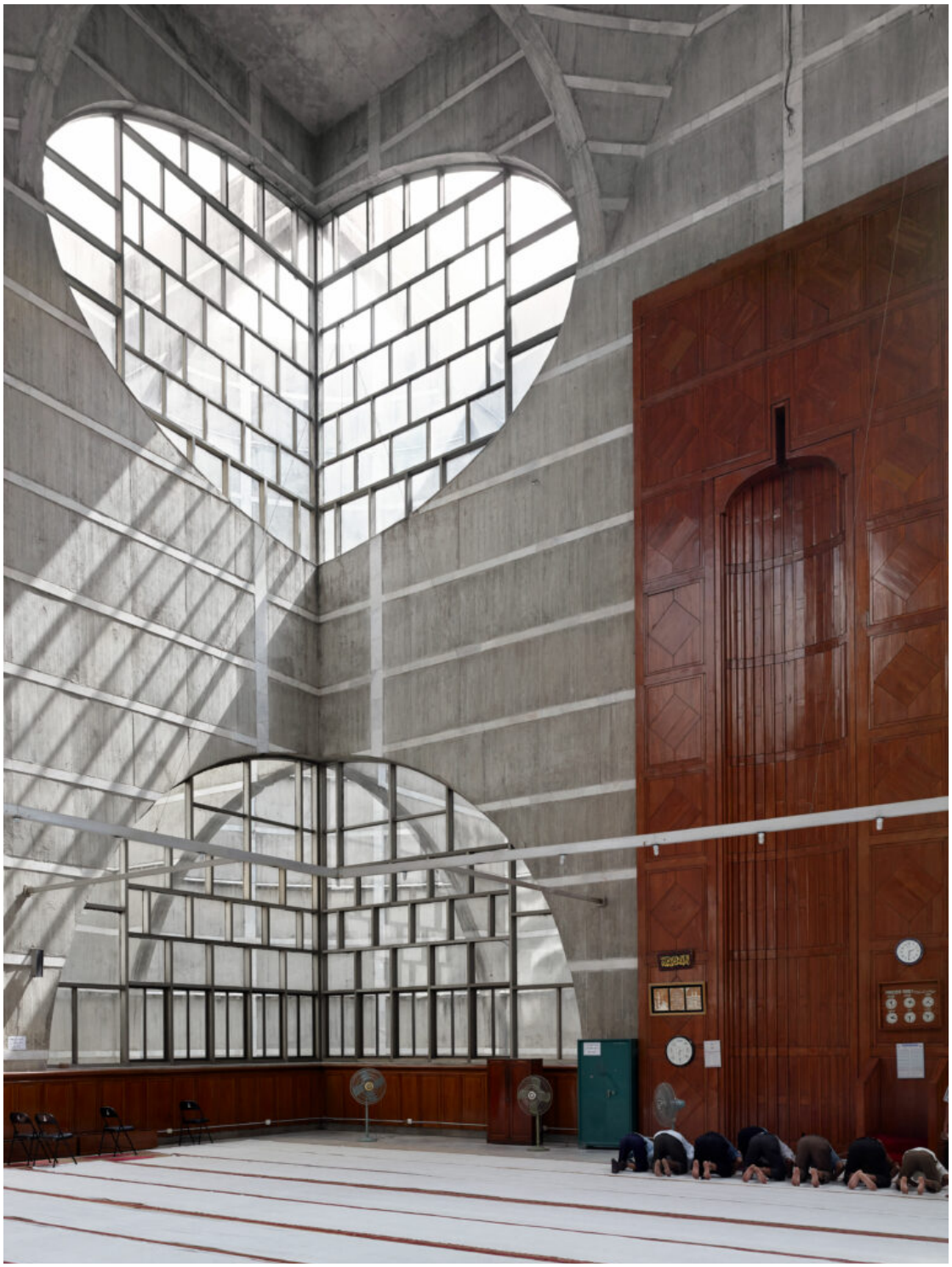


Figure 184: Interior of the Prayer Hall, National Assembly Building. Source: Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania

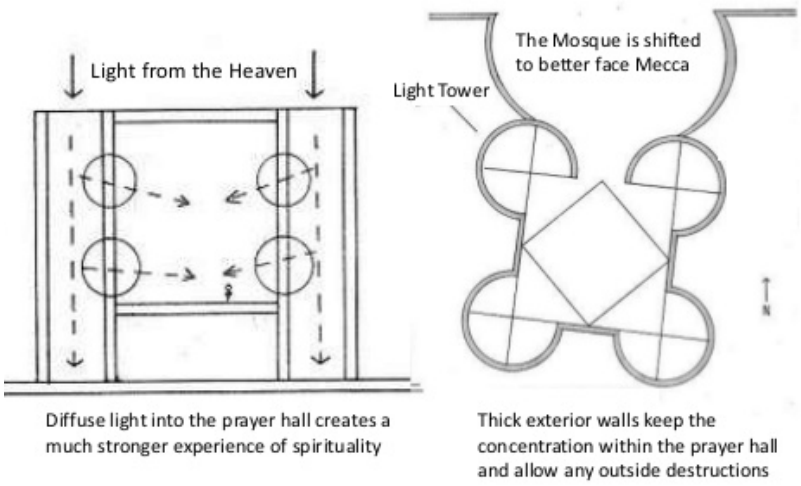


Figure 185: Study of the prayer hall shifted towards Qibla. Source: Author

5.3.4 Regional and Climatic Perplexities

Kahn is largely praised for accommodating local climatic solutions in the design of the National Assembly Building. Kahn's writings illustrated that he was deeply concerned about Dhaka's harsh tropical climate and attempted to design the complex in consideration of the scorching sun, seasonal monsoon and flood. Kahn wrote, 'I visited the land again in the height of monsoon, and I realised how thorough the hardship is during those time when almost half the land is inundated.'[639] However, many of these endeavours were misguided as Vale has argued it is not only that Kahn designed in accordance with Dhaka's climate and failed, but also, that he was so extremely involved that it resulted in an enormous social and financial burden.[640] In relation to responding to the climate, three elements of the National Assembly Building are worth examining: firstly, the artificial lake; secondly, the elevation treatment; and thirdly, the material choice and its implication.

[639] Quoted in, Wurman, *What Will Be Has Always Been : the Words of Louis I. Kahn*, 234.
[640] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 259.



Figure 186: Low land areas of the site of Capitol Complex. Source: Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania

The artificial lake surrounding the Assembly Building on an elevated platform and the low areas of the land were to be filled with earth dug up from the lake which was conceived as a 'giant basin' to control seasonal flooding (fig. 186).[641] Kahn used water as an important symbol to reflect the significance of boat transportation via rivers in East Pakistan.[642] Initially, the PWD objected to the idea of placing a waterbody surrounding the main building as it might also resemble the frequent flood occurrences in Bengal. But Kahn argued that the waterbody in fact resembled the concepts as featured in Mughal mausoleums where this could be a very appropriate solution as a drainage system during the heavy monsoon season.[643] However, for a country which suffers annual floods during the monsoon, one rising capitol building surrounded by reflecting pools was not a climatic solution rather an aesthetic one. The masterplan organisation of the Mughal monuments is evident in this arrangement in which Kahn

641 Reed, "Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Capital of Bangladesh," 376.
642 See, Hossain, "Representing Landscape, Mediating Wetness: Louis Kahn ay Sher-e-Bangla Nagar (East Pakistan/Bangladesh)."
643 Kahn, "Remarks," 308.

designed the ‘citadel’ surrounded by a pool of water which could dissolve the ‘concrete and marble edifice into endless shimmering reflections.’[644] At first, this was not convincing to the client and the idea was interrupted. However, there was always a matter of security and the suggestion of limited access from the PWD. Thus, the idea of having a separate Assembly Building surrounded by an artificial lake was ultimately accepted, with, as Reed recalls, the waterbody ‘guarding its spectacular vistas.’[645]



Figure 187: Deep facades of the exterior. Source: Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania



Figure 188: Contrasting material of the National Assembly Building in concrete and Hostels in red brick. Source: Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania

644 Reed, "Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Capital of Bangladesh," 376.
645 Reed, "Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Capital of Bangladesh," 376.

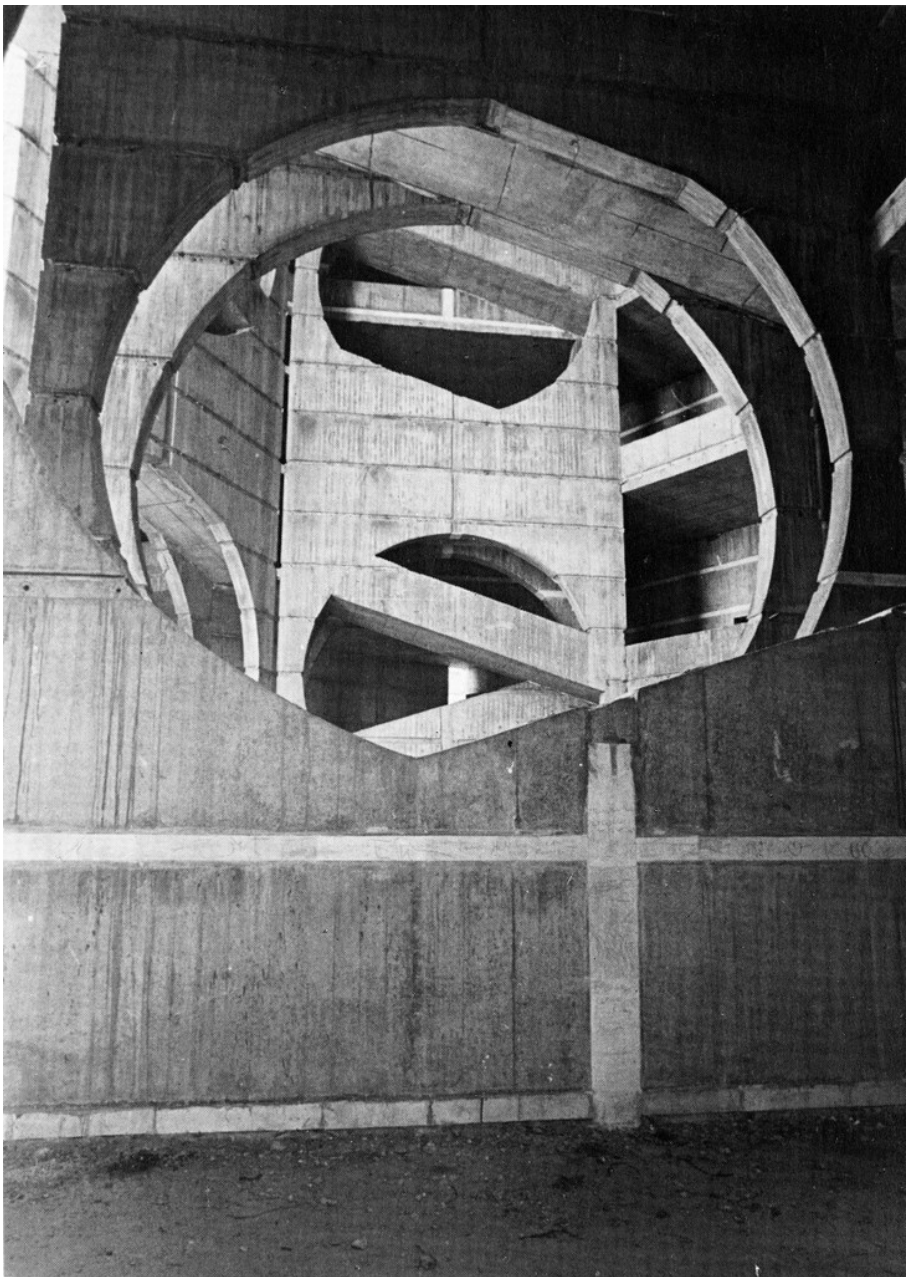


Figure 189: Play of shade and shadow in the interior. Source: Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania

The deep facades were designed to be a barrier from the sun and rain (fig. 187). However, whilst it created a poetic play of shade and shadow in the interior of the building, it did not provide much natural light inside (fig. 189). As a result, and in a similar vein to the Five Polytechnic Institutes, the National Assembly Building was also a victim of modern architectural orthodoxies and remained too dark requiring artificial illuminations (Discussed in Chapter 3). Furthermore, too busy considering the sun and

rain, Kahn consequently neglected issues of wind and humidity.[646] Kahn's long-time friend and associate Anne Tyng claimed that the double walls of the National Assembly Building were built to prevent the country's extreme heat, however, they in fact provided an insufficient cross-ventilation in comparison to the air conditioning system which was installed after the construction.[647] The building is air-conditioned throughout and it costs almost two million dollars per annum to maintain the machines. Ultimately, the outer wall could not act as a shield for the sun and rain nor could the inner wall provide a façade to support the high energy consumption within the building. Kahn defended his decision by stating, 'it costs money to fight the sun,' however, David Wisdom, one of Kahn's associates, noted that he successfully persuaded the client and committee to allow these extravagant designs to happen.[648] In order to achieve either aesthetic, functional, climatic or monumental consideration, Kahn was always persuasive with his logic and he never unattached himself from his 'spiritual mission' which is mostly evident in his prayer hall design.

In the early stages of the design Kahn wanted all the buildings of the Capitol Complex to be constructed of reinforced concrete including the Assembly Building. Vale disputes that Kahn's decision of using concrete demonstrated a strong symbolism that synthesised with the Assembly Building.[649] However, reinforced concrete was not as available as brick in Dhaka. Thus, it was decided that only the National Assembly Building would be built with reinforced concrete and the hostels would be constructed

[646] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 259.
[647] Tyng, *Beginnings: Louis I. Kahn's Philosophy of Architecture*, 68.
[648] Wurman, *What Will Be Has Always Been : the Words of Louis I. Kahn*, 62; David Wisdom, "Kahn's Building at Dacca," *Rassegna* 7 (March 1985): 48.
[649] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 244.

with brick (fig. 188).[650] In the end, aesthetically, the overall composition of the building delivered an honesty achieved through Kahn's approach to the handling of materials. The reinforced concrete inlaid with white marble bands recalled the material organisation of Mughal structures. Although the application of reinforced concrete demonstrated Kahn's version of modernism in the East, nonetheless, due to Dhaka's monsoon climate, the exterior of the building consequently suffered from greenish-black mould periodically. The reinforced concrete was blackened by tropical fungi and needed annual cleaning with hand brushes. As a result, the walls were overwhelmed by stained water, revealing an uninhabited porches which were 'a mere gesture to the exigencies of climate.'[651] Kahn may have been working on a water proofing solution for the elevations, but eventually it failed to protect the surface from dampness.[652] Even today, the government still spends a substantial amount of expense in order to clean the moulds off the walls.

5.4 Politics and Transformation of the Nation

The construction of the National Assembly Building commenced on October 6, 1964. The construction mainly began because Kahn's office was under pressure by the PWD as Khan was planning his first visit to the site. As the construction continued, the cold war between the two wings of Pakistan evolved into a civil war when Sheikh Mujibur Rahman announced liberation and independence in his historic speech on 7 March

[650] Kahn acknowledged, 'I got into doing brick because I could not use any other material. So I had to use it. It was self-protection to use brick in [Dhaka]. I knew concrete would be a complete failure. But still my love for concrete couldn't be denied, so I tried to make these people a purse, let's say, out of a sow's ear.' See, Wurman, *What Will Be Has Always Been : the Words of Louis I. Kahn*, 51.
[651] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 269.
[652] Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 170.

1971. American citizens were evacuated from Dhaka. Consequently, Kahn's office was shut down, his contract was terminated, and the construction of his grand Capitol Complex was paused. In assessing the rapid transition in the construction history of the National Assembly Building, it proves very complicated to analyse the structure from multidisciplinary perspectives. Hirst notes, 'Buildings do not readily narrate. But siege warfare needed to place soldiers and civilians within symbols, not merely to write or speak about buildings in war, but to symbolise what mattered through the building themselves.'[653] Here was a building that underwent numerous alterations both in design and construction, suffered a cold war and a civil war and its creator's death alongside famine and flood in Bengal with a martial law in place; it must surely narrate one of the most complex and interwoven architectural histories in relation to its broader purpose. The purpose that started from the sceptic Constitution of 1962, continued in an unstable newly independent nation of Bangladesh and ended as a symbol of its democracy. The relationship between democracy and the National Assembly Building is intertwined not only with its political context but also with its architect. Considering these issues, this segment will analyse the creation of the National Assembly Building in two sections: firstly, with regards to the broader intention of the Pakistani Government; secondly, in relation to the transformed ambition of the Bangladeshi Government. In both sections, the architecture will be studied within the dogma of its context and the people involved: the architect/s, the client, the new client, the final design and construction; and the repercussion of the Liberation War.

[653] Hirst, *Space and Power: Politics, War and Architecture*, 192.

5.4.1 Dualism in Democracy

The Constitution of 1962 assigned Islamabad and Dhaka as the first and second capitals of Pakistan respectively. Islamabad was chosen as the first capital because its location was convenient for the armed forces. Although the 1962 Constitution stated a return to a democratic system after several years of martial law, nonetheless, a military base was vital for the Pakistani Government to ensure a political and economic hegemony of West over East.[654] Notwithstanding that agitation from the East Pakistan was flaming, and the creation of a second capital can be perceived as a 'gesture of appeasement.'[655]

Dhaka as a second capital was meant to be more of provincial, whereas Islamabad was an entirely new creation intended as the principal seat of the Pakistan Central Government. Although in his speech to introduce the 1962 Constitution, Khan proclaimed that the source of law should be the National Assembly, nevertheless, the political system also approved that the ultimate power of justice would solely be in the hands of the President.[656] Apparently, nine Bengali leaders later issued a complaint against the new constitution as the assigned electors from the assemblies were not given any power to decide anything and everything was to be by the agreement of the President.[657] In addition to the complaints, Bengali politicians were not treated equally to West Pakistani politicians. There were 150 seats allocated to both wings on the basis of equality despite East Pakistan had a larger population than West Pakistan. In

[654] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 245.
[655] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 245.
[656] G. W. Choudhury, ed., *Documents and Speeches on the Constitution of Pakistan* (Dhaka: Green Book House, 1967), 727.
[657] Cited in, Choudhury, *Documents and Speeches on the Constitution of Pakistan*, 980.

1967, West Pakistanis were outnumbered by East Pakistanis by 50.8 million to 42.9 million.[658] Furthermore, sixty of the seventy-five East Pakistani members of the National Assembly opposed the 1962 Constitution.[659] Unfortunately, none of these allegations were taken into account and East Pakistanis could not rely on a provincial National Assembly that mandated only as an election stunt.

According to Mushtaq Ahmad, 'Ayub's main aim was to provide a constitutional façade for a dictatorial design.'[660] In relation to this, Vale argues that Kahn may have also provided an architectural equivalent to Khan's goal.[661] In contrast, according to Muzharul Islam, 'Kahn had no time or interest for politics. I tapped him once and found him totally uninterested.'[662] Nonetheless, Kahn made his designs 'with strong political assumptions and implications.'[663] Although Kahn claimed that he was designing an 'architecture of connection,' he nevertheless, knowing or unknowingly, contributed to the creation of a radical space within a social conjecture which had misconnections within the concepts and designs.[664] From the beginning, Kahn's focus was to achieve monumentality, however, if another architect had been in his place, he/she might have evaluated the political perplexities and refused to treat the institution as a

---

[658] Khalid B. Sayeed, *The Political System of Pakistan* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), 191.
[659] Sayeed, *The Political System of Pakistan*, 194.
[660] Mushtaq Ahmad, *Government and Politics in Pakistan* (Karachi: Space Publishers, 1970), 213. Khan writes in his autobiography, 'The President should be made the final custodian of power on the country's behalf and should be able to put things right both in the provinces and the centre should they go wrong.' See, Khan, *Friends Not Masters*, 190.
[661] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 248.
[662] Muzharul Islam stated this in an interview with Anupam Banerji in 1986. Cited in, Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 245.
[663] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 245.
[664] Whilst discussing the arrangement of the buildings within the 'citadel' Kahn's goal was to produce a profound synthesis which he termed 'architecture of connection.' Cited in, Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 245-46.

monument.[665] The role of Kahn's concepts such as the 'Citadel of Assembly' and 'Citadel of Institutions' was fading away, which had once held a stronger synchronisation with the initial designs.[666] Kahn's idiom of creating a complex of transcendent nature was focussed on two citadels in which the interrelation between these two zones was paradoxical not only for the symbolic meaning but also as to how the programme was placed into the masterplan.[667] The Supreme Court was never realised as a part of the Citadel of Assembly and for the latter citadel, apart from the Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College and Hospital and the National Archives and Library, no other structures were designed and constructed till the twenty-first century.[668]

Throughout the ten years of designing the Capitol Complex on the basis of strong ideas, poetic concepts and antique senses, Kahn always needed to validate his juxtapositions which kept changing over time.[669] According to his colleagues who were associated with this commission, mentioned that Kahn understood the need for the changes in the complex and was willing to modify those with clients' demands.[670] In contrast to Kahn's understanding of the numerous design changes, this 'did not

---

[665] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 248.
[666] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 250.
[667] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 250.
[668] Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College was designed by Louis I. Kahn. It was originally named as Ayub Central Hospital. After the *Sher-e-Banglanagar* masterplan was initially progressing, Muzharul Islam designed the National Archives and Library.
[669] When Kahn was asked about his masterplan, he stated, 'Does it have all the ingredients? If only one is lacking, it will disintegrate. This is my problem.' See, Tyng, *Beginnings: Louis I. Kahn's Philosophy of Architecture*, 119.
[670] Alongside Kahn's colleague in their writings with other Kahn scholars have mentioned Kahn's devotion to this project. See, Tyng, *Beginnings: Louis I. Kahn's Philosophy of Architecture*; Komendant, *18 Years with Louis I. Kahn*; Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style*; Brownlee and De Long, *Louis I. Kahn: In the Realm of Architecture*.

prevent him from remaining equally dogmatic' at the same time.[671] As much as he was keen to work on the alterations, Kahn was always adamant to emphasise his 'architecture of connection' that sometimes could seem to be incongruous. To an extent, Kahn did his task, not to build a functional institution for the country, rather he aimed to build a holistic space which could be placed anywhere.[672] It seems contradictory that Kahn used his architectural knowledge to monumentalise 'democracy' through the National Assembly Building whereas its client unequivocally represented dominance.

5.4.2 A New Nation

Colossal commissions similar to the Capitol Complex have been connected with political issues, but in this case, 'the epic struggle' was to construct a complex which unfolded a parallel between the 'political fortunes of Pakistan and Bangladesh.'[673] The riveting part remains on the issue of 'national identity' as the complex begun as a second capitol of East Pakistan but emerged as the national icon for the independent state of Bangladesh. There are many examples of buildings, erected when a new government has emerged following a revolution that collocate the current regime. In the case of Dhaka capitol, as Vale disputes, 'architecture and its symbolism are never so closely wed as to prohibit divorce and eventual remarriage.'[674] In fact, the National Assembly Building was conceived and groomed in Pakistan to symbolise the unity of the two wings, but it was completed after the Liberation War in Bangladesh. This shift

---

671 Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 251.
672 Kahn remarks, 'Reality is the dream. Reality is the fairy tale […] The unattainable, the yet not made, yet not said, is what motivates man.' See, Wurman, *What Will Be Has Always Been: the Words of Louis I. Kahn*, 251.
673 Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 245.
674 Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 237.

in authority complicates the position of the National Assembly Building in the discourse of architecture and politics as its purpose of being united with Islamabad was annulled and the objective was redirected for sovereignty.

This project could remain incomplete as the client was no longer there. However, after the war, the status of the Capitol Complex was elevated from becoming a second capitol to the primary seat of government.[675] Islam, still an activist of the victorious party, convinced the new administration that work on the complex should continue, and Kahn should be contacted.[676] In August 1972, Kahn was indeed contacted by the new Government of Bangladesh and in the beginning of 1973, he returned to Dhaka with a more suitable modified masterplan for the new nation. The new plans included more expansion and additional structures which were never built. Kahn died in March 1974 and the construction for the project was resumed in 1975 by the military regime of Bangladesh. The remaining unfinished buildings alongside the completion of the National Assembly Building were supervised by his long-time colleague David Wisdom, Henry Wilcots who was working in Karachi for an American firm and Reyhan Tansal Larimer, who joined Kahn's office as an intern.[677]

Even though there were limited budgets and resources, the new government assumed that completion of the building nevertheless viewed as the new nation's accomplishment.[678] As a consequence, the project had extended periods of delays

675 Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style*, 174.
676 Wares, interview.
677 Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style*, 167-69. Reed, "Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Capital of Bangladesh," 382.
678 Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 250.

and financial costs increased. The construction techniques were changed such as mosaic application instead of marbles and wood frames for the windows being replaced by aluminium frames.[679] Nonetheless, the success lay in the completion of the building which was according to Kahn's original intentions for the design. If the whole completion of the complex not taken place after Kahn's death, there might have been altered meaning for the central structure such as the symbolic shift from West Pakistani authority to a relatively new Bangladeshi Government which yet needed to be stabilised.[680] However, Kahn was aware of the cultural differences of the two wings, and his grand design might be seen as a repercussion of the political restructuring for a new nation. Kahn wrote,

> I toured the land and saw what happened during time of war. They are very different people. They hold the state first, religion second. What held East and West together was supposedly the religious agreement, but when the East was freed from the West, they considered the country first.[681]

Thus, the symbolic impact of the National Assembly Building was clear after the independence. Bangladesh faced preliminary instability in the beginning as there were subsequent government crises alongside the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Afterwards, a referendum was held for either continuing the parliamentary system based on the British model or changing into a presidential system. A voting system was introduced in which the ballot was printed with a NO for people who opposed the parliamentary system and there was no space for YES, instead an image of the Assembly Building was used to vote 'yes.' Architect Sanaul Haque, who was

[679] Ali, *Shamatate Shangshad [National Parliament]*, 151.
[680] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 250.
[681] Wurman, *What Will Be Has Always Been : the Words of Louis I. Kahn*, 234.

present at that time during the vote stated, 'Democracy would not have survived without that building.'[682] The National Assembly Building eventually became such an important icon for Bangladesh that Kahn's citadel was and still is printed on the nation's currency (fig. 190).



Figure 190: 1000 Taka Banknote of Bangladesh. Source: Tahsin Rahman

The fact that Kahn refused to work according to Khan's preference for Islamic architectural features, such as including a dome or an arch, eliminate the contradiction that might have occurred after the emergence of Bangladesh. Thus, the transition was easier due to the lack of specific symbolisations that could have reflected and implied the regime of Ayub Khan or West Pakistani dominance. After the independence of Bangladesh, the 'citadel' was renamed from Ayub Nagar to *Sher-e-Bangla Nagar* (City of the Bengal Tiger), after one of the Bengali nationalist leaders, A. K. Fazlul Haque. The purpose of renaming the place was to assign a role in the memory of freedom fighters and this change initiated other gradual and subdued transitions of the building that ensured its place as the symbol of Bangladesh.[683] Following Islamic identity

[682] Cited in, Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style*, 174.
[683] Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style*, 174.

(associated with Pakistan) or Bengali identity (associated with West Bengal), the Bangladeshi identity is a product of independence. Developing a nation's ideals by amalgamating its past identities with such large-scale building is understandable. In the end, architecturally or historically, as Vale notes, 'the difficulties associated with this Capitol Complex are tied more closely to Louis Kahn than to Ayub Khan.'[684]

Kahn had the opportunity to design an institution, which he believed can empower to create other institutions.[685] Therefore, Kahn acted on his belief that an architect should be a social activist and 'the client's wishes were important only insofar as they concorded with the architect's ideal.'[686] Kahn was aware of Khan's authoritarian practices which he overlooked to focus on his client's stated goal of 'creating a new democracy.'[687] Kahn noted, 'This is a new capitol in a new country. […] It must be indicative of a new way of life.'[688] Kahn was so deeply involved in the project, that even during the nine month long Liberation War, he continued to work on the Capitol Complex. Indeed, Kahn was asked by his son, Nathaniel Kahn, why he was still working on the project when there is an ongoing war. He replied, 'there will be a time that the war will be over and the people will really need this building more than ever.'[689] Eventually Kahn not only succeeded in completing his design for the Assembly Building but he also worked extensively on the masterplan of *Sher-e-Bangla Nagar,*

[684] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 239-40.
[685] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 240.
[686] Cited in, Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 166.
[687] In 1961, Khan told the U.S. Congress that 'our aim always was and always has been and always shall be to have representative institutions.' See, Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 166.
[688] Kahn's notes. November 1963, in unmarked file, box 116, Kahn Collection.
[689] Stated by Nathaniel Kahn in Tagore, "Louis Kahn's Tiger City."

which is in fact still in the phase of construction to this date, almost 49 years after his death.

Kahn's search for creating 'ruins wrapped around buildings' might be another reason that the building survived during the war.[690] One anecdote in relation to this has been cited in numerous sources with diverse interpretations. During the Liberation War, the incomplete structure of the National Assembly Building served as an ammunition depot for the freedom fighters and allied Indian troops. As much as it sounds apocryphal, it has been suggested that the building escaped air attacks as the geometric openings punctuating the exterior walls already appeared to resemble a ruin-like structure.[691] Wilcots stated:

> The pilots making the runs over [Dhaka] saw this building and they thought that it had already been bombed, because there were so many holes in it, so they wouldn't waste another bomb on it![692]

Kahn's urge to design thousand-year-old structure, as Vale notes, became an obsession to seek the connection between construction and ruin.[693] If the anecdote mentioned above is in fact true, then Kahn's attempt of achieving 'transcendence' from the concept of ruins succeeded to save his creation from the violence emerging from the civil war. 'Whether or not the Assembly Building was designed to be [a] ruin,' as Vale argues, the time span of more than twenty years for completion of the building

690 Kahn, "Remarks."
691 See, Wurman, *What Will Be Has Always Been : the Words of Louis I. Kahn*, 106; Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style*, 169-74; Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 242; Gusheh, "Louis Kahn in Dhaka: Ruin as Method," 1.
692 Wilcots, interview. Cited in, Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 242.
693 Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 242.

occurred with series of incidents: Khan's political strategy, the Liberation War, the change of client from East Pakistan to Bangladesh, the death of Kahn and the subsequent political instability of Bangladesh. Despite all these occurrences, the National Assembly Building was formed and materialised in accordance with Kahn's vocabulary of 'what the building wants to be,' seemingly relevant with the result and how the building has been received in the present day.

Despite being such a celebrated design, there was always going to be controversies about the final outcome of the complex. Some of Kahn's colleagues and the PWD were not happy with his behaviour during the design and construction process as he would always be adamant to incorporate his conceptions and there were plenty of delays to deliver the drawings. Wilcots mentions that Kahn's reaction was rebellious when the local engineers protested against his decision of inserting steel reinforced rods into brick elements, as the area was not prone to earthquakes.[694] Abdul Wazid, an engineer of the PWD, recalled that they often had to call Kahn and remind him about the pressure from the government. Wazid stated, 'I went to Kahn's office with a $50,000 cheque in my pocket and told him that it was his if he finished the drawings. After two weeks, the situation remained unchanged.'[695] Komendant comments,

> The parliament building, first so perfectly conceived, but fails in design. The arrangement of elements is accidental and they do not relate to each other in form or function […] May be artists and critics will consider it great art and architecture. I don't,

[694] Cited in, Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style*, 168.
[695] Cited in, Wiseman, *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style*, 168.

> because these types of building do not talk to me or stand the test of reason.[696]

These remarks from the people who worked closely on the project seem to reflect over some of the issues separating the building's visual aesthetics from its construction flaws. For example, the central chamber is undeniably grand in its appearance, however, there are acoustical problems. Additionally, there was long struggle over the structure of the roof system. In the initial plans of May 1964, PWD criticised the top of the building for resembling smokestacks and suggested that a dome would be better to achieve 'Islamicness.'[697] As a consequence, the final design was a parabolic reinforced concrete 'umbrella' engineered by Palmbaum for the central chamber and an octagonal drum of twenty-five feet was built to produce a lightwell through the roof (fig. 191, 193).[698] Furthermore, little or no consideration was given for expansion despite Kahn and his later predecessors who supervised the project, knowing about the rapid population growth and the potential increased demand of political party members to sit in the assembly (fig. 192).

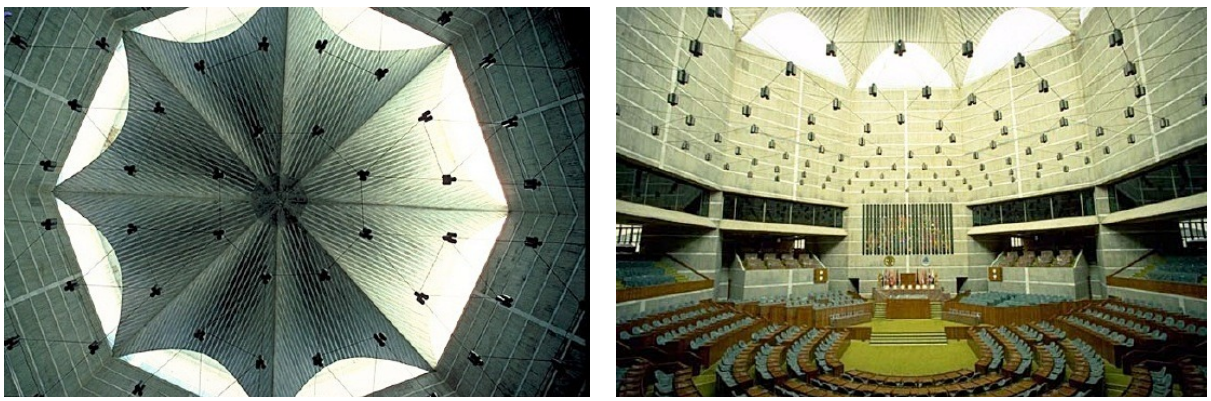


Figure 191: Octagonal 'umbrella' constructed in reinforced concrete, Assembly Chamber. Source: Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania

[696] Komendant, *18 Years with Louis I. Kahn*, 85-87.
[697] Reed, "Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Capital of Bangladesh," 379.
[698] Reed, "Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Capital of Bangladesh," 381.



Figure 192: Top view of the Assembly Chamber. Source: Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania

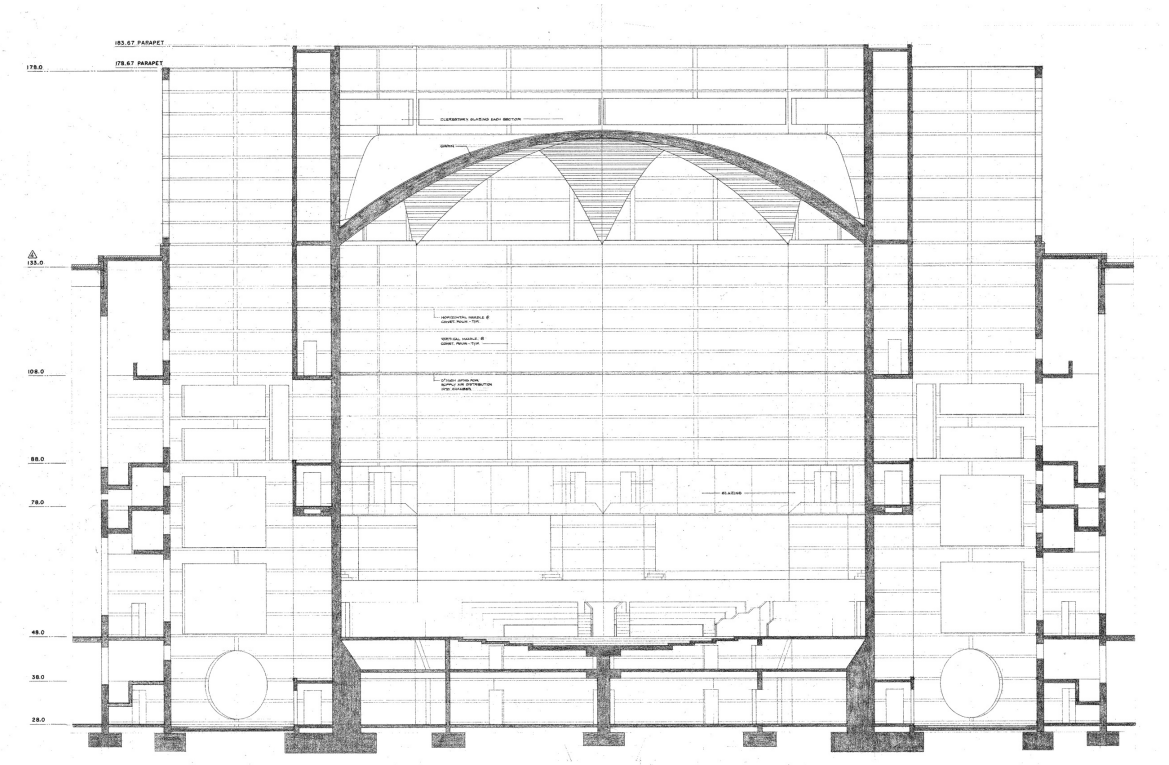


Figure 193: Section of the Assembly Chamber. Source: Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania

Despite all the criticism about the flaws and myths, one aspect has remained constant for the National Assembly Building, which is its 'visual dominance'; with its massive scale, positioning on an elevated plinth and material usage of grey-coloured reinforced concrete that highlights the building is prominent in contrast to the surrounding hostels built with red bricks. The building's 'aesthetic of authenticity' comes to a climax as the edifice 'forces the viewer to reflect on the nature of the institution [it] faces, and on her role and place within it.'[699] An octagonal building, with simple geometrical forms applied with careful repetition, is uniquely composed, as Goldhagen describes it, as 'giant child's set of building blocks.'[700] The massive walls of concrete perforated with primary shapes, generate monumental openings which resemble a vacant building 'ready to be appropriated for anyone who approaches it' through the universality it offers.[701] In both the massiveness and facade compositions, the National Assembly Building achieved Kahn's primary vision of being monumental and also became a primary landmark for Bangladesh similar to the pyramids of Giza or the Pantheon in Rome.

5.5 Conclusion

There is little or no doubt that most of the design and construction development was a result of Kahn's various tropes of ideologies and concepts. However, President Khan, the PWD and state officials also played important roles in the instruction of the drawings, programme briefings and other information required for the complex and

[699] Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 188.
[700] Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 188.
[701] Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 188.

these were filtered through Kahn's philosophies.[702] Kahn's approach towards his design evolved with time and was shaped by the changing identity of the nation. However, Kahn implemented his own ideas in such a way that Bangladesh (or previously Pakistan) would not fully escape from the integration of those concepts. Nonetheless, the National Assembly Building is neither an imposition of Western conceptions nor a complete authentication of local traditions. It is possible to connect this building with any other tradition or urbanism, but it became a symbol of Bangladesh. However, the inspiration of designing the complex was not derived from Bangladesh.[703] Rather the building reveals national identity intertwined with its architect's attempt of 'transcending the timebound parochialism of political conflict' into a universal institution.[704]

In the discussion of national identity, Kahn's choices of creation might seem ambiguous as the design of National Assembly Building neither conveys a notion of nation-building or a union of East and West Pakistan.[705] Kahn may or may not have thought about nation building, however, through the cross-cultural disciplines which developed the background to his influences and via geopolitical contexts, this chapter revises the creation of the National Assembly Building through people, places and events reaching beyond the materialistic relation between client, creator and the product. This approach is crucial to validate not only the role of a Western architect in

[702] Hossain, "Representing Landscape, Mediating Wetness: Louis Kahn ay Sher-e-Bangla Nagar (East Pakistan/Bangladesh)," 190.
[703] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 283.
[704] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 278.
[705] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 241.

a project of nation-building but it also problematises the idea of defining a monumental building as a national icon or landmark.

The National Assembly Building is one of those examples of architecture which cannot be evaluated instantly. Whilst its dominant features awe the spectators, the core judgement will always be a war between its creator's philosophies and its clients' ambiguities. Vale inquires, 'What sense does it make to try to single out qualities that are exclusively architectural when the architect himself professed to be so concerned with the meaning of institution?'[706] Were the challenges Kahn faced greater than the challenges the region faced by shifting its identity from Pakistan to Bangladesh? As James Dunnett asked, 'Could any delegates be good enough, heroic enough, for the building? Will architecture belie the mundane business of the Assembly?'[707]

Kahn's attempt to regenerate a sacred assembly of transcendent nature might seem a privileged bureaucratic building inaccessible to the public, however, the deeper meaning of this structure is in the representation of its timelessness and universality. The latter is compacted within the volumetric expression organised by different functions such as the office blocks behind the geometric punctured motif, the Presidential Square to the north with parted sheer walls, the Southern Plaza with cylinder shaped towers tilted to the Qibla to form the prayer hall, an oval shaped member's lounge to the east and a cafeteria situated within the interplay of light and shadow formed by the circle cut in the concrete wall to the west. Finally, the four sides

[706] Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, 270.
[707] James Dunnett, "City of Tiger: Work of Louis Kahn at Dacca, Bangladesh," *The Architectural Review* 197, no. 998 (April 1980): 234.

of the building frame the umbrella shaped light shafts illuminating the central assembly chamber. The connection between the external and internal spaces reflects a balanced attitude to design. Goldhagen suggests that the National Assembly Building contradicts Robert Venturi's concept of a 'decorated shed,' recalling rather the concepts of early modern or high Victorian Gothic architecture.[708] Either Kahn was capitalising on the Pakistani authority with his concepts, or it was a product shifted from the symbol of unity to sovereignty. Ultimately, through its dynamic and three-dimensional tension between rigidness and expressiveness, the building was designed in such a manner that it could be a functional capitol for any other country despite being set against a vast backdrop of social and political dilemmas.

Undeniably, today it is a building that is literally and figuratively an image of Bangladeshi democracy. But the universality of this building creates such a timelessness that it can be expressed any way a critic or a spectator wants to explain it. Nevertheless, evaluating Kahn's concepts from the beginning till his death and despite the misjudgement that occurred through the construction, one thing is deliberately constant which are the democratic consequences. The building might be debatable on the basis of its uniqueness, however, because this building was built in Dhaka, a growing resemblance of democracy is evident through the city's urban growth surrounding the National Assembly Building alongside its own architectural features. This includes the everyday usage of the central chamber by the Government of Bangladesh, a religious harmony that makes the mosque a meditation space, a city that grew centring the building and lastly the gathering of citizens from outside of the

[708] Goldhagen, *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism*, 188-89.

peripheries at the Manik Mia Avenue overlooking the Southern Plaza providing a constant connection between the National Assembly Building and the public realm.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The general insights produced by the thesis follow two key concepts – nationalism and architecture which gradually unfold the interrelated issues of political and cultural phenomena during the period between 1947 and 1971 – after the creation of Pakistan and before the independence of Bangladesh. The aim of the thesis is to comprehend the architectural production of East Pakistan through the transforming layers of nationalism related to economic and political agenda, and cultural and religious conundrums. This is demonstrated by studying the critical approach of historians and architectural historians, personal ideas and philosophies of the politicians and the architects, economic data, political constitutions and existing architectural drawings and photographs.

This thesis is comprised of six chapters in which each chapter attempts to frame the key themes of the research – the altered meaning of nationalism, gradual transformation in architectural expression and the continuous religious-cultural perplexities amidst the local and global state of affairs – politics and funding. The framework of this thesis is shaped by these elements and by intertwining them with each other the significance of the architecture of East Pakistan can be comprehended.

Chapter 2 elaborately discusses these themes both theoretically and rhetorically which is vital to understand the further key findings of the next three data chapters. Divided into three sections, the first section of Chapter 2 provides following insights – the critical understanding of the concept of nationalism and nation-building, the

transformation from Islamic to Bengali to Bangladeshi nationalism and its different interpretations, and how these changes in ideology played a significant role in the postcolonial development of a nation. The second section is a brief comprehension of Modern, Postmodern, Regional and Tropical architecture which is achieved through a theoretical approach of architectural historians with examples of various architectural projects. This study allows to explore architectural production of other postcolonial countries as well as provide genealogical specifications of the case studies for the next three data chapters of the thesis. Furthermore, through the study, the architectural discourse of East Pakistan is comprehended by connecting with previously discussed concepts of nationalism and nation-building. The third and last section focuses on 'search for identity' through the paradoxical concern of culture and religion. This section attempts to understand the ambiguities of being Bengali and Muslim by recalling the historical and ethnic transformation through various rulers and political changes in the region. The analysis allows to identify the identity crisis and how it defines the altered meaning of nationalism at different periods of time. This also provide an opportunity to interpret the case studies from different perspectives and engage with critical dialogues of ideological and historical disputes.

Another key concern is the global and local political setting involving funding and development schemes which are informed as the backdrop with relevant references in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 in order to discuss how these buildings were commissioned and constructed. Each of the chapters discusses the political setting for specific case studies, the architect(s) involved and the engagement between the Pakistani Government and the funding initiated by various organisations from the USA. Although

the political historiography remains generic throughout the chapters, nevertheless, separate building commissions or the arrival of an architect or architects narrate different circumstances and reflect changing political situations.

In Chapter 3, I investigate the gradual architectural transition between the modern Islamic architectural practice and buildings designed by Muzharul Islam which started simultaneously during the same period starting from 1947. The chapter then proceeds to broadly analyse the architectural designs of Islam up until 1971. Alongside a clear manifestation of architectural transformation between the designs of Hicks and McConnel, Thariani and Muzharul Islam, the chapter also frames the contextual background and the dilemma of Bengali identity which depicts the complex transition from Islamic nationalism to Bengali nationalism. Although Islam was working in the C&B under McConnel, nevertheless, his first two designs for the Fine Arts Institute and the Public Library reflected his own personal political agenda. Islam was not only an architect but also an active member of the left-wing league known as the National Awami Party (NAP). Islam participated in discussions for sovereignty with influential key figures namely Kalim Sharafi (singer), Shamsur Rahman (poet), Zainul Abedin (artist) and Qumrul Hassan (artist).[709] As Islam continued his architectural designs, he deliberately introduced a notion of 'Bengaliness' through the ambience that surrounded the buildings. A core argument in this chapter investigates if Islam's architecture was either 'Regional' or whether it played a significant role in nation building. In an interview conducted between Islam and Nurur Khan, Islam recalls his immediate concerns after returning from Oregon when he started his architectural

[709] Ashraf, *An Architect in Bangladesh: Conversation with Muzharul Islam*.

practice, 'I deeply thought [about] what needs to be done. What my country needs now is sensitive and rational architecture.'[710] Khan emphasises that introducing Regionalism was easier in the given context, but 'region' had a very different meaning for Islam. 'Region' was perceived in diverse layers of socio-economic, tradition, heritage, political and cultural-based aspects by Islam and each of the layers played an important role in the expression of his architecture. Furthermore, Islam understood the political division between the two halves of Pakistan very well. Islam realised that modernism would develop the country and provide economic advancement. Western influence is evident in Islam's design due to his academic background; however, he brought his knowledge from the West as a fruitful solution that contributed to the nation-building of Bangladesh. At most what he did in his architectural practice was the groundwork to establish modernism in the country.

Whilst Chapters 3 and 5 broadly focus on one architect – Islam and Kahn respectively, Chapter 4 covers a wide range of architectural projects designed by various expatriate architects. This chapter investigates multiple works of various architects interpreting the diverse dimensions of their architectural approaches in a context foreign to them. All of the projects the expatriate architects were assigned to work in East Pakistan were related to the development schemes initiated and commissioned by Ayub Khan. Therefore, this chapter covers a vast study of the relationship between Pakistan and the US alongside the ample international funding provided for the projects. The core argument of this chapter explores if these architectural endeavours can be considered

[710] Nurur Khan stresses that if you need to understand Islam's architecture, you first need to know who he was as a person. Muzharul Islam repeatedly identified himself as a Bengali and expressed his patriotism on various occasions. This quote was recalled by Khan during an interview conducted for this research. Khan, interview.

either as the nationalist products for Bangladesh or as the products of Khan's strong vision of establishing an Islamic country of Pakistan. However, by analysing the buildings designed by Doxiadis, Dunham, Rudolph, Boughey and Vrooman, something very different from what Khan envisioned as religious nation-building is revealed. Most of the designs were contextual and well-functioned for the climate. It is undeniable that there are indeed profound references to Western influences in their architecture and at times some were unaware of Islamic customs during the design process (such as Doxiadis' housing design which was criticised by Tigerman). However, most of these buildings were built with proper climate consideration and some of them are still functioning in the present day. Both Doxiadis and Rudolph spent very little time in East Pakistan and their interpretation of architecture remains largely in the format of climatic considerations. However, Dunham, Boughey and Vrooman who spent longer time in the region, attempted to amalgamate their Western knowledge with historical and cultural aspects of Bengal. These architects were also working amidst regular political strikes and protests that occurred in Dhaka which heavily interrupted the continuity of their jobs. Despite the argument that their architectural endeavours might be according to Khan's vision of Islamic nation building, it is evident that the architectural community they built for and the buildings that were produced during the political upheaval reflected a new identity as well as providing new scope of initiating architecture as an institution and profession.

Chapter 5 presents the climax to the thesis in which I explore the architectural historiography of the National Assembly Building of Bangladesh. I attempt to investigate the relationship between the client Ayub Khan and the architect Louis I.

Kahn by studying their motives, the history of commissioning the project, the interruption of the construction during the Liberation War and the final completion of the complex in an independent nation. The core argument remains here that the Capitol Complex was conceived for Pakistan and became a national symbol for Bangladesh. Furthermore, the argument continues to explore whether the architectural design produced by Kahn was relevant to its context. In the conclusion of Chapter 5, I provide a discussion of the significance of the universal characteristics of the National Assembly Building. Contrary to the discourse of universalism, the National Assembly Building represents an expression of being 'in the right place.'[711] It means if the Capitol Complex was designed for any other nation, the outcome may have been different and mainly for two strains – the mediator and the people. Firstly, the design for the Second Capitol Complex of Pakistan was offered to Muzharul Islam by the Pakistani Government. Had Islam in fact considered designing the complex, then it would have never been commissioned to Kahn. Islam refused the offer to design, however, he remained instrumental in bringing in a more suited replacement for the project. When Indian architect Doshi visited the National Assembly Building, he remarked that it was, 'as if Islam was whispering in Kahn's ears.'[712] After the project was commissioned to Kahn, Islam continued to be a mediator acquainting Kahn with the culture of his country and consequently the influence and inspiration of traditional values are evident in the design of the National Assembly Building and its surrounding complexes. Secondly, the construction of the Capitol Complex was conducted by Kahn himself and after his demise it was supervised by his colleagues David Wisdom

[711] Khan, interview.
[712] This was recalled by Wares during an interview conducted for this thesis. Wares, interview.

and Henry Wilcots. These expatriate figures supervised thousands of Bengali labourers who were assigned to work on the construction of the edifice. Nurur Khan argued 'it is exactly designed for where it is supposed to be. The outcome would be very different in another context, where would they find thousands of workers and labourers to hand-build such a monument?'[713] These construction workers carried materials on their heads in baskets to the site and local bamboo scaffolding was a main technique for the construction carried out by them. Thus, it would have been impossible to complete the Capitol Complex of Bangladesh without the involvement of its people.

In the history of East Pakistan between 1947 and 1971, there are two people who played important roles in architectural advancement – Ayub Khan and Muzharul Islam. As contradictory as it sounds the initiation of nation-building was a primary concern for both, however, the two men were working parallelly according to two very different layers of nationalism. By the time Khan came to power, Islamic nationalism had somewhat transitioned into Ayub's nationalism in which the US intervention was a major support. Khan wanted the rapid development of colossal projects in order to show US delegates that their funding was being used for the development of the country. Khan also had a personal motive for East Pakistan's rapid development in that he wanted to appease the population and win votes during the election.

In contrast, Islam's motive was to place his region on an international platform. This is evident in his design of the Public Library which was featured as a modern building of

[713] Khan, interview.

Pakistan in Koenigsberger's article.[714] Subsequently, Islam was constantly active in bringing his foreign networks to work in the region such as Tigerman who completed massive Five Polytechnic Institutes in collaboration with Islam, Rudolph who was assigned to design AU by the World Bank and Kahn who was commissioned to design the Capitol Complex. Islam recognised that international architects would not only produce buildings but would also bring opportunities for learning design and construction techniques first-hand for the country.

The final research questions for this thesis are threefold: can one posit these architectural buildings as nationalist products for Bangladesh? How is nationalism ultimately portrayed within these structures? Did the political context really shape the design ideas? To answer these questions, firstly, consideration should be taken for the context these buildings were built – a postcolonial setting; Pakistan freshly appeared as a country on the global map and the gradual decline from its Eastern counterpart ultimately led to political turbulences. Secondly, global politics should be taken into account – the financial support of the US and sharing a border with Pakistan's antagonistic neighbouring country, India. Pakistan's ambition to build a nation led to a quick friendship with the US which was not coincidental, rather it was an intelligent political understanding by both countries. The US wanted an ally country closer to Russia during the 1960s Cold War situation in which Russia was actively supporting India. Subsequently, Pakistan needed to achieve an economic balance in order to have an equal position to India in the global perspective. In both cases, US and Pakistan benefitted from each other for at least a decade.

[714] Koenigsberger, "India, Pakistan and Ceylon."

Thirdly and finally, is understanding the key architects who were working in this context. Each of the architects who worked in East Pakistan perceived architecture as a 'tool' and contributed to the architectural production of the nation. I am not saying the motive was strictly noble as the proper design and construction of buildings ultimately also provided these architects with more opportunities for work. Furthermore, if the meaning of architecture as a 'tool' for each architect is explored, it would perhaps demonstrate different meanings. Islam notes,

> The task of an architect is very difficult here. You have to make it clear. On the one hand, we are plunged into confusion due to [the] political and economic situation. On the other hand, we are in a cultural conundrum where we have no image of ourselves that will form the basis of our work. Here we have to struggle [on] a number of fronts. One, there is [an] overall adverse social situation. There is world-wide domination by Western culture. Then there are various tentacles of that domination that make the search for our roots an extremely difficult one.[715]

Islam perceived architecture as a nation-building task in which he understood global capitalism, Bengal's rich past and the struggling context of domination. Furthermore, Dunham identified the void of local architects and stressed how structural engineers provided designs for buildings which would not have survived due to a lack of knowledge in constructional techniques.[716] Kahn's perception of architecture is

---

[715] Ashraf, *An Architect in Bangladesh: Conversation with Muzharul Islam*, 33.

[716] Dunham published articles as a professor of EPUET during his stay in Dhaka. Two of his published articles were provided by Katherine Dunham. The first one entitled 'Some Problems of Architecture in Dacca' briefly discusses the problem of not having local architects in the region and the problems he faced as an expatriate. The second one entitled 'Planning the School Building' is an article co-written with his wife Mary Frances Dunham. This article describes the difficulties they faced due to having a lack of architectural equipment in order to teach pupils.

compelling in his own philosophies, however, for the Dhaka commission, Kahn's involvement was intriguing.[717] It is evident that he continued to work on this project from his Philadelphia office during the nine months of civil war despite knowing that he might not be able to continue or that the client may be changed from Pakistani Government to Bangladeshi Government.[718] Eventually, all of the architects perceived architecture sensibly and applied their knowledge to the production of buildings in East Pakistan as a means of providing a good service to the land.

The independence of Bangladesh has an eminent history, however, what is less recognised is the architectural historiography which was built amidst the social, political and cultural phenomena. Furthermore, scholarship on the architecture of Bangladesh between 1947 and 1971 is characterised by critical efforts to frame these buildings within the canon of modernism or regionalism. This thesis attempts to interpret the architectural production of pre-independent Bangladesh between 1947 and 1971 through its intrinsic and extrinsic meaning. The intrinsic translation is revealed through the spatial reading of the forms, structures and materials and extrinsic meanings are explored through the interrelation of history, society, politics, economy and culture. The buildings demonstrated in this thesis are not only portrayed as products of nationalism but it has also clarified how they were conceived in a capitalist environment and transformed into architecture for national identity.

[717] In Sundaram Tagore's documentary, Carter Wiseman states that Kahn was so involved in the project that he ultimately died during the design and construction development. See, Tagore, "Louis Kahn's Tiger City."
[718] This is discussed elaborately in Chapter 5 under the sub-section entitled 'A New Nation.'

The thesis provides a compelling discourse between nationalism and architecture of the pre-independent Bangladesh between 1947 and 1971, nevertheless, there are a number of limitations which are based on two factors – research data and research scope. There are very limited resources available related to the topic, most of which provide similar ideas and information. Many relevant architectural drawings archived at the PWD and the National Archive were either destroyed or difficult to read. Therefore, a sufficient amount of historical and architectural reading was possible through multiple interviews and by cross-referencing the information with other resources. Furthermore, during the Covid-19 pandemic, it was very difficult to travel, therefore, I had to rely on data retrieved from online archival resources and email exchanges and Zoom meetings with architects and architectural historians.

The research scope of this thesis can be combined with the broader historiography of the postcolonial architecture of India and Pakistan. However, the purpose of this thesis is to emphasise the study of Bangladeshi architecture. Therefore, I choose to remain solely focused on the phenomena related to East Pakistan. Needless to say, the historiography of postcolonial Pakistan plays an inevitable role in the study of this thesis, however, the research intentionally circumvents deeper analysis of postcolonial Indian nationalism and architectural historiography. There are related and relevant references used in this research on the political events of West Bengal between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries such as the Bengal Enlightenment, the Swadeshi Movement and the study related to Bengali identity (Chapter 2). Furthermore, for the architectural reading of the case studies, the study explores relevant buildings from India designed by Charles Correa, B. V. Doshi, Achyut Kanvinde, Le Corbusier and

Louis I. Kahn (Chapters 2 and 3). Related architecture from West Pakistan is also mentioned as some of the projects were simultaneously ongoing in East Pakistan as well. These include Doxiadis' design for the Rural Development Programme in Peshawar and Comilla (Chapter 4) and the incomplete project of Capitol design in Islamabad by Kahn which was later designed by Edward Durell Stone (Chapter 5). Other studies related to India remain detached from the research because most of the events require to explore Indian political historiography are either in relation to West Pakistan or in relation to Bangladesh after independence. Therefore, this thesis provides a scope to develop a new and broader investigation of architectural and historiographic interest related to the Indian subcontinent and its contextual background.

The thesis contributes to postcolonial and Bangladeshi scholarship in various ways. It presents an original and primary architectural analysis of the selected governmental and institutional buildings and provides a better comprehension of the development and transformation of these projects through design and construction process. It also explores and accounts for anomalies within global and local political interference as well as continuities. This provides a richer understanding of the architecture of East Pakistan signifying a valuable subject of architectural history.

The three themes explored in Chapter 3, 4 and 5 respectively allows broader architectural concepts to be understood in new ways. Particularly, it provides a nuanced and distinct comprehension of the architects' effort to invest architecture into

nation-building. It also contributes to the understanding of an evolving new nation's path towards a modern movement and what comes after.

The thesis also contributes to the discussion of modern architecture in a non-Western postcolonial setting. All of the projects analysed in this thesis have not been studied from this perspective before, therefore, this dissertation plays a pivotal role in expanding the architectural canon. Furthermore, this thesis directly engages and intersects with multidisciplinary studies of history, politics and culture. From an architectural perspective, Bangladesh is inevitably shaped by the ideologies of multi-layered nationalism and paradigm that accompany the dichotomy of East and West Pakistan. This thesis argues that the architectural project built between 1947 and 1971 are nurtured and developed in a nationalist environment and designed and constructed from the ethos of twentieth century modernism. The thesis thus offers unique insights into the beginning of Bangladeshi modernism and how it contributes to the later decades of architectural production until the present day.

This thesis provides an opening for a distinct enquiry into the architectural realm of Bangladesh in relation to its political backdrop. The buildings selected as case studies represent a new beginning for architectural endeavours in Bangladesh. This investigation includes a new layer to the multifaceted narratives of Bangladeshi architectural historiography and will hopefully prove to be a valuable reference for further study of the buildings after the independence.

Bibliography

Absar, A. B. M. Nurul. "Muslim Identity, Bengali Nationalism: An Analysis on Nationalism in Bangladesh." *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 3, no. 1 (March 2014): 439-49. https://doi.org/10.5901/ajis.2014.v3n1p439.

Ahmad, Mushtaq. *Government and Politics in Pakistan.* Karachi: Space Publishers, 1970.

Ahmed, Imran, and Samuel Isenstadt. "The Ontological Centaur: Louis Kahn and the Capitol Complex in Dhaka." *AKP Newsletter* 4, no. 2 (Spring 1992): 1,6.

Ahmed, Nazimuddin. *Buildings of the British Raj in Bangladesh.* Dhaka: The University Press Limited, 1986.

Ahmed, Nizamuddin. "Vrooman's Faculty: Overcoming the Test of Time." In *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka*, edited by Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham, 2011.

Ahmed, Rafiuddin. *Understanding the Bengal Muslims: Interpretative Essays.* New Delhi, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Ali, Meer Mobashsher. *Shamatate Shangshad [National Parliament].* Dhaka: Intercon Associates, 2006.

Ali Saleem, Raja M. *State, Nationalism, and Islamization.* Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2017.

Ali, Zainab F., and Fuad H. Mallick, eds. *Muzharul Islam Architect*. Dhaka: BRAC University, 2011.

Ali, Zainab, and Fuad H. Mallick. By Author. August 18, 2018.

Ameen, Farooq. "National Library, Dhaka." *Chetana* 2 (1987): 16-20.

———. "The South Asian Paradigm." In *Contemporary Architecture and City Form: The South Asian Paradigm*, edited by Farooq Ameen, 1-12. Mumbai: Marg Publication, 1997.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* Revised ed. London: Verso, 2016.

Asher, Catherine B. *Architecture of Mughal India.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Ashraf, Kazi Khaleed. By Author. July 3, 2018.

———, ed. *An Architect in Bangladesh: Conversation with Muzharul Islam*. Dhaka: Loka Press, 2014.

———. "The Hermit's Hut: A Study in Asceticism and Architecture."PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2002.

———. "Muzharul Islam, Kahn and Architecture in Bangladesh." *Mimar 31: Architecture in Development* (1989): 55-63.

———. "Muzharul Islam's Modernity and the Idea of Return Home." In *Muzharul Islam Architect*, edited by Zainab F. Ali and Fuad H. Mallick, 11-22. Dhaka: BRAC University Press, 2011.

———. "Reincarnations and Independence: The Modern Architecture of South Asia." In *An Architecture of Independence: The Making of Modern South Asia: Charles Correa, Balkrishna Doshi, Muzharul Islam, Achyut Kanvinde*, edited by Kazi Khaleed Ashraf and James Belluardo, 23-30. New York: The Architecture League of New York, 1998.

———. "Tropical Trysts: An American Architect in the Bengal Delta." In *Reassessing Rudolph*, edited by Timothy Rohan. Yale: Yale University Press, 2017.

———. "Wind, Water and Clay: The Architecture of Bangladesh." In *Pundranagar to Sher-E-Bangla Nagar: Architecture in Bangladesh*, edited by Saiful Haque, Raziul Ahsan and Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, 8-26. Dhaka: Chetana Sthapatya Unnoyon Society, 1997.

Ashraf, Kazi Khaleed, and James Belluardo, eds. *An Architecture of Independence: The Making of Modern South Asia: Charles Correa, Balkrishna Doshi, Muzharul Islam, Achyut Kanvinde*. New York: The Architecture League of New York, 1998.

———. "Building the Nation: The Architecture of Achyut Kanvinde and Muzharul Islam." *India International Centre Quarterly* 24, no. 2/3 (1997). http://www.jstor.org/stable/23005446.

"Kazi Khaleed Ashraf." 2022, https://kaziashraf.com/.

Bandyopadhyay, Sanghamitra, and Elliott Green. "Nation-Building and Conflict in Modern Africa." *World Development* 45, no. C (2013): 108-18. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2012.09.012.

Banerji, Anupam. "Learning from Bangladesh." *The Canadian Architect* 25, no. 10 (1980): 34-38.

———. "A Recent Conversation with Architect Muzharul Islam in Dhaka, Bangladesh." *Environments* 19, no. 2 (1988).

Beiner, R. *Theorizing Nationalism.* Albany: State University of New York, 1999.

Beng, Tan Hock. "Modernizing Appropriations/Appropriating Modernity." In *Tropical Architecture: Critical Regionalism in the Age of Globalization*, edited by

Alexander Tzonis, Liane Lefaivre and Bruno Stagno, 93-103. Chichester: Wiley-Academy, 2001.

"Bengal Stream: The Vibrant Architecture Scene of Bangladesh." https://www.sam-basel.org/en/exhibitions/bengal-stream-vibrant-architecture-scene-bangladesh.

Bengali, Kaiser. *History of Educational Policy Making and Planning in Pakistan.* The Sustainable Development Policy Institute (Pakistan: The Sustainable Development Policy Institute, 1999).

Berman, Marshall. *All That Is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity.* London: Verso, 1983.

Bjur, Wesley E. *Final Report of the Usaid/Usc Pakistan Contract (Icac1690-Aidc1690) Aid/Nesa-225. 1960-65; Institution Building in an Emerging Nation: Pakistan.* University of Southern California (California: 1968).

Bose, Neilesh. *Recasting the Region Language, Culture and Islam in Colonial Bengal*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198097280.003.0001.

Boussora, Kenza. "Regionalism: Lessons from Algeria and the Middle East." In *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition*, edited by V. B. Canizaro, 121-27. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007.

Bozdogan, Sibel. *Modernism and Nation Building: Turkish Architectural Culture in the Early Republic.* Seattle, Wash, London: University of Washington Press, 2001.

Brewer, Anthony. *Marxist Theories of Imperialism a Critical Survey.* Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2012.

Brownlee, David Bruce, and David Gilson De Long. *Louis I. Kahn: In the Realm of Architecture.* Los Angeles, Calif: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1991.

Canizaro, Vincent B., ed. *Architectural Regionalism : Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007.

Chakrabarti, Ratan L. *Bhasha Andoloner Dalilpatra.* Dhaka: Bangla Academy, 2000.

Chang, Jiat-Hwee, and Anthony D. King. "Towards a Genealogy of Tropical Architecture: Historical Fragments of Power-Knowledge, Built Environment and Climate in the British Colonial Territories: Towards a Genealogy of Tropical Architecture." *Singapore journal of tropical geography* 32, no. 3 (2011): 283-300. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9493.2011.00434.x.

Chatterjee, Partha. *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories.* Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993.

Choudhury, Bayezid Ismail. "The Architecture of C. A. Doxiadis in Bangladesh."Masters diss., Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, 1999.

———. "The Genesis of Jatio Shangsad Bhaban at Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka."PhD diss., The University of Sydney, 2015.

Choudhury, Bayezid Ismail, and Peter Armstrong. "The Duality of Jatio Sangsad Bhaban and the Notion of Nationalism." *Journal of Social and Development Sciences* 4, no. 9 (2013): 412-24.

———. "The Geopolitics of Jatio Sangsad Bhaban in the Cold War Era." *International Journal of Engineering Technology* 2, no. 1 (May 2013): 22-28.

———. "Monument and Architecture in Shaping Bangladeshi National Identity." *GBER* 8, no. 3 (2013): 45-67.

Choudhury, Bayezid Ismail, Peter Armstrong, and Paul Jones. "Jsb as Democratic Emblem and Urban Focal Point: The Imagined Socio-Political Construction of Space." *Journal of Social and Development Sciences* 4, no. 6 (2013): 294-302.

Choudhury, Bayezid Ismail, and Graham Bell. "The Engagement of Kahn and Khan in Jatio Sangsad Bhaban." *Architecture+Design* (April 2011): 104-11.

Choudhury, G. W., ed. *Documents and Speeches on the Constitution of Pakistan*. Dhaka: Green Book House, 1967.

———. "New Political Order in Pakistan." *Civilisations* 14, no. 3 (1964): 192-201.

Colquhoun, Alan. "The Concept of Regionalism." In *Postcolonial Space(S)*, edited by G. B. Nalbantoglu and C. T. Wong, 13-22. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997.

Conway, Hazel, and Rowan Roenisch. *Understanding Architecture: An Introduction to Architecture and Architectural History.* Second edition. ed. London: Routledge, 2005.

Crinson, Mark. "The Building without a Shadow: National Identity and the International Style." In *Nationalism and Architecture*, edited by Raymond Quek, Darren Deane and Sarah Butler, 115-34. Surrey, Vermont: Ashgate, 2012.

———. *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire.* Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003.

Cullather, Nick. *The Hungry World : America's Cold War Battle against Poverty in Asia.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2022.

Cunningham, David, and Jon Goodbun. "Marx, Architecture and Modernity." *The Journal of Architecture* 11, no. 2 (2006): 169-85. https://doi.org/10.1080/13602360600787066.

Curtis, William J. R. "Authencity, Abstraction and the Ancient Sense: Le Corbusier's and Louis Kahn's Ideas of Parliament." *Perspecta* 20 (1983): 181-94. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1567073.

———. *Modern Architecture since 1900.* Third ed. London: Phaidon, 1996.

Daechsel, Markus. "Islam and Development in Urban Space: Planning 'Official' Karachi in the 1950s." In *Cities in South Asia*, edited by Crispin Bates and Mio Minrou, 64-83. New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2015.

———. *Islamabad and the Politics of International Development in Pakistan.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.

Deutsch, Karl W. "Nation-Building and National Development." In *Nation-Building*, edited by Karl W. Deutsch and William J. Foltz, 1-16. New York: Atherton Press, 1966.

Dunham, Katherine D. By Author. July 13, 2022.

Dunham, Mary F. , and Katherine Dunham, eds. *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967*. 2nd ed. 5 vols., 2018.

Dunham, Mary F., and Katherine Dunham, eds. *Some Weep, Some Laugh: Memoirs of an American Family in Dacca 1960-1967, Part Ii: Our Days*. 2nd ed. 5 vols. Vol. 2, 2018.

Dunnett, James. "City of Tiger: Work of Louis Kahn at Dacca, Bangladesh." *The Architectural Review* 197, no. 998 (April 1980): 229-34.

Eaton, Richard Maxwell. *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.

Edelman, Murray. "Space and the Social Order." *JAE* 32, no. 2 (November 1978): 2-7.

Eggener, Keith L. "Placing Resistance: A Critique of Critical Regionalism." *Journal of Architectural Education (1984)* 55, no. 4 (2002): 228-37. https://doi.org/10.1162/104648802753657932.

Elleh, Nnamdi. *Architecture and Politics in Nigeria: The Study of a Late Twentieth-Century Enlightenment-Inspired Modernism at Abuja, 1900–2016.* London: Routledge, 2016.

Eriksen, Thomas Hylland. "Ethnicity Versus Nationalism." *Journal of peace research* 28, no. 3 (1991): 263-78. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343391028003004.

"February 2020 Session: Muzharul Islam and Bengali Modernism." Bengal Institute, 2020, https://bengal.institute/academic-program/february-2020-session-muzharul-islam-beginnings-in-bangladesh/.

Foyez Ullah, Mohammad. "Search for Conceptual Framework in Architectural Works of Muzharul Islam." M. Arch Masters, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, 1997.

Frampton, Kenneth. "Introduction: South Asian Architecture: In Search of a Future Origin." In *An Architecture of Independence: The Making of Modern South Asia: Charles Correa, Balkrishna Doshi, Muzharul Islam, Achyut Kanvinde*, edited by Kazi Khaleed Ashraf and James Belluardo, 10-12. New York: The Architecture League of New York, 1998.

———. *Modern Architecture.* London: Thames and Hudson, 1992.

Fry, Maxwell, and Jane Drew. *Tropical Architecture in the Dry and Humid Zones.* Second edition. ed. Malabar, Fla: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Company, 1982.

———. *Tropical Architecture in the Humid Zone.* London: Batsford, 1956.

Fry, Maxwell, Jane Drew, and Harry Ford. *Village Housing in the Tropics: With Special Reference to West Africa.* London: Lund Humphries, 1947.

Gant, George F. "The Ford Foundation Program in Pakistan." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, no. 323 (1959): 150-59.

Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures.* New York, NY: Basic Books, 1973. https://search.alexanderstreet.com/view/work/bibliographic_entity%7Cdocument%7C1667786.

Gellner, Ernest. *Nations and Nationalism.* Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2008.

Giddens, Anthony. *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory; an Analysis of the Writings of Marx, Durkheim and Max Weber.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971.

Goldberger, Paul. *Why Architecture Matters.* New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 2009.

Goldhagen, Sarah Williams. *Louis Kahn's Situated Modernism.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001.

Graber, Niklaus. *Bengal Stream: The Vibrant Architecture Scene of Bangladesh.* Edited by Andreas Ruby and Niklaus Graber. Basel: Christoph Merian Verlag, 2018.

Grinceri, Daniel. *Architecture as Cultural and Political Discourse: Case Studies of Conceptual Norms and Aesthetic Practices.* London, New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2016.

Grindereng, William. By Bruce Barnes. UMass Dartmouth. June 28, 2006.

Grosz, Elizabeth. *Architecture from the Outside: Essays on Virtual and Real Space.* Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001.

Guibernau, Montserrat. *The Identity of Nations.* Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007.

Gusheh, Maryam. "Louis Kahn in Dhaka: Ruin as Method."Doctor of Philosophy, University of New South Wales, 2013.

Haque, Mofidul. By Author. August 24, 2018.

Haque, Saiful. "Ouponibeshik Amole Dhakar Sthapottya (Architecture of Dhaka in Colonial Period)." In *400 Years of Capital Dhaka and Beyond*, edited by Abdul Momen Chowdhury and Sharif Uddin Ahmed, 167-74. Dhaka: Bangladesh Asiatic Society, 2012.

———. "Towards a Regional Identity: The Evolution of Contemporary Architecture in Bangladesh." *Architecture+Design* iv, no. 4 (May-June 1988).

Haque, Saiful, Raziul Ahsan, and Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, eds. *Pundranagar to Sher-E-Bangla Nagar: Architecture in Bangladesh*. Dhaka: Chetana Sthapatya Unnoyon Society, 1997.

Harris, H. H. "Regionalism." In *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition*, edited by V. B. Canizaro, 67-69. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007.

———. "Regionalism and Nationalism in Architecture." In *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition*, edited by V. B. Canizaro, 55-64. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007.

Hasnat, Abul, Rabiul Hussain, and Tarik Sujat, eds. *Sthapati Muzharul Islam*. Dhaka: Bengal Publications, 2015.

Hayes, Carlton. *The Historical Evolution of Modern Nationalism.* New York: Russell & Russell, 1949.

Hershberger, R. G. "Architecture and Meaning." *The Journal of aesthetic education* 4, no. 4 (1970): 37-55. https://doi.org/10.2307/3331285.

Hicks, Coleman. "Flats at Dacca." *Building* (November 1950): 420-22.

Hirst, Paul. *Space and Power: Politics, War and Architecture.* Cambridge, Malden: Polity Press, 2005.

Hobsbawm, E. *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality.* Second ed. Cambridge: Cambreidge University Press, 2012.

Hooff, T. van, B. Blocken, C. Aanen, and B. Bronsema. "A Venturi-Shaped Roof for Wind-Induced Natural Ventilation of Buildings: Wind

Tunnel and Cfd Evaluation of Different Design Configurations." *Building and Environment* 46 (2011): 1797-807.

Hosagrahar, Jyoti. "South Asia: Looking Back, Moving Ahead-History and Modernization." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 61, no. 3 (2002): 355-69.

Hossain, Labib. "Representing Landscape, Mediating Wetness: Louis Kahn Ay Sher-E-Bangla Nagar (East Pakistan/Bangladesh)." In *Rethinking Global Modernism: Architectural Historiography and the Postcolonial*, edited by Vikramaditya Prakash, Maristella Casciato and Daniel E. Coslett, 190-206. London, New York: Routledge, 2022.

Hubert, Bruno J. "Kahn's Epilogue: National Capital, Dacca, Bangladesh." *Progressive Architecture* 65 (1984): 56-57.

Hussain, Mubassher. By Author. July 6, 2018.

Hussain, Rabiul. *Bangladesher Sthapatya Sanskriti.* Dhaka: Sahitya Samabaya, 1987.

Hutchinson, John. *Nationalism and War.* First edition. ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

Ingersoll, Richard. "Louis I. Kahn: The Last Master." *Design Book Review* 21 (Summer 1991): 7-8.

Islam, Muzharul, Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, and Saiful Haque. "Introducing Bangladesh - a Case for Regionalism." In *Participants' Paper of 2nd Regional Seminar on Architecure and the Role of Architects in Southern Asia*, edited by Iftekhar Khan, Meer Mobashsher Ali, Mahbub Rahman and Habibullah Hemani, 9-10. Dhaka: The Aga Khan Award for Architecture, 1985.

Islam, Rafique. "The Building." In *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka*, edited by Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham, 2011.

———. "Introduction." In *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka*, edited by Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham, 1-4, 2011.

———, ed. *A Man for All Reasons: Daniel C. Dunham 1929-2000*. Edited by Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham, The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka. Dhaka, 2011.

———. "Overhead View." In *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka*, edited by Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham, 5-14, 2011.

———. "The Teacher." In *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka*, edited by Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham, 31-44, 2011.

Islam, Rafique, and Mary F. Dunham, eds. *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka*. Dhaka, 2011.

Islam, Rafique. "Contribution of Daniel C. Dunham to the Profession and Practice of Architectue in Bangladesh." Academia.edu, December 2019. https://www.academia.edu/7472245/Daniel_Dunham_Contribution_to_the_profession_and_practice_in_Bangladesh.

———. "Kamalapur Railway Station, Dhaka, Bangladesh." Academia.edu, December 2019. https://www.academia.edu/11816240/Kamalapur_railway_station_Dhaka_Bangladesh.

Jackson, Iain. "Tropical Architecture and the West Indies: From Military Advances and Tropical Medicine, to Robert Gardner-Medwin and the Networks of Tropical Modernism." *The Journal of Architecture* 22, no. 4 (June 2017): 710-38. https://doi.org/10.1080/13602365.2016.1204078.

Jackson, Iain, and Jessica Holland. *The Architecture of Edwin Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew: Twentieth Century Architecture, Pioneer Modernism and the Tropics.* Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014.

Jalal, Ayesha. *The Struggle for Pakistan: A Muslim Homeland and Global Politics.* Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004.

Jencks, Charles. *Critical Modernism: Where Is Post-Modernism Going?* Chichester: John Wiley, 2007.

———. *The New Paradigm in Architecture: The Language of Post-Modernism.* New Haven, Conn, London: Yale University Press, 2002.

———. *What Is Postmodernism?* Third, Revised and Enlarged ed. London: Academy Editions, 1989.

Judin, Hilton. *Architecture, State Modernism and Cultural Nationalism in the Apartheid Capital.* London: Routledge, 2021.

Kabir, Muhammad Ghulam. "Changing Faces of Nationalism in Bangladesh." PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1984.

Kahn, Louis I. "Berkeley Lecture, 1966 Thoughts on Architecture and Personal Expression; an Informal Presentation to Students at Berkeley." *Perspecta* 28 (1997): 1-33. https://doi.org/10.2307/1567188.

———. "Form and Design (1960)." In *Louis Kahn: Essential Texts*, edited by Robert Twombley, 62-74. New York, London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2003.

———. *The Louis I. Kahn Archive : Personal Drawings. 3, National Capital of Bangladesh, Dacca.* New York: Garland, 1987.

———. "Monumentality (1944)." In *Louis Kahn: Essential Texts*, edited by Robert Twombley, 21-31. New York, London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1960.

———. "Remarks." *Perspecta* 9/10 (1965): 303-35. https://www.jstor.org/stable/1566926.

Kamenka, Eugene. *Nationalism : The Nature and Evolution of an Idea.* London: Edward Arnold, 1976.

Karim, Farhan S. "Between Self and Citizenship: Doxiadis Associates in Postcolonial Pakistan, 1958-1968." *International Journal of Islamic Architecture* 5, no. 1 (March 2016): 135-61. https://doi.org/10.1386/ijia.5.1.135_1.

———. "Interpreting Rural: Doxiadis Vis-a-Vis East Pakistan." *Forum* 9 (2019): 243-80.

———. "Muzharul Islam and Bengali Modernism." Dhaka: Bengal Institute, February 10-20 2020. Lecture.

———. "Sculpted Landscape: The Unbuilt Public Square of Islamabad." In *Contemporary Urban Landscapes of the Middle East*, edited by Mohammad Gharipour, 90-119. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2016.

Kedourie, Elie. *Nationalism in Asia and Africa.* London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971.

Kellas, James G. *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity.* Second ed. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998.

Khan, Aminul Haq. "Sher-E-Banglanagar, Dhaka." In *Continuity and Change: Design Strategies for Large-Scale Urban Development*, 70-78. Cambridge: The Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, 1984.

Khan, Ayub M. *Friends Not Masters.* London: Oxford University Press, 1967.

Khan, Ehsan. By Author. July 2, 2018.

Khan, Nurur R. By Author. June 8, 2018.

Khan, Nurur R. . *Muzharul Islam.* Dhaka: Sthapattya O Nirman, 2010.

Khan, Zillur R. "Islam and Bengali Nationalism." *Asian Survey* 25, no. 8 (August 1985): 834-51. https://www.jstor.org/stable/2644113.

King, Anthony D. "Architecture, Capital and Globalization of Culture." In *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity*, edited by Mike Featherstone, 397-411. London: Sage Publications, 1990.

Koenigsberger, O. H. "India, Pakistan and Ceylon." *The Architectural Review* 128, no. 761 (July 1960): 53-58.

Kohn, Hans. *The Idea of Nationalism: A Study of Its Origins and Background.* New York: Macmillan, 1946.

Komendant, August E. *18 Years with Louis I. Kahn.* Englewood, N.J.: Aloray, 1975.

Kramer, Lloyd S. *Nationalism in Europe and America: Politics, Cultures, and Identities since 1775.* Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2011. doi:10.5149/9780807869055_kramer.

Ksiazek, Sarah Williams. "Architectural Culture in the Fifties: Louis Kahn and the National Assembly Complex in Dhaka." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 52, no. 4 (1993): 416-35. https://www.jstor.org/stable/990866.

———. "Changing Symbols of Public Life: Louis Kahn's Religious and Civic Projects 1944-1966 and Architectural Culture at the End of the Modern Movement."Doctor of Philosophy, Columbia University, 1995.

Lang, J., M. Desai, and M. Desai. *Architecture and Independence: The Search for Identity: India, 1880-1980.* Delhi, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Langford, Fred. "Concrete in Dacca." *Mimar 6: Architecture in Development* (1982): 50-55.

le Roux, Hannah. "The Networks of Tropical Architecture." *Journal of Architecture* 8, no. 3 (2003): 337-54. https://doi.org/10.1080/1360236032000134835.

Levin, Ayala. *Architecture and Development : Israeli Construction in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Settler Colonial Imagination, 1958-1973*

. Durham: Duke University Press, 2022.

———. "Exporting Architectural National Expertise: Arieh Sharon's Ife University Campus in West Nigeria (1962-1976)." In *Nationalism and Architecture*, edited by Raymond Quek, Darren Deane and Sarah Butler, 39-66. Surrey, VT: Ashgate, 2012.

Lifchez, Raymond. "Masterplan Study Gives East Pakistan New Approaches for Tropical Architecture." *Architectural Record*, no. 9 (September 1968): 153-60.

Linz, Juan J. "State Building and Nation Building." *European Review (Chichester, England)* 1, no. 4 (1993): 355-69.

Lunn, Eugene. *Marxism and Modernism: An Historical Study of LukáCs, Brecht, Benjamin, and Adorno.* London: Verso, 1985.

Mayer, Albert. "Regional Development: The Architect's Role." In *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition*, edited by V. B. Canizaro, 253-57. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007.

Mill, John Stuart. *Considerations on Representative Government.* Auckland: The Floating Press, 2009.

Misra, Sumantra, Manjari Chakraborty, and N. R. Mandal. "Critical Regionalism in the Post-Colonial Architecture of the Indian Subcontinent." *Journal of Architecture and Urbanism* 42, no. 2 (2018): 103-11. https://doi.org/10.3846/jau.2018.6140.

Mohaimen, Abdul, and Saiful Haque, eds. *Chetana* Vol. 2. Dhaka: Khansons PTE Ltd, February 1987.

Morshed, Adnan. "Modernism as Postnationalist Politics: Muzharul Islam's Faculty of Fine Arts (1953–56)." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 76, no. 4 (2017): 532-49.

———. "Mysteriously Handcuffed to History." *Places Journal* (May 2022). https://doi.org/10.22269/220524.

Morshed, Adnan, and Nefsun Nahar. *Dhaka in 25 Buildings.* Barcelona, India: Altrim Publishers, Thomson Press India, 2017.

Mowla, Qazi A. "Architectural Education in Bangladesh: An Exclusive Interview with the Delegate." 2015. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342010721_Architectural_Education_in_Bangladesh_An_exclusive_Interview_with_The_Delegate.

Mujibur Rahman, Sheikh. "We Don't Know Defeat." *Strategic analysis* 45, no. 6 (2021): 663-67. https://doi.org/10.1080/09700161.2021.2012046.

Mumford, Lewis. *The South in Architecture.* Dancy Foundation Lectures. Second Series ; April 1941. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1941.

Mumtaz, Kamil Khan. *Architecture in Pakistan.* Singapore: Concept Media, 1985.

Muzaffar, Ijlal. "Boundary Game: Ecochard, Doxiadis, and the Refugee Housing Projects under Military Rule in Pakistan, 1953-1959." In *Governing by Design: Architecture, Economy, and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, edited by Dianne Harris, 147-75. Pittsburgh PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012.

Nilufar, Farida. "Architecture of Pakistan Time in Bangladesh since 1947 to 1971." *Asiatic Society of Bangladesh* (2007): 67-85.

Osborne, Peter. *Philosophy in Cultural Theory.* London, New York: Routledge, 2000.

Osmany, Shireen Hasan. *Bangladeshi Nationalism: History of Dialectics and Dimensions.* Dhaka: The University Press, 1992.

Özkan, Suha. "Introduction: Regionalism within Modernism." In *Regionalism in Architecture*, edited by Robert Powell, 8-16. Singapore: Concept Media, 1985.

Pakistan, Government of. *Second Five-Year Plans (1960-1965).* Government of Pakistan (Karachi: 1960).

Pallasmaa, Juhani. "Tradition and Modernity: The Feasibility of Regional Architecture in Post-Modern Society." In *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition*, edited by V. B. Canizaro, 129-45. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007.

Pamir, Mehmet Doruk. "Sher-E-Banglanagar, Dhaka." In *Continuity and Change: Design Strategies for Large-Scale Urban Development*, 70-78. Cambridge: The Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, 1984.

Parvin, Afroza, and Steven Moore. "Educational Colonialism and Progress: An Enquiry into the Architectural Pedagogy of Bangladesh." *Pedagogy, Culture and Society* 28, no. 1 (2020): 93-112. https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2019.1599996.

Pieris, Anoma. *Architecture and Nationalism in Sri Lanka: The Trouser under the Cloth.* Routledge Contemporary South Asia Series ; 65. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2013. doi:10.4324/9780203074831.

Powell, Robert, ed. *Regionalism in Architecture*. Singapore: Concept Media, 1985.

Prakash, Vikramaditya, Maristella Casciato, and Daniel E. Coslett. "Global Modernism and the Postcolonial." In *Rethinking Global Modernism: Architectural Historiography and the Postcolonial*, edited by Vikramaditya Prakash, Maristella Casciato and Daniel E. Coslett, 1-26. London, New York: Routledge, 2022.

"The Project of Independence: Architectures of Decolonization in South Asia, 1947–1985." MoMA, 2022, https://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/5439.

Qadir, Muzaffar, and Iftikhar Ahmad, eds. *Introducing Pakistan*. Lahore: National Institute of Public Administration, 1966.

Quek, Raymond. "Nationalism and Architecture: An Introduction." In *Nationalism and Architecture*, edited by Raymond Quek, Darren Deane and Sarah Butler, 1-18. Surrey, VT: Ashgate, 2012.

Quek, Raymond, Darren Deane, and Sarah Butler, eds. *Nationalism and Architecture*. Surrey, VT: Ashgate, 2012.

Rab, Wajeda J. "In Gratitude to Professor Richard E. Vrooman." In *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka*, edited by Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham, 123-30, 2011.

Rahman, A. S. M. Aminur. By Author. August 13, 2018.

Raper, Arthur Franklin. *Rural Development in Action : The Comprehensive Experiment at Comilla, East Pakistan.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970.

Reed, Peter. "Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Capital of Bangladesh." In *Louis I. Kahn: In the Realm of Architecture*, edited by David Bruce Brownlee and David Gilson De Long, 374-83. Los Angeles, Calif: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1991.

———. "Toward Form, Louis I. Kahn's Urban Designs for Philadelphia, 1939-62."Doctor of Philosophy, University of Pennsylvania, 1989.

Renan, Ernest. *Qu'est-Ce Qu'une Nation? (ConféRence Faite En Sorbonne, Le 11 Mars 1882)* Paris: C. Levy, 1882.

Ricoeur, Paul. "Universal Civilization and National Cultures." *History and Truth* (1965): 271-84.

Roth, Leland M. *Understanding Architecture: Its Elements, History and Meaning.* London: Herbert Press, 1994.

Roy, Ananya. "Traditions of the Modern: A Corrupt View." *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review* 12, no. 11 (2001): 7-19. https://www.jstor.org/stable/41757866.

Rumy, Nasheet, and Mohammed A. Saadullah. "The Voice of the Modern Bengali: Architect Muzharul Islam." *Docomomo*, no. 37 (September 2007): 40-46.

Samddar, Ranabir. *Paradoxes of the Nationalist Time: Political Essays on Bangladesh.* Dhaka: University Press Limited, 2002.

Sartori, Andrew. *Bengal in Global Concept History: Culturalism in the Age of Capital.* Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 2008.

Sayeed, Khalid B. *The Political System of Pakistan.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967.

Schendel, Willem van. *A History of Bangladesh.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020.

Scully, Vincent. *Louis I. Kahn.* New York: George Braziller, 1962.

Seton-Watson, Hugh. *Nations and States : An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism* London: Methuen, 1977.

Smith, Anthony D. *Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism.* London, New York: Routledge, 1998.

———. *Theories of Nationalism.* London: Duckworth, 1971.

———. "Towards a Global Culture?". In *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity*, edited by Mike Featherstone, 171-92. London: Sage Publications, 1990.

Snyder, Louis L. *The Meaning of Nationalism.* New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1954.

Stanek, Łukasz. *Architecture in Global Socialism: Eastern Europe, West Africa, and the Middle East in the Cold War.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020.

Stierli, Martino, Anoma Pieris, and Sean Anderson, eds. *The Project of Independence: Architectures of Decolonization in South Asia, 1947–1985*. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2022.

Stirling, James. "Regionalism and Modern Architecture." In *Architectural Regionalism: Collected Writings on Place, Identity, Modernity, and Tradition*, edited by V. B. Canizaro, 327-30. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007.

Tagore, Sundaram. "Louis Kahn's Tiger City." 113 minutes. United States, 2019.

Tasmia, Fatema, and Mahmudul Anwar Riyaad. "Sensitivity Towards Context and Climate: An Understanding of Robert G. Boughey's Architectural Works in Bangladesh." *Journal of Architecture* 18, no. 1 (2021): 31-49.

Taylor, Brian Brace. "Vision of Grandeur." *Mimar 6: Architecture in Development* (1982): 37-39.

Thapar, Romila. *Historical Interpretations and the Secularising of Indian Society.* Bangalore: Bangalore : Visthar, 1999.

Tigerman, Stanley. *Designing Bridges to Burn: Architectural Memoirs.* San Francisco: ORO Editions, 2011.

———. *Versus, an American Architect's Alternatives.* New York: Rizzoli, 1982.

Tyng, Alexandra. *Beginnings: Louis I. Kahn's Philosophy of Architecture.* New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1984.

Tzonis, Alexander. "From Nationalist to Critical Regionalist Architecture." In *Nationalism and Architecture*, edited by Raymond Quek, Darren Deane and Sarah Butler, 211-26. Surrey, VT: Ashgate, 2012.

Tzonis, Alexander, and Liane Lefaivre. *Architecture of Regionalism in the Age of Globalization: Peaks and Valleys in the Flat World.* Abingdon, New Yoek: Routledge, 2012.

———. "Tropical Critical Regionalism: Introductory Comments." In *Tropical Architecture: Critical Regionalism in the Age of Globalization*, edited by Alexander Tzonis, Liane Lefaivre and Bruno Stagno, 1-13. Chichester: Wiley-Academy, 2001.

Tzonis, Alexander, Liane Lefaivre, and Bruno Stagno, eds. *Tropical Architecture: Critical Regionalism in the Age of Globalization*. Chichester: Wiley-Academy, 2001.

Uddin, Sufia M. *Constructing Bangladesh: Religion, Ethnicity, and Language in an Islamic Nation.* New Delhi: Vistaar Publications, 2006.

Vale, Lawrence J. *Architecture, Power and National Identity.* New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1992.

———. "Doubts About Dacca." *The Architectural Review* 181, no. 1082 (April 1987): 5.

Veer, Peter van der. *Religious Nationalism : Hindus and Muslims in India.* Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 1994.

Walden, James. "Memoir: My Dacca Days." *Architectural Record* 200, no. 3 (2012): 30.

———. "Planting the Seeds." In *The First Faculty of Architecture in Dhaka*, edited by Rafique Islam and Mary F. Dunham, 15-30. Dhaka, 2011.

Wares, Shamsul. By Author. May 24, 2018.

———. "Bangladeshe Adhunik Sthapotter Shuchonalogno O Shater Doshok." *Shilparup*, no. 2 (April-June 2009): 89-96.

Wilcots, Henry. "Kahn for Dacca." By Richard Saul Wurman. Domus. July 1975.

Wisdom, David. "Kahn's Building at Dacca." *Rassegna* 7 (March 1985).

Wiseman, Carter. *Louis I. Kahn: Beyond Time and Style.* New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2007.

Wurman, Richard Saul, ed. *What Will Be Has Always Been : The Words of Louis I. Kahn*. New York: Access and Rizzoli, 1990.

Yegul, Fikret K. "Review of Louis I. Kahn: In the Realm of Architecture by David B. Brownlee and David G. De Long." *Journal of Society of Architectural Historians* 52, no. 1 (March 1993): 115-18.

Zaheer, Hasan. *The Separation of East Pakistan: The Rise and Realization of Bengali Muslim Nationalism.* Karachi, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Zahiruddin, Shah Alam, Abu H. Imamuddin, and M. Mohiuddin Khan, eds. *Contemporary Architecture Bangladesh*. Dhaka: Institute of Architects Bangladesh, 1990.

Ziring, Lawrence. *The Ayub Khan Era: Politics in Pakistan, 1958-1969.* Syracruse: Syracruse University Press, 1971.

———. *Bangladesh: From Mujib to Ershad. An Interpretive Study.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.