

KHALIFATABAD

A Study of its History and Monuments

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ABSTRACT

The thesis aims at making a critical study of the history and architecture of Khalīfatābād, with special reference to its founder Khān al-ʿAzam Ulugh Khān Jahān, in the context of political and architectural history of the Muslims during their long five hundred and fifty years' rule in Bengal. The architectural study of the region in question is mainly based on the experiences of my personal visit, observation and investigation.

The thesis contains five chapters:

Chapter I offers in brief the evolution of the term Bengal: its river systems, physiographical divisions, ancient administrative divisions and political condition on the eve of the Muslim conquest. It also summarises the extent of the Muslim conquests in Bengal. This chapter is basically a background story to determine the time and extent of Khān Jahān's rule in Bengal.

Chapter II gives an introduction to Khān Jahān and a chronological study of the history of Khalīfatābād upto the present time. The chapter specially focuses attention on the boundary lines of the province, which varied from time to time.

Chapter III outlines the formation, growth and development of Islamic architecture in Bengal, in the context of which an attempt has been made to describe the architecture of Khalīfatābād in chapter IV.

Chapter IV presents an account of the architecture of the study area under three main heads: A. Religious Buildings; B. Secular Buildings; and C. Non-extant Buildings. Majority of the buildings of the former two

groups are discussed in detail including their restorations in present day. A critical estimation has in each case been attempted, and the various buildings dated. It should perhaps be mentioned here that fourteen of the monuments of both these groups were not studied or published anywhere before. Part C catalogues those monuments which are known through local traditions and references of some recent authors, which no longer exist today.

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CHAPTER - I

MUSLIM CONQUESTS OF BENGAL

The word 'Bengal' takes its derivation from the term 'Bangālah' or 'Vaṅgālā', which in turn originated from 'Baṅga' or 'Vaṅga'¹, used in ancient sanskrit literature². Abūl Fazl³ has given a strange explanation of the origin of the name Bengal, which reads: 'The original name of Bengal was Baṅga. Its former rulers raised mounds measuring ten yards in height and twenty in breadth throughout the Province which were called AL. From this suffix the name Bengal took its rise and currency'. It is interestingly enough to note that these two terms Baṅga and Bangālah are very often identical, but sometimes indicate the existence of two distinct names with their separate geographical boundaries, and this boundary line varied from time to time. Abūl Fazl regarded Baṅga and

¹In ancient times India was divided into a large number of Janapadas and some of the important Janapadas of eastern India were Aṅga, Baṅga and Suṃha. See F. E. Perciter, 'Ancient Countries in Eastern India', JASB, LXVI, Pt.I, 1897, P. 45; Sree Radharam, Pāṇā Zilār Itihāsa, I, Pāṇā, 1330 B. S., P. 1; B. C. Law, Ancient Indian Tribes, II, London, 1934, Pp. 2ff; S. K. De, 'Kālidāsa', IHQ, XVI, Pp. 390 - 91; V. S. Agrawala, 'The Janapada and the Greek City State', IHQ, XXX, No. 1, 1954, P.38. Baṅga as a Janapada is said to have existed in the Epic period, extending roughly from the 4th century B. C. to the 4th century A. D. See Gurinath Sastri, Sanskrita Sāhityer Itihāsa, Calcutta, 1376 B. S., Pp. 29, 36. The Janapada appears to have been a small principality like the Greek City State and inhabited by the people of different gotras and vāṃśas who had a distinct political and cultural life of their own. See IHQ, XXX, No.1, 1954, Pp. 39 - 40; A. K. M. Yaqub Ali, 'Vanga: From Janapada to Country', JVRM, 5, 1979, P. 101.

²A. Rahim, Social and Cultural History of Bengal, I, Karachi, 1963, P.2.

³Āin (Jarret and Sarkar), II, P. 132.

and Bangālah as identical, but they are mentioned separately in several inscriptions of south India and the Tārīkh-i-Firūz Shāhī of Shams-i-Sirāj 'Afīf¹. A brief study of the evolution of these two terms, however, will perhaps give a solution to the problem. Under the Gupta rule, as A. M. Chowdhury² opines, Baṅga meant only the south-eastern Bengal, but in the mid-sixth century (after the fall of the Gupta Empire) it was comprised of southern and eastern Bengal and southern part of western Bengal³. H. C. Roy⁴ holds that Baṅga of the late Pāla and early Sena rule referred to the river-girt regions of the eastern and southern Bengal, while Bangālah of the Chandra Kings embraced the territories of Tippera and Chittāgong. But during the late Sena rule, at least during the time of Ballālsena Baṅga signified a small portion lying to the east of the Karatoyā and the Meghnā⁵.

Relying on the accounts given by Minhāj who visited Lakhnawatī in 1242 - 44, A. Rahim⁶ suggests that the Baṅga of the early Muslim rule in Bengal denoted the river-girt regions of southern and eastern Bengal.

¹ Epigraphia-Indica, V, 1898 - 99, P. 257; 'Afīf in Elliot and Dowson, III, P. 295.

² A. Rahim and others, Bāṅglādesher Itihāsa, Dacca, 1977, P. 13.

³ HB., I, P. 51.

⁴ Ibid., Pp. 15 - 16, 18 - 19.

⁵ Infra, P. 13.

⁶ Op.cit., P. 3.

From the time of Ghyās Uddīn Balban Bangālāh took the place of Baṅga to mean the territory as Baṅga did. Bangālāh in the contemporary historian Baranī's account denoted the same region as mentioned above. He quotes a statement of Sultān Balban which reads, "I have given the territory of Lakhnawatī and Bangālāh to my younger son, and it is for years that the territory has been growing strong¹". In another place Baranī refers to Balban's instructions to his son Bughra Khān, governor of Lakhnawatī, for the occupation of 'Iqlīm-i-Bangālāh'². These statements of Baranī reveal that Bangālāh was a separate region from Lakhnawatī (north Bengal) during the time of Balban and hence it may be said that Baranī used Bangālāh to mean the southern and eastern Bengal. Thus we see that Baṅga of Minhāj and Bangālāh of Baranī are identical in their geographical connotation. During this time the Muslim called the different regions of Bangālāh by different names: 'Arṣa-i-Bangālāh', 'Iqlīm-i-Bangālāh' and 'Diyār-i-Bangālāh'. Qanungo³ identified 'Arṣa-i-Bangālāh' with Sātgaon region (southern Bengal), Iqlīm-i-Bangālāh with Sonārgaon region (eastern Bengal) and Diyār-i-Bangālāh with the combined regions of Sātgaon and Sonārgaon. The Moorish traveller Ibn Battūṭah (1345 - 46) also identified Bangālāh with the southern and eastern Bengal, and called its people Bangālī⁴. It

¹ A. H. Dani, 'Shams Uddin Ilyas Shah, Shah-i-Bangalah', Sir Jadunath Sarkar Commemoration Volume, Punjab, 1958, Pp. 53 - 54.

² Ibid.

³ HB., II, Pp. 67 & 71.

⁴ A. Rahim, Op.cit., P. 4.

is thus seen that till the mid-14th century only the southern and eastern Bengal were known as Bangālah or Baṅga and its inhabitants Bāṅgālī. But it was Shams Uddin Ilyās Shāh who for the first time brought the different regions of Bengal (Rādhā, Varendra and Baṅga) under one political unit - Bangālah, and himself assumed the title of 'Shāh-i-Bangālah'¹ and Shāh-i-Bangāliyan². From this time onwards the term 'Bangālah' connoted the whole Bengal (Pre-partition Bengal³) and its people were termed as Bāṅgālī⁴. During the British rule, Bangālah received the name of 'Bengal' which formed a Province of British India. Since then till today the country is known as Bengal in English and Bāṅglā or Bāṅglādesh in Bengali.

By the term Bengal we thus generally mean the Bengal proper, but in a wider sense it also includes the State of Biḥār which, politically and geographically well connected with Bengal, roughly corresponds to the ancient kingdoms of Videha, north of the Ganges, and Magadha, south of the river⁵. Later on, perhaps, Videha turns to be known as Mithilā or Tirhut. The geographical area of Bengal in the Muslim period may thus be summarised as follows: it is bounded up on the north by the eastern Himālayan countries like Nepāl, Bhūṭān and Assām; on the east by Assām

¹ A. R. Dani, Op.cit., Pp. 53, 56.

² Ibid.

³ A. Rahim, Op.cit., Pp. 5 - 6; A. Karim, Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, Dacca, 1959, P. 28.

⁴ A. Rahim, Op.cit., Pp. 5 - 6.

⁵ Encyclopaedia Britanica, III, P. 474; H.B., I, P. 14.

and Burma; on the west by the modern Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh of India; and on the south by the Province of Orissā and the Bay of Bengal.

An important factor which from time immemorial play a dominant role in shaping the history and geography of this country is its considerable number of large rivers with their numerous adjuncts, tributaries and channels. Oldham¹ suggested that the Indo-Gangetic Trough of which 'the Bengal plains are a part, had been created by the sinking of the crust under the weight of the alluvial deposits brought down by the rivers from the Himālaya mountains'. This view has been supported by 'some well reputed earlier geologists, including Hooker and Theobald'². In the most easterly portion of the Himālayas all the snow and water falling upon the Kūmāon, Nepāl, Bhūṭān and Assām sections find their way ultimately into the Ganges, the Brahmaputra and the Meghna, the three largest river systems of India, and through these mighty rivers they are washed down to the Sea across the surface of Bengal. On their way march they carry with them the vast deposits of silt from the uplands and have thus created the huge areas of deltaic lands. The process is still going on. The constant shiftings of river beds is an important phenomenon in the river systems of Bengal, and the changes thus occur in the river courses lead to the making and unmaking of flourishing cities and thriving trade centres. It is in the history of these rivers of Bengal that a chronicle of its past largely depended upon.

¹ A Manual of the Geology of India, London, 1893, P.267; N. Ahmad, An Economic Geography of East Pakistan, London, 1958, P. 27.

² N. Ahmad, Op.cit., P. 27.

Among the rivers of this deltaic land the Ganges is the most prominent. Taking birth at the feet of the Himālaya, it runs south-eastward upto Allahābād, wherefrom again flows eastward. After the confluence with the Ghogrā and the Gandak, the Ganges flows straightway to the east, dividing Bihār into two - North Bihār (Mithilā) and South Bihār (Magadha). In addition to the Gandak and the Ghogrā, North Bihār is drained by many other rivers and numerous rivulets. Among these the important are Bāgmāli, Kosi, Pānārā, Kamalā and Mohānandā. The region of South Bihār is full of hills, the important being the Rājmahal and the Paresnāth. This portion contains greater number of rivers than the former one and they are all hill streams. Of these rivers mention may be made of Sonā, Karmanāsā, Pūnpūn, Morāhār and Phālgm-mohanā. Mention may also be made that with the exception of the Sonā, all these rivers for the most part of the year contain little water in them.

Rounding the Rājmahal hills the Ganges enters Bengal plain and about twenty five miles to the south of ancient Gaur it gives off two main branches - the Bhāgīrathī-Hooghly and the Padmā (Ganges). The former is the western most channel of the Ganges in Bengal and on the seaward march it gives off many distributaries. Of these the Bhairab was the most active left hand distributary, while the Ajoy, the Dāmodar, the Sarasvatī and the Rupnārāyan had been thrown off from the right bank.

Subsequently with the eastward movement of the Ganges the Bhāgīrathī-Hooghly gradually decayed. Now the river Barāl is thrown off from the left bank and this is the only distributary of the Ganges to the north. It flows through the Chalan Bil and, receiving the drainage of the Atrāi, joins the Jamunā (Brahmaputra) above Māthurā in Pābnā. The

Ganges also meets the Jamunā above Guālundo. After this confluence the Ganges, with the name of Padmā¹, marches east and south-eastwards as the widest river and ultimately finds confluence with the Meghnā near Chāndpūr. This great intermingling of the mighty rivers Padmā and Meghnā 'does not appear to have taken place more than about 125 years ago'².

It has been mentioned that the Bhāgīrathī-Hooghly, and the Ganges with a number of its right bank distributaries, having carried with them the vast alluvial deposits from the uplands, created a huge deltaic land in the south. This is widely known as the Gangetic delta that covers an area of 25,000 square miles, an area greater than that of Holland and Belgium combined, and is larger than the Nile Delta³. The Seaward margin of this delta is known as the Sundarban, a region of forest and swamp, extending from the Hooghly estuary to that of the Meghnā, a distance of 170 miles and averaging from 60 to 80 miles across in Khulnā⁴. This vast tract, comprising of Kushtīā, Jessore, Faridpūr, Khulnā and Bākerganj districts of present Bānglādesh, and Calcutta, 24-Parganās and Nadiā of India, is drained by such a large number of rivers that no other region of the country possesses such a riverine feature. The notable of these rivers from the west to east respectively are the Jhelāngī, the Māthābhāngā, the Ichhāmātī, the Kumār, the Nabagāngā, the Chitrā, the Bhairab, the

¹ N. Ahmad, Op.cit., P. 14.

² Ibid., Pp. 32 - 33.

³ Ibid., P. 14.

⁴ Ibid.

Kobādāk, the Garāi-Madhumatī and the Arial Khān. A number of cross channels connect them in various parts of the region.

For our purpose it will perhaps be better if some words are also added here on the course and movement of these rivulets. The Māthābhāngā is the western most active river of this delta. Originating directly from the Ganges, it ran southwards along the boundary of Kushtīā and Murshidābād. But eventually it lost its vigour by giving birth from its left bank some active rivers such as the Kumār and the Nabagāngā which flowing through Kushtīā and Jessore, finally meet the Garāi in the east. Another important left hand channel of the Māthābhāngā is the Chitrā. Passing Kushtīā, it marches east-southwards through Jhenāidāh and Jessore sadar sub-divisions, and at Sarsūnā in Māgūrā received the waters of Nabagāngā by a channel called Fatkī¹. The Chitrā again meets another channel of Nabagāngā in Narāil and then runs southwards parallel to the Bhairab. Entering Khulnā the Chitrā joins the Bhairab at Siddhirpāshā by a right bank spill channel, and itself, after flowing a few miles southwards, takes a left hand turn and finally finds confluence with the river Atthārabāki which in turn, taking off from the Madhūmatī at Mānikdāh, joins the Bhairab at Shener-bāzār. The Ichhāmatī is another western most river of this delta. Leaving Māthābhāngā in south Kushtīā, it runs south and south-eastward to the east of Bangrām Railway Station. At Gabardāngā it receives the river Jamunā, a left bank distributary of the Bhāgirathī-Hooghly. After

¹ J. Westland, A Report on the District of Jessore (Revised edition), Calcutta, 1874, P. 14.

this confluence the Ichhāmātī flows southwards forming a boundary line between 24-Parganās and Khulnā. At Kāliganj the Ichhāmātī gives off two left hand channels - the Kadamtālī and the Kholpetuā, and they all fall into the Sea. In between the Chitrā and the Ichhāmātī, the Bhairab is the most important, which at one time was the most powerful and active central delta building river. Originally it was a left bank distributary of the Bhāgīrathī-Hooghly, but with the eastward development of the parent river it turned to be a right bank channel. At the primary stage it ran parallel to that of the Jhelāngī and met the Māthābhāngā near the Jayrāmpūr Railway Station in Kushtīā¹. Soon it made itself isolated and entered Jessore. At Tāhirpūr in Jessore, a few miles south of Kotchāndpūr, the Bhairab had thrown off the Kobādāk channel straightway to the south, and itself rushed south-eastward in a zigzag course via Bārābāzār, Muralī-qasbā, Sheikhāhātī, Paigrām-qasbā, Daulatpūr, Shenerbāzār, Fakīrhāt, Bāgerhāt and finally joined the Baleswar at Kachuā. Some mention may be made here of the Pushar which, though at present a large navigable river in Khulnā, was originally a mere canal and had no connection with the Bhairab. In 1730², by an artificial canal a connection has been made between these two rivers at Belfoliā (Bhairab). However, the Kobādāk, flowing through the surface of the Jessore sadar sub-division, enters Khulnā at Trimohini. Here by a right hand channel the Kobādāk joins the Betnā which takes off from the Bhairab at Mahespūr in Jessore. In the south the Betnā re-joins

¹S. C. Mitra, Jessore-Khulnā Itihāsa, I, Calcutta, 1963, p. 21.

²Ibid., p. 23, f.n. 1 and 2.

the Kobādāk above Chāndkhālī. From Trimohini the Kobādāk rushes southwards as the widest river through Mīrsānagar, Sāgardāri, Māgurā, Masjid-kūr, Amādi and ultimately connects the Sea as the river Arpāngāsīā.

The Garāi-Madhumatī is one of the principal distributaries of the Ganges to the south and carries a large part of its water to the Sea. The upper part of this river, which passes through the Kushtīā district and then along the boundary between Faridpūr and Jessore (Jhenāidah and Māgurā sub-divisions), is known as Garāi, but from the neighbourhood of Muḥammadpūr in the Māgurā sub-division it acquires the name of Madhumatī. Further down in Faridpūr, the Bārāsīā branches off and then re-joins it at Kālnā. Lower down the river becomes distinctly tidal and after Kachua is known as the Baleswar. The big estuary through which it opens out into the Bay is called the Haringhātā. In between the Garāi-Madhumatī and the Meghnā, the Ariāl Khān is the most active delta-building distributary of the Padmā. On the seaward march through the plains of Faridpūr and Bākerganj, it issues to right and left a maze of river like channels. At the northern extremity of Bākerganj a right hand branches off from it to the west. This new channel again divides itself into two - the Swarupkātī-Hundā and the Ghāgrā¹. While the former, flowing through the Pirojpur sub-division, joins the Baleswar at Kumārkhalī, the latter, rounding the Gauranadī thānā, marches through the Kotwālīpārā marshes (now in Gopālganj in Faridpūr) and falls into the Madhumatī below Mollāhāt

¹ W. W. Hunter, A Statistical Account of Bengal, V (Indian Re-print), 1973, P. 161.

as the river Sildah¹. The main river, however, continues its southward march and finally connects the Sea through the four main channels - the Tetulia, the Rabanābād, the Buriswar and the Bishkhālī.

It is to be noted that in 1787² the heavy Tistā floods caused the Brahmaputra to march southwards through the Jamunā, leaving its older channel past Mymensingh as the secondary course, and thereby to join the Ganges above Guālundo. After this confluence the Ganges becomes mightier than before and with its eastward flow, the rivers west of the Garāl-Madhumatī line - Nabagaṅgā, Chitrā, Bhairab, Kumār, Māthābhāṅgā, Betnā, Kobādāk and Bhadrā gradually dried up. By the beginning of the 19th century they all have practically ceased to function as carriers of silt thereby ceasing the formation of land³. In the upper part of the delta (Kushtīā, Jessore, north-west parts of Faridpūr and north-western Khulnā), the rivers are now primarily local drainage channels. And only the lower reaches of them due to tidal action are flushed to a certain extent⁴.

The North Bengal rivers acquire a large area, extending from the Mohānandā in the west to the Brahmaputra (Jamunā) in the east. The Tistā in the north-east is the most important water carrier of the area

¹ W. W. Hunter, Op.cit., p. 161.

² H. Ahmad, Op.cit., pp. 32 - 33.

³ R. H. Colebrook, 'On the Course of the Ganges through Bengal', Transactions of the Asiatic Society, VII, Calcutta, 1801, pp. 13 ff.

⁴ K. Bagchi, The Ganges Delta, Calcutta, 1944, pp. 62 and 118 - 19;
S. C. Majumder, Rivers of the Bengal Delta, Calcutta, 1942, pp. 75-76.

and in the past occupied a pivotal position in the drainage system of North Bengal. Originating in the Sikkim-Himālaya, it fed the Punarbhabā, the Atrāi and the Karatoyā, and ultimately fell into the Ganges. But after the mighty floods in 1787 the Tistā left the Atrāi and joined the Brahmaputra. This dramatic shift led to the development of the Jamunā as the Brahmaputra's main channel which, rushing southwards, met finally the Ganges above Guālundo in Faridpur district.

The area in between the Meghnā and the Jamunā is connected by a network of rivers. Of these the chief one is the Brahmaputra which carries perhaps more water than the Ganges and is notorious for its shifting channels and the formation of lands. Flowing through the Assām Valley, the Brahmaputra enters Raṅgpur round the Gāro hills. From the north of Dewānganj it flows past Mymensingh and this was the main channel of the Brahmaputra in Bengal till 1787. This is commonly known as the old Brahmaputra which joins the Meghnā at Bhairabbāzār. The chief part of the Meghnā is formed by the union of the two rivers of Assām - the Surmā and the Kusiyrā. However, after its confluence with the old Brahmaputra, the Meghnā grows rapidly and begins to flow as a wide meandering river with offshoots and branches. South of Daudkāndi, it receives the combined waters of the Burhigaṅgā-Dhaleswari-Sitlakhyā near Munshiganj and later the Padmā at Chāndpur. Then the left hand branch meanders in the country of Tippera. From Chāndpur the Meghnā runs south and south-eastward as the widest river of the country and meets the Bay through some of its important distributaries - the Shāhbāzpur channel, the Hātiā river and the Bāmini river.

Rivers in the south-east Bengal are also numerous and are all hill streams. All these, originating from the Lushāi hills and the Tripurā hills, are directed to the Sea through the four main rivers - the Fenny, the Karnafuli, the Sāngu and the Mātāmuhari.

Broadly speaking, all these rivers thus forming themselves as the natural boundaries of Bengal divide this vast tract physiographically into three: (a) the older deltaic and flood plain lying north of the Ganges - Padmā - Meghnā axis; (b) the younger deltaic and flood plain lying south of the axis and (c) the erosional and flood plain lying west of the Bhāgīrathī - Hooghly and south of the Ganges¹. It is interesting that the political divisions of ancient Bengal were formed on the basis of these physiographical divisions. According to Ballālcharita, a sanskrit work compiled by Ananda Bhatta in 1502², the administrative units of Ballālsena's kingdom were the following: (1) Mithilā, a region to the west of the Mohānandā and north of the Ganges; (2) Rādha (north and Dakkhin Rādha), the country west of the Bhāgīrathī - Hooghly and the south of the Ganges; (3) Varendra, the area in between the Karatoyā, the Mohānandā and the Ganges; (4) Bāgdī, commonly known as the Gangetic delta surrounded by the Bhāgīrathī - Hooghly on the west, the Padmā or the Ganges on the north, the Meghnā on the east and the Bay of Bengal on the south and (5) Bānga, the country lying east of the Bāgdī and the Varendra.

¹ S. P. Chatterjee, Bengal in Maps, Bombay, 1949, P. 8; Shahanara Husain, Everyday Life in the Pala Empire, Dacca, 1968, P. 2.

² See A. M. Chowdhury, Dynastic History of Bengal, Dacca, 1967, Pp. 230 - 33, f.n. 4.

Except Mithilā, the rest comprised the Bengal proper. These political divisions with their respective locations have also been supported by some well reputed historians¹.

✓ Towards the end of the 12th century Lakṣmaṇsena (1178 - 1206), the son and successor of Ballālsena, was the ruler of a vast territory comprising almost all these divisions which he inherited from his father. He himself is also credited to have established the Sena hold over the whole of Magadha as far as Gayā by defeating the Kāshirāj or the Gohadavāla king Jayachandra (c. 1170 - 93), who held sway over Benaras and Allahābād². But although the early years of his rule was marked by a brilliant career of conquest, his reign ended in a sea of troubles that overwhelmed him and his kingdom. Towards the close of his reign, when he himself was too old to look after the affairs of the state, there arose a number of petty independent chiefs in different parts of the kingdom. In the eastern part of Khadī Mandala (identified with Sundarban area) Dammonapāla had set himself up as an independent chief in 1196 and assumed the title of 'Mahārājādhirāja'³. Towards the close of the 12th century, the Deva family also set up an independent kingdom to the east

¹ Beaz-us-Salātīn (Beng. tr.), P. 353; H. Blochmann, 'Contribution to History and Geography of Bengal', JASB, 1873, P. 211; W. W. Hunter, Op.cit., II, (Indian Re-print) 1973, P. 219; S. W. Haig (ed.), The Cambridge History of India, III, Cambridge, 1928, Pp. 260-61; HB., I, P.217; A. K. Sur, History and Culture of Bengal, Calcutta, 1963, P.65. It is however important to note that scholars like R. C. Majumdar, A. M. Chowdhury and others doubt the location of some of these divisions such as Bagdī.

² HB., I, Pp. 220 - 23.

³ Ibid., Pp. 222 - 23, 253; A. M. Chowdhury, Op.cit., Pp. 247 - 48.

of the Meghnā, which comprised of Noākhālī, Comilla and Chittagong¹. Another minor independent principality is known to have flourished under Banavāṅkamalla Harikelladeva (1204 - 1220) in Paṭṭikera (identified with north Tippera and south Sylhet²). Equally in the west the Sena power seemed to have been threatened. A minor Gupta dynasty is known to have ruled North Bihār (Moṅghyr district) as the feudatories of Lakṣmaṇasena and his predecessors³. They are supposed to have assumed independence when the Sena rule was at the verge of decline⁴. It is also likely that the Gohadavālas, who were said to have been vanquished earlier by the Senas, availed the chance of the disintegration of the Sena power and were perhaps endeavouring to avenge their defeat. All these instances reveal the clear disruption of the Sena kingdom towards the close of Lakṣmaṇasena's reign and ultimately led to its final destruction at the hands of the Muslims.

✓ Taking thus the advantage of the turmoiling conditions and the general collapse of the Sena rule, Muḥammad Bakhtiyār Khalzī, a Turkish soldier of fortune and a nominee of Qutb Uddīn Aibak, the then viceroy of Sultān Muḥammad Ghori in Hindūstān (North India), carried the victorious banner of Islām towards the eastern India. On his way march Bakhtiyār reduced the whole of Magadha (South Bihār), and having defeated Rājā Lakṣmaṇasena at Nadiā in or about 1204⁵ founded the first Muslim kingdom in Bengal. Since then to the battle of Plassey in 1757, Bengal, with gradual extensions and annexations, was under the Muslims,

¹ HB., I, Pp. 222 - 223, 253; A. M. Chowdhury, Op.cit., Pp. 247 - 48.

² Ibid.

³ HB., I, Pp. 261 - 62.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ IHQ, XXX, 1954, Pp. 133-47; A. Karim, Op.cit., P. 33; A. M. Chowdhury, Op.cit., Pp. 252-58; A. Rahim and others, Op.cit., Pp. 120 - 23.

at times under the nominees of the Delhi authority but chiefly under the independent Sultāns. These independent Sultāns governed Bengal successfully for about two hundred years till 1538, from which date until Akbar's conquest in 1575 Bengal remained under the Afghāns (Pāthān). Since then a couple of centuries elapsed when the British had occupied Bengal in 1757¹.

Bakhtyār's kingdom was confined to a small tract of land round about Lakhnawati (his seat of government), with the main stream of the Ganges in the south, the Tistā and Karatoya rivers in the east and Devikot in the north, while in the west he had his firm control over an area ranging from the Vindhuya hill to that of the Rājmahal in South Bihar and from the mouth of the Gandak to that of the Kosi in North Bihar². However, immediately on his fateful retreat from the Tibet expedition, Bakhtyār is said to have been murdered on death-bed by 'Alī Mardān at Devikot in 1206³. This untimely death of Bakhtyār was a serious blow to the newly founded Muslim power and ultimately signalised the outbreak of a civil war among the Khalzī Malikis and nobles for the throne of Lakhnawati. On receiving this news, Muḥammad Shīrān hurried to the capital, leaving possibly unguarded the cities of Lakhnā (in the Birbhum district⁴) and Jājnagar (an old headquarter of north Orissā⁵) against

¹ With the withdrawal of the British imperialism and the creation of India and Pākistān in 1947, Bengal was finally divided into two halves- West Bengal in India and East Bengal in Pākistān. Of the two, the latter in 1971 takes the name of Bānglādesh after being separated from Pākistān, and thereby attains a distinct position in the World Map.

² HB., II, Pp. 12 - 13; A. Karim, *Op.cit.*, P.34.

³ HB., II, P.11.

⁴ R.D. Banerjee, *History of Orissa*, I, Calcutta, 1930, P.258; HB., II, Pp.10, 37.

⁵ JPASE, V, 1909, P. 217.

which he had been posted previously by his departed master to occupy the Rāḍha tract permanently and to keep the Hindus of the south in check from their northward advance¹. On reaching Devikot, Shīrān attacked and imprisoned 'Alī Mardān in his fief of Barsalā in the Sarkār Ghorāghāt² of Todar Mall's rent roll, and in 1207 was elected ruler of Lakhnawatī³. But soon the shrewd 'Alī Mardān escaped, retired to Qutb Uddīn's court at Delhi and instigated him to interfere in the affairs of Bengal. The Delhi Emperor, who had no good term with Shīrān, took this opportunity and ordered his governor Qāmeẓ Rūmī of Qudh to march to Bengal with a view to settling the disputes in Lakhnawatī. Accordingly, a battle took place between Qāmeẓ Rūmī and Shīrān. But the latter, being discomfitted, fled towards Moseda and Santosh, identified with Mahisantosh in Rājshahī⁴.

Muhammad Shīrān was thus replaced by 'Alī Mardān (1208 - 12) to the throne of Lakhnawatī. Under his rule Bengal received no experience of new conquests, save the annexation of Lakhnor which was conquered earlier by Shīrān Khalzī⁵. But it was Ghiyās Uddīn 'Iwaz Khalzī (1212-27), who for the first time tried to push the Muslim conquest towards the

¹ HB., II, P. 10.

² Ibid., Pp. 15, 35 - 36.

³ Ibid.

⁴ A. Karim, Op.cit., P. 35, f.n. 2.

⁵ HB., II, P. 20.

south, west and the east. About him Minhāj¹ writes that he (Ghiyās Uddīn 'Iwaz) was a virtuous, just and good mannered sultān. The neighbouring states of Lakhnawatī such as Jājnagar, Baṅga (Eastern Bengal), Kāmṛup and Tirhut all sent tributes to him². And he brought Lakhnawar under firm control of the Muslims having posted his own officers there³. He also re-annexed South Bihār and pushed his conquests upto the Delhī province of Qudh as far as the mouth of the Gandak in North Bihār⁴. In this connection it is worth mentioning that although the kingdoms of Jājnagar, Kāmṛup, Baṅga and Tirhut sent tributes to 'Iwaz, it is likely, these were not finally integrated to the Muslim kingdom of Bengal yet.

The statement of Minhāj proves that 'Iwaz annexed and retained Lakhnawar, but it was lost during the reign of Fughral Fughān Khān (1233 - 44), while he was in war against Grissā in 1243. After having killed Fakr ul-Mulk Karīm Uddīn Lānghirī, the fiefholder of Lakhnawar, along with a number of Muslims, the Grissan army under the Rāy of Jājnagar marched northwards through the Rādha tract, attacked the Varendra and even laid sieze to Lakhnawatī⁵. At this critical juncture, Malik Ikhtiyār Uddīn Yūzbak of Qudh, who later on assumed independence with the title of Sultān Muḡhīs Uddīn Yūzbak (1246 - 57), appeared as

¹ Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī (Tr. by Raverty), I, Pp. 587 - 89 and also in Elliot and Dowson, II, P. 319.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ HB., II, P. 29.

⁵ Tabaqāt-i-Nāsirī (Eng. Tr. by Raverty), II, Pp. 739 - 40; HB., II, P. 49.

a relief to Bengal and retrieved to a great extent its loss. Influenced by the traditional policy of his predecessors he launched expedition against the Orissans, drove them back and captured Mandāran in Hooghly district¹. He next directed his energy in reducing the entire Rādha region, which was almost completed with the second conquest of Nadiā after Bakhtyar Khalzī. Thus we see that the Muslim power of Lakhnawati owed much to the illustrious service of Yūzbak, who annexed permanently the whole of Rādha as far as modern northern boundary of Midnapur and Bānkurā districts which later on became the main base of operations of Muslim arms against the dying Sena rule of eastern and southern Bengal. But the scene of conquest was unexpectedly cut short by his defeat and death in the disastrous Kamrup expedition in 1257². For more than two decades after the tragic end of Mughis Uddin Yūzbak, the Delhi governors at Lakhnawati, even the energetic Sultan Mughis Uddin Tughral (1268 - 81), who cut off allegiance from the Delhi authority, could make no territorial expansion of note except some traditional raids in the 'Ārṣa-i-Bangalah' (Sātgaon region) and a faint one in Baṅga (eastern Bengal) which provided him with immense booty³.

Some mention may be made in this connection that with the extinction of Sultan Mughis Uddin Tughral by Balban, Muslim Bengal once again became a province of Delhi Empire. But while Balban was succeeded

¹ JNSI, XXI, Pt. I, 1959, Pp. 54 - 57; HB., II, Pp. 51 - 52.

² Tabaqāt-i-Nāsiri (Tr. by Raverty), II, P. 766; HB., II, Pp. 53 - 54.

³ HB., II, Pp. 59 ff.

by his grandson Kaikobād to the throne of Delhi, Nāsir Uddīn Bughrā Khān (son of Balban) declared himself independent and with him the independence of Bengal practically started¹. This process of independence, though came to an end for a short interval by the Tughlaq intervention, was again revived under Fakr Uddīn Mubārak Shāh and completed finally under Shams Uddīn Ilyās Shāh. Be that as it may, with the establishment of the Balbanī regime in Bengal under the governorship of Bughrā Khān (1281 - 91), a fresh wave of all round conquests commenced. 'The period was', says Stapleton, 'one of active expansion of Musalman dominion in Bengal and the adjacent countries'². The contemporary historian Baranī³ remarks, 'He (Balban) called his son to him in private, and made him take an oath that he would recover and secure the country of Bengal and that he would not hold convivial parties, nor indulge in wine and dissipation'. But the pleasure loving Bughrā Khān could not maintain his father's advice and instructions. The task ultimately fell upon his son and successor Rukn Uddīn Kaikāūs (1291 - 1301), who occupied permanently for the first time at least a portion of the 'Iqlīm-i-Bangālāh' as evidenced by his coin, minted from the kharāj of Baṅga⁴. During his reign raids in the Sātgaon region again commenced under the Saint-General Zafar Khān Ghazī⁵, a fact which

¹ Baranī in Elliot and Dowson, III, pp. 129 ff.; HB., II, p. 71.

² JPASB, XVIII, 1922, p. 411; HB., II, p. 68.

³ Baranī in Elliot and Dowson, III, p. 120.

⁴ JPASB, XVIII, 1922, p. 410; A. Karim, Op.cit., p. 36.

⁵ JPHS, July, 1956, pp. 198 ff.

is corroborated by the Tribeni inscription¹, dated 698/1298. It was, however, Shams Uddin Firoz Shah (1301 - 22) who, by annexing permanently the territory of Satgaon, put a finishing touch to the work of his immediate predecessor (Kaikaus) who had conquered it partially². But what has yielded him a permanent place in history is that he expanded for the first time the Muslim power in the modern Mymensingh district and then in the Sylhet district of Assam. The appearance of Sonargaon, Bang and Ghiyathpur (identified by Stapleton with Enayetpur in Mymensingh district³) as mint-towns⁴ and the epigraphical records of Tribeni⁵ and Sylhet⁶, the latter now preserved in the Dacca Museum⁷, in the regnal period of Firoz Shah undoubtedly testify to the facts just mentioned above.

✓ The history of Muslim conquests and possessions in different parts of Bengal took a definite shape with Fakr Uddin Mubarak Shah (1338 - 50) and particularly with Shams Uddin Ilyas Shah (1339 - 57).

¹ JASB., 1870, Pp. 285 - 86; EIM, 1917 - 18, Pp. 13 - 15; HB., II, Pp. 75-76; S. Ahmed, Inscriptions of Bengal, IV, Rajshahi, 1960, Pp. 18 - 21.

² A. Karim, Op. cit., Pp. 36 - 37.

³ HB., II, P. 85.

⁴ Mir Jahan, 'Mint Towns of Medieval Bengal', Proceedings of the Pakistan History Conference, Dacca Session, 1953; JPASB., XVIII, 1922, Pp. 410 ff.

⁵ JASB., 1870, Pp. 287 - 88; EIM, 1917 - 18, Pp. 33 - 34; SFP., XV, 1316 B. S., Pp. 24 - 25; S. Ahmed, Op. cit., Pp. 28 - 29.

⁶ Dacca Review, August, 1913, Pp. 141 - 56; JPASB., XVIII, 1922, Pp. 413-14; HB., II, P. 79; S. Ahmed, Op. cit., Pp. 24 - 26.

⁷ S. Ahmed, Op. cit., P. 24; A. Karim, Op. cit., P. 37, f.n. 3.

From now onwards the conquest is followed by one of consolidation, the method applied with great rigidity than before, which stabilized their rule in the conquered region. The disintegration of the Delhi Sultanate, caused by the violence and caprices of Muhammad Tughlaq, encouraged Fakr Uddin Mubarak Shah and Ilyas Shah to declare themselves independent in Sonargaon and Lakhnawati respectively. While thus the former extended his possessions southwards by conquering Chittagong (Chattgaon)¹, the latter directed his arms westwards. He soon established his authority over a vast tract extending from the Terai of Nepal on the north to Benaras in Oudh on the south including the entire territory of Tirhut², and founded the town of Hazipur on the Ganges-Gandak confluence³ with a view to pushing further the western limit of his domain at the expense of Delhi. But misfortune was fast knocking at his door and was soon displayed with the rise of a new master in Delhi, Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq, whose fateful hammerings deprived the former a lot of his conquests in the west. Nevertheless, the ambitious Sultan was not to be

¹J. N. Sarkar, Studies in Mughal India, Calcutta, 1919, P. 122; A. Karim, Op.cit., P. 37; Reaz-us-Salatīn (Beng.Tr.), P. 347.

²HR., II, Pp. 103 - 05; M. R. Tarafdar, Husain Shahi Bengal, Dacca, 1965, P. 8.

³M. R. Tarafdar, Op.cit., P. 8 and also see Rennel's Map of Bengal facing page 74.

disappointed. He extended his mighty arms towards Kāmṛup which had experienced previously the two unsuccessful Muslim attacks - one under Ghyas Uddīn 'Iwaz in 1227 and the other under Sultān Yūzbak in 1257¹, and occupied Kāmṛup². Emboldened by this dazzling success and more perhaps to make good his loss in the west, Ilyās Shāh made another spectacular display of arms in the east. Having overthrown the son of Fakr Uddīn Mubārak Shāh, he occupied all his (Fakr's son) possessions as far as Chittagong, and for the first time systematized and confirmed the Muslim conquests in Bengal by uniting Sātgaon, Lakhnawatī and Sonārgaon under his direct control³. The southern outskirts of the province still remained unconquered and was consequently annexed by Sultān Jalāl Uddīn Muḥammad Shāh (1415 - 32) and Nāsir Uddīn Maḥmūd Shāh I (1437 - 59). The mint towns of Chāṭgaon (Chittagong) and Faṭḥābād appear for the first time under Jalāl Uddīn Muḥammad Shāh⁴, and depending

¹ HB., II, P. 109.

² The conquest of Kāmṛup is evidenced by the coin bearing date 759/1358 and the mint name of 'Chawlistān Urf Kāmṛup'. But it is interesting that the coin bears the name of Sikander Shāh. Nevertheless the date helps us to infer that the city was occupied previous to this year, presumably sometime in the reign of Ilyās Shāh. See HB., II, P. 110; and for coin see H. N. Wright, Catalogue of the Coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, II, Oxford, 1907, P. 152, Pl. II, No. 38; A. Karim, Corpus of the Muslim Coins of Bengal, Dacca, 1960, Pp. 50 & 57.

³ N. K. Bhattashali, Coins and Chronology of the Early Independent Sultans of Bengal, Cambridge, 1922, P. 27; HB., II, Pp. 103-05; A. Karim, Social History, Op. cit., P. 37; A. H. Dani, Op. cit., Pp. 53 - 56.

⁴ JASB., 1952, P. 145; A. Karim, Bengal Coins., Op. cit., table facing P. 160.

on these numismatic evidences we may conclude that he was able to exert unbounded authority over Chittagong and Fathābād (Farīdpur¹). Likewise the coins, dated 858/1454 and 862/1258, minted for the first time from Mahmūdābād² (identified with north Jessore³), and the inscriptions dated 863/1459 of Khān Jahān's Tomb at Bāgerhāt in Khulnā district⁴ reveal that Jessore and Sundarban area was first conquered by the Muslims during the reign of Nāsir Uddīn Mahmūd Shāh I. A mosque inscription⁵, dated 870/1465, at Mīrzaganj thānā in Patuākhālī district clearly indicates that Bārbak Shāh occupied at least the western portion of Bākerganj, which, linking up the very recently conquered Jessore- Khulnā region, established a continuous southern frontier of the then Sultān-i-Bangālāh. The northern boundary of the country was extended by Bārbak Shāh (1459 - 74) at least upto Raṅgpūr, for the Saint-General Shāh Ismāīl Ghāzī (d. 1474) was buried in his reign at Kāntāduār in Pīrganj thānā in Raṅgpūr district⁶. Meanwhile the eternal warfare between the Sharqī rulers of Jaunpūr and the Lodīs

¹ Āīn (Jarret and Sarkar), II, P. 127; JASB., 1952, P. 145; Reāz-us-Salātīn (Beng. Tr.), P. 356.

² A. Karim, Bengal Coins, Op.cit., P. 162.

³ Ibid., P. 162; Āīn (Jarret and Sarkar), II, P. 127; Reāz-us-Salātīn (Beng. Tr.), P. 356.

⁴ Appendix B.

⁵ See Chapter IV, Pp. 215-16.

⁶ JASB., 1874, Pp. 215 ff.; HB., II, P. 134; A. Karim, Social History, Op. cit., P. 38.

of Delhi made Bengal free from any alarms from her western frontiers, and this, no doubt, encouraged the later Ilyās Shāhī rulers, particularly Barbak Shāh to establish his sway over the region of Tirhut as far as the eastern frontier of Jaunpūr, wherefrom his ancestor Ilyās Shāh had retreated more than about a century ago due to the constant invasions of Fīroz Shāh Tughlaq of Delhi. In this connection M. R. Tarafdar¹ remarks, 'Reviving the old political divisions of Ilyās Shāh, he (Barbak Shāh) brought the lower part of the country within the jurisdiction of Bengal administration with Hāzīpūr as its headquarters and the region to the north of the Burhi-Gandak was left under Rājā Dhīr Sīmha with a naib Kedar Rāy to collect tribute from the Rājā'.

With the foundation of the Husain Shāhī dynasty under 'Alā' Uddīn Husain Shāh (1493 - 1519), a brilliant chapter opened in the history of the late medieval Muslim kingdom of Bengal. These new masters established their authority over every nook and corner of the country leaving no rival to challenge their supremacy, and unlike their predecessors, shifted their conquests from inland towards the frontier region in all directions. Although Husain Shāh could not achieve resounding victories in the 'Assam, Tippera and Arākān fronts', yet he annexed 'Kāmrūp and Kānta and Orissā and Jājnagar'² with his kingdom, a fact corroborated by his coins with

¹ Op.cit., P. 9; See also S. H. Askari, 'A Review of Bihar During the Turko-Afghan Period', Current Studies, Patna, 1954, P. 19; S. Mukhapadhyay, Bānglār Itihāser Dusha Baser, Calcutta, 1962, Pp.97-99.

² M. R. Tarafdar, Op. cit., Pp. 40 - 63; HB., II, Pp. 146 - 48.

the above mint names and dates ranging from 1493 to 1518¹. Another remarkable success he achieved in the west by pushing his frontier as far as Sāran in Jaunpūr, the territory which Sikandar Lodī had integrated to the empire of Delhi by defeating the last Sharqī ruler Husain Shāh in 1494². His extensive dominion was thus bounded by Sāran and Bihar on the north-west, Sylhet and Chittagong on the south-east, and Hajo on the east, Mandāran and 24-Parganās on the south-west³. Such a vast kingdom, with an well established and sound administration, Nasrat Shāh (1519-32) inherited, and maintained energetically its territorial integrity in every front, with a further advance in the west by holding his control beyond Sāran as far as Azamgarh. Nasrat Shāh's mosque inscription⁴, dated 933/1527, at Sikandarpur in Azamgarh district bears the proof of this fact. But soon a dangerous political crisis arose with the rise of the Mughals in Delhi, the Lohānī kingdom in South Bihar with

¹ S. Lane-Poole, The Coins of the Muhammadan States of India in the British Museum, London, 1885, P. 47, Pl. 6, No.122; H. N. Wright, Op. cit., P. 173, Pl. V, No.173; A. W. Botham, Catalogue of the Provincial Coin Cabinet of Assam, (2nd ed.), Allahabad, 1930, Pp.169-71; M. K. Bhattashali, Catalogue of Coins (collected by H. H. Rahman Khan), Dacca, 1936, P. 24, Pl. II, No.120.

² M. R. Tarafdar, Op.cit., P. 38.

³ HB., II, Pp. 150 - 51.

⁴ JASB., XLII, 1873, Pp. 296 - 97; S. Ahmed, Op.cit., Pp. 221 - 22; M. R. Tarafdar, Op. cit., P. 9; HB., II, P. 153, f.n. 1.

Sher Khan its de facto ruler and the reunification of the Afghans (Lodis) under Mahmūd Lodi to regain their lost kingdom. This was undoubtedly a sign of political threat for Bengal¹. Although his political farsightness and diplomatic ability saved Bengal proper from any territorial loss, yet Nasrat Shah had to cede his trans-Ganges-Gandak possessions to be occupied by Babar². The process of disintegration of the Husain Shahi regime thus began with Nasrat Shah and culminated in the reign of the last ruler of the line Ghyas Uddin Mahmūd Shah (1533 - 38), when in 1538 Sher Khan finally occupied Bengal and thereby marked the end of the long two century-old independent Sultanate of Bengal³.

Sher Shah could not enjoy the throne of Bengal peacefully for long. Thinking the presence of such a spirited man in Bengal a political menace to the Empire of Delhi, Humayun hurried to Bengal, drove Sher Shah away and captured Gaur without any opposition. Humayun then appointed Quli Beg the governor of Bengal, renamed Gaur Jannatabad⁴ and himself indulged in pleasure and luxury there. Meanwhile, a serious political

¹ M. R. Tarafdar, Op.cit., Pp. 69-77; HB., II, Pp. 153-57.

² M. R. Tarafdar, Op.cit., P. 77.

³ Ibid., P. 88.

⁴ Muntakhab ut-Tawarikh (Eng. Tr.), I, P. 458; Akbarnama (Tr. by H. Beveridge), I, P. 341; Firishta (Tr. by J. Briggs), II, P. 53; Tabaqat-i-Akbari in Elliot and Dowson, V, P. 211; Reaz us-Salatīn (Beng. Tr.), P. 431; JASB., XVIII, 1952, P. 23; A. Rahim and others, Op. cit., P. 223.

crisis arose in Delhi under Mīrzā Hindol. Sher Shāh availed the chance, confirmed his power in Bihār and at Chausā in 1539 attacked and defeated Humāyūn on his way to Delhi. He then re-occupied Gaur by killing its Mughal governor Qulī Beg. Having thus established his sway over Bihār and Bengal, Sher Shāh proceeded towards North India. To avenge the defeat of Chausā, Humāyūn also marched against Sher Shāh and ultimately in 1540 a battle took place at Bilgram (Kanauz), which ended with the defeat of the former. The battle of Bilgram thus transferred once again the sceptre of India to the hands of the Afghāns under Sher Shāh¹, and with him Bengal again formed a part of the Delhi Sultānate. But in 1553 the death of Islam Shāh, son and successor of Sher Shāh, signalled the outbreak of a civil war which ultimately resulted in the re-capture of the throne of Delhi by the Mughals in 1556 and the foundation of the independent Karrānī regime in Bengal in 1564².

During the rule of the Afghān viceroys, Chittagong was snatched away from the Portuguese and integrated to the province of Bengal³. Consequently Sylhet and the region of Bhāṭī⁴, which was being appropriated

¹ Tārīkh-i-Sher Shāhī (Tr. by S. M. Imamuddin), II, Pp. 99-100.

² HB., II, P. 180; A. Rahim and others, Op.cit., P. 226.

³ J. J. A. Campos, History of the Portuguese in Bengal, Calcutta, 1919, Pp. 42-44; HB., II, P. 174.

⁴ The region of Bhāṭī includes eastern Mymensingh, Dacca, western Sylhet and Tippera (Comilla) districts. See A. Rahim, Op.cit., II, P. 197; O. Malley, Bengal District Gazetteers (Jessore), Calcutta, 1912, P. 28.

by the father of Zamīndār 'Isā Khān, were conquered by order of Islām Shāh. In 1547-49 Kāmūrūp was invaded and the territory as far as Kamakshya and Hajo was re-annexed with Bengal. But in 1563 the Kuch king of Kāmta recovered the lost territories of Kāmūrūp and even invaded Gaur. Meanwhile, the Karrānī family established independent rule in Bengal. Of the Karrānī rulers Sulaimān (1565-72) was the most renowned. He first directed his arms against Kuch-Bihar whose rulers were the constant source of troubles to the kingdom of Bengal. A greater part of Kuch-Bihar, however, was captured and its prince Shukhladhawazā imprisoned¹. Soon Shukhladhawazā was set free and a friendly relation established with the Kuch king². But Sulaimān achieved an uncommon fame in the south by conquering permanently for the first time the entire territory of Orissā and thereby marked the extinction of its long line of Hindu kings³. The victory of Orissā made Sulaimān the undisputed master of Bengal, Bihar and Orissā. But yet the farsighted Sulaimān did never assume any lofty title like 'Sultān' or 'King', rather minted coins and read khutba in the name of Emperor Akbar⁴. He thus diplomatically maintained the territorial integrity of his kingdom atleast in her western front. But his unworthy son and successor Dāūd (1572-75), puffed

¹ Beaz-us-Salātīn (Beng. Tr.), Pp. 118-19; E. A. Gait, History of Assam, Calcutta, 1926, Pp. 53 - 55; HB., II, Pp. 184 - 85; A. Rahim and others, Op.cit., Pp. 226 - 27.

² A. Rahim and others, Op.cit., P. 227.

³ Ibid., P. 226; HB., II, P. 183.

⁴ A. Rahim and others, Op.cit., P. 227.

up with vanity for his vast treasures and army, cast off allegiance to Akbar having read his own name from the pulpit and stamped on the coins, and ultimately brought his own destruction. Moreover, by oppressing and insulting the nobles and foolishly removing every kinsman who might prove a rival to the throne, Dāūd raised a host of enemies at home. All these factors, and the ambition for the mastery of the whole of Hindūstān encouraged Akbar to spread his mighty hands towards Bengal, which was once a part of his father's kingdom. Accordingly, Munīm Khān, governor of Jaunpūr, proceeded eastwards and in 1575 decisively defeated Dāūd Khān Karrānī at Tukarōī and thereby laid the foundation of the Mughal rule in Bengal¹. Dāūd fled to Cuttack and finding no other way of success made a complete submission to the Mughal General Khān-i-Khānān². Secure in his possession in Orissā, Dāūd however soon rose in arms, and in alliance with his vanquished Afghan kinsmen and the mighty Bhūyās or Zamīndārs again challenged actively the Mughal authority. In the battle of Rājmahal in 1576 Dāūd was finally defeated and executed³, and a great obstacle to the consolidation of the Mughal power in Bengal was thus removed. From now onwards Bengal continued to be ruled by the Mughal viceroys till 1717.

The death of Dāūd Khān Karrānī did not in anyway improve the imperial position in Bengal. The Bengal Zamīndārs called the Bāra

¹ T. K. Roychowdhury, Bengal under Akbar and Jahangir, Calcutta, 1953, P. 1.

² Akbarnāma (Tr. by E. Beveridge), III, Pp. 183 - 86; HB., II, P. 192;

³ A. Rahim and others, Op.cit., P. 230.

³ Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī in Elliot and Dowson, V, P. 400.

Bhūyās enjoyed the fullest freedom in their respective territories and defied the Mughals. The Mughal authority thus remained confined in the North and West Bengal. Notable, however, of these Zamīndars were 'Isa Khān and his son Mūsā Khān of the Bhāṭī region, 'Uthmān Khān Lohānī and Bāyazīd Karrānī, who established their Zamīndāries in Sylhet after being driven from Orissā by Mānsīngh in 1592, Majlis Protāp and Majlis Qutb of Bhawal, Anowār Khān of Bāniāchang (Habiganj sub-division of Sylhet district), Mukundrām and his son Satrajit of Bhushnā (Faridpur district), Chānd Rāy and Kedār Rāy of Srīpur, Rājā Kandarpa Nārāyan and Rāmachandra of Chandrawip or Bākla (Barisal district), Lakhsman Mānikya of Bhulua (Noakhali district), Rājā Rāy of Shāhjādpur (Pabna district), Protāpāditya of Jessore, Birhāmīr of Birbhum and Bānkurā, Shams Khān of Pachet and Salīm Khān of Hizli¹. To subdue these local zamīndars more than half a dozen of viceroy-generals were appointed by Akbar. But they all, inspite of their vast military resources, failed in their projects.

It was, however, with the appointment of Rājā Mānsīngh as viceroy in 1594 that the consolidation of Mughal power in Bengal and the pacification of the province practically commenced. In 1595 the Rājā laid the foundation of a new capital at Rājmahal. From this new capital Mānsīngh launched a large scale campaigns, turned the frontier kingdom of Kuch into a vassal state, and by 1603-04 effectively crushed the turbulent chiefs of the Bhāṭī for the time being. This incomplete work of Mānsīngh received virtually the finishing touch at the hands of

¹ For details, HB., II, Pp. 225 - 26, 234 ff.; A. Rahim and others, Op.cit., Pp. 235 ff.; A. Rahim, Op.cit., II, Pp. 185 - 208.

Sūbahdar Islām Khān (1608 - 13). In 1608, the Zamīndars of Birbhum, Pachet and Hizli were forced to accept vassalage, but allowed to retain their Jāgīrs. The viceroy next turned to East Bengal and the Zamīndars submitted one after another. Satrajit of Bhushnā submitted in 1609, entered imperial service and was confirmed in his lands. In 1610 Mūsā Khān, son of 'Isā Khān, the chief of the Bengal Zamīndars, and his associates also laid down their arms. They were nominally confirmed in their Jāgīrs, but forced to attend the viceregal court personally and put under surveillance. Mention may be made that with the subjugation of Mūsā Khān, the capital was transferred from Rājmahal to Dacca, and named Jahāngīr Nagar¹ after the reigning Mughal Emperor Jahāngīr. Since then Dacca remained the seat of Government of Muslim Bengal until Murshid Qulī Khān transferred it to Makhsūsābād, which he named Murshidābād after him². By 1612, however, Jessore and Baklā were brought under the direct control of the viceroy. In the same year 'Uthmān Khān was killed in an engagement and with the submission of Bāyazīd, the last resistance of the Afghāns in Sylhet came to an end. Thus a vast tract within the geographical limits of Bengal, ranging from Sylhet to Noākhālī in the east, was now under the firm sway of the Mughals. From now onwards complete peace and order prevailed throughout the country, though at times some minor troubles broke out in the inland and the frontier regions,

¹ Reāz-us-Salātīn (Beng. Tr.), Pp. 138 - 39, 455 - 56; T. K. Roychowdhury, Op.cit., P. 3; A. Rahim and others, Op.cit., P. 239.

² Reāz-us-Salātīn (Beng. Tr.), P. 520; A. Karim, Murshid Quli Khan and His Times, Dacca, 1963, Pp. 22 - 23; A. Rahim and others, Op.cit., P. 272.

caused by the local chiefs, the Firingī (Portuguese) and the Magh pirates, the East Indian Company, the Dutch and the vassal chiefs of frontier kingdoms.

The extreme eastern and south-eastern portions of Bengal still remained beyond the pale of the Mughal authority. By a sweeping campaign Subahdār Ibrāhīm Khān Fath-e-Jang (1617 - 25) occupied the state of Tippera in 1618 and thus a continuous frontier in the east was established. But the important Mughal conquest in Bengal took place with the coming of Subahdār Shāyestā Khān (1663 - 78, 1678 - 88). The new viceroy first occupied Sandwip in 1665. But his memorable achievement was the conquest of Chittagong from the Arakanese (Maghs), who had long terrorised the water ways in Bengal. Henceforth Chittagong became the seat of a Mughal Fauzdār, and its name was changed to Islāmābād by order of the Emperor Aurangzeb¹.

The successors of Shāyestā Khān ruled Bengal peacefully to a great extent as the nominees of the Delhi authority. But in the declining days of the Mughal Empire Subahdār Murshid Qulī Khān, though showed an outward allegiance to the Emperor, practically established the independent 'Nizāmat' in 1717, which ultimately came to an end after the battle of Plassey in 1757, and thus the sovereignty of Bengal passed to the hands of the British.

¹HE., II, P. 381; A. Rahim and others, Op.cit., P. 261.

CHAPTER - II

KHĀN JAHĀN AND THE GEOGRAPHICAL EXTENT OF KHALIFATĀBĀD

It has been stated in chapter I that during the reign of Nāsir Ḥddīn Mahmūd Shāh I Jessore-Khulnā region was first brought under the Muslim control by one Khān Jahān. But as the contemporary historians recorded nothing of this mysterious figure in their accounts it has become very difficult to find out exactly who and what he was. The only historical information about him is derived from the inscriptions engraved upon his tomb at Bāgerhāt¹. Before going to make an attempt in reconstructing a history of Khān Jahān on the light of these epigraphical records, some mention may be made on the numerous legendary tales which all connect him with Delhi. One such popular tradition is that one Khān Jahān, a chief of great piety and liberality, being ousted or commissioned by the court of Delhi, appeared in the border land close on the jungles of the Sundarbans sometime in the first quarter of the 15th century². The main object of his mission seems to have been to reclaim and populate this forest land of South Bengal and propagate the tenets of Islām³. O'Malley⁴ points out that the legends about him as handed down from father to son are, however, 'not without historical value'. 'In these legends', T. Bloch⁵

¹ Appendix B.

² B. G. Bysack, 'The Antiquities of Bagerhat', JASB., 36, Pt. I, 1867, P. 127.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Bengal District Gazetteers (Jessore), Calcutta, 1912, P. 24.

⁵ 'Ruins of Bagerhat Near Khulna', ASIAR, 1903 - 04, Pp. 52 - 53.

writes, 'Khan Jahan appears as a holy man and a staunch warrior, who was sent out by the Emperor of Delhi to conquer the distant country, who worked great miracles and achieved wonderful deeds'. But all these, however, need a careful and logical examination and interpretation. During the Turko-Afghan period we know of several high officials with the title of Khan Jahan in the court of Delhi, while there were others in different provinces. One such Khan Jahan (original name being Malik Qabul) was a Prime Minister of Firoz Shah Tughlaq¹, whose mausoleum (Khan-i-Jahan Tilangini)² still stands at Delhi to commemorate his name. After the demise of this Wazir in or about 1370, his son Junah Shah held the office of his father with the title of Khan Jahan³. In the closing years of Firoz Shah's rule, his minister became all powerful in the state and made himself the owner of vast wealth and treasure. But soon in 1387 the minister (Khan Jahan) was executed on the charge of treason to usurp the throne of Delhi⁴. Meanwhile Firoz Shah Tughlaq died and this hastened a serious political crisis in the court of Delhi. Taking this advantage and thinking himself insecure at Delhi, A. Jalil⁵ points out, possibly a son of the deceased Prime Minister with the title of Khan Jahan retired to Bengal with vast wealth and property inherited

¹ Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh (Eng. Tr.), I, Pp. 324 - 47; Firishta (Eng. Tr. by Briggs), I, P. 264; S.W. Haig (ed.), The Cambridge History of India, III, Cambridge, 1928, P. 182.

² P. Brown, Indian Architecture (Islamic Period), Bombay, 1942, P. 25.

³ Firishta (Eng. Tr. by Briggs), I, P. 264; Tabaqat-i-Akbari (Beng. Tr.), I, P. 275.

⁴ Firishta (Eng. Tr. by Briggs), I, P. 266; S.W. Haig (ed.), Op.cit., Pp. 182-84.

⁵ Sundar Baner Itihasa, Dacca, 1967, Pp. 265 - 76.

from his father, and with the consent of the then reigning Gaur Sultān Nāṣir Uddīn Maḥmūd Shāh I began to govern the Sundarban districts. It has been further suggested that as Khān Jahān betrays in his buildings an affectation for the Tughlaq architecture, he might have come from Delhi¹. Likewise Abdul Qadir², Sayed Mortuza Ali³ and others hold that Khān Jahān was originally an officer from the Delhi Emperor. But it is to be noted that since the time of Ilyās Shāh the relation between Bengal and Delhi was inimical, for the Tughlaqs led several expeditions against Bengal⁴. After the Tughlaqs the power of Delhi passed to the hands of the Sayyids and the Lodīs, who could not devote their attention to the affairs of Bengal as were engaged in wars with the Sharqīs of Jaunpūr⁵. While thus Bengal enjoyed the fullest independence, the reigning Sultān must not have allowed a portion of his territory (i. e. Jessore-Khulnā region) within the jurisdiction of Bengal to be governed independently by a foreign element (i. e. Delhi nominee). As regards the opinion of A. Jalil it may be said that it is purely a surmise and that no documents ever refer to the existence of any son of the deceased Prime Minister of Fīroz Shāh Tughlaq, and as such, therefore, there arose no question of his assuming the title of Khān Jahān and leaving Delhi for Bengal.

¹ A. H. Dani, Muslim Architecture in Bengal, Dacca, 1961, p. 142.

² Pakistan Observer, 1957 (quoted by A. Jalil, Op. cit., pp. 276 - 77).

³ Morning News, 14th Nov., 1963; Pakistan Times (Lahore), 25th December, 1962.

⁴ Firishta (Eng. Tr. by Briggs), I, pp. 259 ff.; Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī (Beng. Tr.), 51, pp. 269 ff.

⁵ S. W. Haig (ed.), Op. cit., pp. 214 - 15, 228 - 50.

Similarly the Tughlaq style of architecture in Khān Jahān's buildings can not absolutely trace his origin back to Delhī, for these features might have been imported through some other channels, possibly by the migration of craftsmen who settled in Bengal¹.

Of the modern historians, who wrote about Khān Jahān, S. C. Mitra suggested a new possibility. He tried to identify Khwāja Jahān², the founder of the Sharqī dynasty of Jaunpūr, with our Khān Jahān of Bāgerhāt³. He said that while Jalāl Uddīn Muhammad (Jadu) was engaged in war with Ibrāhīm Sharqī, Khwāja Jahān, taking advantage of the chaotic condition of Jalāl Uddīn's dominion, left Jaunpūr for Bengal and established an independent kingdom in the Sundarban area⁴. Sk. A. Aziz⁵ also holds the same opinion. But the historians are unanimous in saying that this Khwāja

¹ Chapter III, P. 83.

² A eunuch whose original name was Malik Sarwār. After 1389 he was made Prime Minister of Muhammad Tughlaq with the title of Khwāja Jahān. In 1394, while Nāṣir Uddīn Mahmūd Shāh II was on the throne of Delhī, Khwāja Jahān retired to Jaunpūr with the title of 'Malik-us-Sharq' (King of the East) and with him was established the independent Sharqī kingdom of Jaunpūr. See H. N. Wright, Catalogue of the Coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, II, Oxford, 1907, P. 206; C. Stewart, History of Bengal, London, 1813, P. 62; Reāz-us-Salāṭīn (Eng. Tr.), P. 114; S. W. Haig (ed.), Op.cit., Pp. 190 - 93.

³ S. C. Mitra, Jessore-Khulnā Itihāsa, Calcutta, 1963, P. 316.

⁴ Ibid., P. 315.

⁵ Pir Khān Jahān Allī, Khulnā, 1966, Pp. 9, 35 ff.

Jahān died in 1399¹. If this comes out to be true, it would be unwise to make him identical with that of Bāgerhāt, who died in 1459. Another Khwāja Jahān, known from an inscription, flourished during the reign of Nāsir Uddīn Mahmūd Shāh I. The inscription reads : 'Allāh the Great has said, 'Verily Mosques belong to Allāh; so do not call Allāh with anyone'. This gate was strengthened and built in the days of the authority of the Khalīfa, the succoured Nāsir-ud-Dunyā wad-Dīn Abūl Muẓaffar Mahmūd Shāh, the Sultān, may Allāh the Glorious, perpetuate his kingdom, by one addressed with the title of Khwāja Jahān, may Allāh the Merciful, protect him from all vicissitudes, in the frontier region of Mubārakābād on the 20th Shābān, in the year 863 A. H. (i. e. 25th June, 1459 A. D.); may the blessings of Allāh be on him and all of his family². The inscription reveals that this Khwāja Jahān was, no doubt, a governor of Nāsir Uddīn Mahmūd Shāh I in the province of Mubārakābād, identified with Pargana Mubārak Ujāl of the Sarkār Bazuhā of Todar Mall's rent roll³ (now a large tract in the Dacca district, lying in between the Padma on the south and the Dhaleswari on the north)⁴.

¹ Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī (Beng. Tr.), I, P. 305; Muntakhab-ut-Tawārīkh (Eng.Tr.), I, P.359; R. C. Majumdar and others, An Advanced History of India, Newyork, 1967, Pp. 341 - 42; S. W. Haig (Ed.), Op.cit., P. 251.

² JASB., 1872, P. 107; JPASB., VI, 1910, Pp. 145 - 48; S. Ahmed, Inscriptions of Bengal, IV, Rajshahi, 1960, Pp. 62 - 64.

³ Ain (Jarret and Sarkar), II, P. 138.

⁴ S. Ahmed, Op.cit., P. 63.

Blochmann¹ and O. Malley² identified this Khwāja Jahān with Ulugh Khān Jahān of Bāgerhāt. The suggestion is, however, untenable on the grounds that (a) there is a remarkable difference in the nomenclature of the two persons viz, one is called Khwāja Jahān, while the other Khān Jahān, (b) the presence of Khwāja Jahān at Dacca on 20th Shabān, 863 A. H. (25th June, 1459 A. D.), as an important officer in the court of Mahmūd Shāh is vouched for by this epigraph and as such it is unlikely for him to have travelled from Dacca to southern Jessore to reclaim and populate the vast Sundarban area within a span of only four months and expire on 26th Zil Hijjah, 863 A. H. (22nd October, 1459) as noted in the inscription fixed in the shrine at Bāgerhāt³.

It thus seems that Khān Jahān had neither come from Delhī or Jaunpūr, nor that he is identical with Khwāja Jahān of Dacca. His origin, therefore, has to be sought elsewhere. One thing may be mentioned here that although the inscriptions mention him as 'Khān Jahān', yet he is widely known as Khānjā 'Alī⁴ or Khān Jāhān 'Alī⁵. It is, however, not unlikely that the word عليه (referring some blessings on him), which is

¹ JASB., 1872, Pp. 107 - 08.

² Op.cit., P. 24.

³ Appendix B.

⁴ B. G. Bysack, Op.cit., P. 127; J. Westland, A Report on the District of Jessore (Revised edition), Calcutta, 1874, P. 11.

⁵ O. Malley, Op.cit., Pp. 23 - 24.

added after الخ خان جهان in the inscription¹, has been corrupted into 'Alī'. It is interesting to note that in the epigraphs, with which we are concerned, the name of the reigning king is omitted and this may lead one to suppose that Khān Jahan was possibly an independent chief and did not owe allegiance to Sultān Mahmūd Shāh I. If thus he is taken to be an independent ruler, he would have at least issued coins in his own name or assumed some sort of lofty sovereign titles as were usual in such cases but we find here nothing such. But in practice, we have examples of such type of inscriptions where the name of the reigning king has been omitted. One of such inscription reads: 'There is no God but Allāh, Muhammad is His messenger. The mosque was built by the exalted and the great Majlis, may his glory last for ever, in the year 871 A. H. (1466 A.D.)'². This is the inscription from the Sālik Masjid at Basīrhāt in 24-Parganās. Although the date, referred to in the epigraph, precisely indicates that the Masjid was erected in the regnal period of Bārbak Shāh (1459 - 1474), yet his name is not cited in it. It is thus not unlikely that Khān Jahan was a subordinate officer who flourished during the reign of Nāṣir Uddīn Mahmūd Shāh I.

Furthermore, the titles 'Ulugh' and 'Khān al-Kāzām' of Khān Jahan³, as pointed out by A. H. Dani⁴, suggest that he was not an

¹ For text of the inscriptions, see S. Ahmed, Op.cit., P. 66.

² JPASE., VI, 1910, P. 29; JBORS., IV, 1918, pp. 179 - 80; S. Ahmed, Op.cit., Pp. 88- 89.

³ See Appendix B.

⁴ Op. cit., P. 141.

independent free lancer but that he owed fealty most probably to Gaur Sultān. The title 'Ulugh' is a Turkish word, which signifies 'Great' or Principal and is conferred only upon the high officials. A thorough study of the Bengal inscriptions reveals that the Sultāns had appointed governors, bestowing on them the title just mentioned, in different administrative units of the Empire. During the regnal period of Mahmūd Shāh I at least five mosque inscriptions, save those of Bāgerhāt, record the builders' names with the title of 'Ulugh'. They are Ulugh Ahmad Khān¹, Ulugh Rahīm Khān², Ulugh Sarfarāz Khān³, Ulugh Azmal Khān⁴ and Ulugh Khān ... (?)⁵, and are all, no doubt, the nominees of Sultān Mahmūd Shāh I, for either his (Sultān) name or epithets are referred to in the epigraphs. From these evidences it may thus be assumed that Khān Jahan was also a high official of Mahmūd Shāh who as usual conferred on him the title of 'Ulugh'.

As a General Khān Jahan thus proceeded southwards to conquer the Jessore-Khulnā region which was then supposed to have been under

¹ S. Ahmed, Op.cit., Pp. 53 - 54.

² The inscription, which records the erection of a mosque by Ulugh Rahīm Khān in 858 A.H./1454 A.D., has very recently been discovered from the village Navagrām, P.S. Tārās in Pābnā district and is now being displayed in the Varendra Research Museum Gallery, Rājshāhī. See A. K. M. Yaqub Ali, 'Navagrām Inscription', BIPP, Baisākh-Ashār, 1384 B. S.

³ S. Ahmed, Op.cit., Pp. 49 - 51.

⁴ Ibid., Pp. 68 - 69.

⁵ Ibid., Pp. 54 - 55.

control of the successors of Danuz Mardhana Deva and Mahendra Deva, identified with the kings of South Bengal (Chandradīp)¹. It is difficult to say whether Khān Jahān, in his project, had to face any stubborn resistance offered by the enemies. Anyway, he is said to have marched with 60,000 followers² and landed first at Bārabāzār, ten miles north of present Jessore town. From there he came to Murālī (present Jessore town). Herefrom a detachment is known to have been directed southwards along the Kobādāk under Burā Khān and Fath Khān, who were able to establish the Muslim sway over the land at least upto the village of Amādi in the present Khulnā Sadar Sub-division. The Masjidkūr Masjid on the Kobādāk, which is attributed to Khān Jahān, and the two tombs in Amādi, which were said have been of Burā Khān and Fath Khān, testify to this account³. On the other hand, Khān Jahān himself marched south and south-eastwards along the Bhairab, making roads, mosques, tanks, etc. and finally settled at Bāgerhāt, which contains the remains attributed to him in greatest abundance⁴. After the acquisition of these territories, he possibly devoted himself to the preaching of Islām among the people and thus locally was revered as a Great Saint⁵. The qualitative marks

¹ For details, see JASB, 1952, Pp. 121 ff.

² W. W. Hunter, A Statistical Account of Bengal, II (Indian Reprint), 1973, Pp. 227 - 28; O. Malley, Op.cit., P. 23; R. K. Chakravarti, Gaurer Itihāsa, II, Māldah, 1909, P. 84.

³ See Chapter IV, Pp. 163-64 & 250-51.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ B. G. Bysack, Op.cit., P. 118; O. Malley, Op.cit., P. 24; A. Rahim, Social and Cultural History of Bengal, I, Karachi, 1963, Pp. 133-34.

ascribed to him in the inscriptions, viz, a helpless slave of God, the lover of the descendants of Muhammad (sm), sincere to the pious and the learned, helper of Islām and Muslims, enemy of the non-believers and the infidels corroborate the view. In this connection, however, a reverse opinion is made by A. Karim¹.

Apart from these, some further informations in this connection may be obtained from other sources. In the rent roll of Akbar Khalīfatābād appears as a Sarkar, which is identified with south-west Jessore and west Bākerganj². Hence as the territory under study was first conquered by Khān Jahān, he might have given it the name of Khalīfatābād (viceregent's clearance) in honour of the reigning king Nāsir Uddīn Mahmūd Shāh I, who for the first time among the Bengal Sultāns declared himself the 'Khalīfa of God by proof and testimony'³. It is also suggested that he governed this newly conquered region with the seat of his government at Havelī Khalīfatābād (clearance for the residence of the viceroy), identified by Blochmann⁴ with modern Bāgerhāt, where his mosque and tomb

¹ Khān Jahān was primarily a real soldier and conqueror, and treated as Saint probably after his death like that of Zafar Khān Ghāzī of Tribeni in Sātgaon. See A. Karim, Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, Dacca, 1959, Pp. 125 - 26.

² Ain (Jarret and Sarkar), II, P. 127.

³ JASB, 1870, Pp. 292 - 93; 1873, Pp. 270 - 72; SPP, XV, 1315 B.S., Pp. 26 - 27; S. Ahmed, Op.cit., Pp. 56 - 57; A. Karim, Corpus of the MuslimaCoins of Bengal, Dacca, 1960, Pp. 170 - 76.

⁴ JASB, Pt. I, 1873, P. 227.

still stand. In the Dutch and Portuguese maps, viz, the maps of De Barros (d. 1570), Blaeu (1650) and Vanden Brouke (1660) 'Cuipitavaz' appeared as one of the five Sundarban towns¹. Cuipitavaz exactly shows its location where now Bāgerhāt stands. Blochmann² thus remarks, 'I have no hesitation to identify Cuipitavaz³ with Khalīfatābād'. And as such Bāgerhāt is no doubt identical with Khalīfatābād. Khān Jahān's city of Havelī-Khalīfatābād seems to have been extended two or three miles all round the famous Shāṭgumbad Mosque, the greatest architectural achievement of Khān Jahān, as evidenced by the numerous ruins of the place attributed to him⁴.

It is to be noted that the term Khalīfatābād generally indicates only Bāgerhāt, the seat of Khān Jahān's government and residence, but in a wider sense it includes the entire territory he ruled. As originally founded the province of Khalīfatābād is likely to have been bounded up by the river Chitrā on the north, for Bārābāzār, Bāshurī, Suvarārā and Dhūlgrām in modern Jessore Sadar Sub-division, which were said to have

¹ JASB, Pt. I, 1873, P. 227.

² Ibid.

³ Blochmann is of opinion that the term Khalīfatābād has very likely been transformed into Cuipitavaz such as Khalīfat = Cuipit and ābād = avaz. Ibid.

⁴ S. C. Mitra, Op.cit., P.351. The remains of Havelī-Khalīfatābād attributed to Khān Jahān will be discussed in chapter IV.

been under firm control of Khān Jahān¹, are located to the south of this river. Moreover the mint-towns of Mahmūdābād and Fathābād, as supplemented by the account in the Ain², appear to have been located to the north of the river Chitrā and thereby mark the northern regions of Khalīfatābād. Similarly its western limit did not in anyway cross the Kobādāk, because Khān Jahān's contemporary Ulugh Azmal Khān, as known from an inscription³, is said to have been ruling in 1455 the province of Sājla-Mankābād, identified by R. D. Banerjee⁴ with the territory comprised of West Nadiā, South-West Murshidābād and the whole of 24-Parganās as far as the western bank of the Kobādāk. In the east a very small portion of North-West Bākerganj seems to have been included within this province, for the Qasbā Mosque in Gaurnadī thānā is ascribed to Khān Jahān⁵. It may thus be surmised that at the time of Khān Jahān Khalīfatābād was surrounded by the Kobādāk on the west, the Chitrā and the Ghāgrā on the north and north-east, the Swarupkaṭī-Hundā and the Baleswar on the east and Sundarban on the south. ✓

Khān Jahān seems to have been a benevolent governor and a good administrator. For the betterment of the general mass he undertook a

¹ S. C. Mitra, Op.cit., Pp. 319 - 20, 343 - 45; A. Jalil, Op.cit., Pp. 277-80, 297 - 99.

² (Jarret and Sarkar), II, Pp. 144 - 46.

³ JASB, 1870, P. 290; SPP, XV, 1315 B.S., P. 27; S. Ahmed, Op.cit., Pp. 68-70.

⁴ SPP, XV, 1315 B.S., Pp. 38 - 39.

⁵ See chapter IV, Pp. 169-70.

series of public works, in which he was supposed to have been aided by his leading followers, i.e. Gharīb Shāh, Bahrām Shāh, Burā Khān, Fath Khān, Bakhtiyār Khān, Ālam Khān, Sādat Khān, Dariyā Khān, Sher Khān, Didār Khān, Muhammad Tahir (Pir 'Alī) and others¹. He dug canals and tanks and constructed roads throughout the entire region he was likely to rule. At Bārābāzār, where he landed first, all the tanks are ascribed to him, and there are numerous roads in the country still called after his name². Several other tanks such as those of Bidyā-nandakāṭī and Bāshurī in Jessore Sadar Sub-division, and a number at Bāgerhāt like the Ghorādighi, the Bakhtiyār Khān's dighi, the Khānjeli dighi or the well known Thākur dighi, etc. may also be cited as examples. People point to a road along the Bhairab, which is identified with the road he made for his march from Jessore towards Bāgerhāt³. Tradition ascribes to him another road, made along the Kābādāk under the able supervision of his generals Burā Khān and Fath Khān⁴. The road is likely to have begun from the modern Jessore town and ended at Amādi under Khulnā Sadar Sub-division⁵. Khān Jahān is also credited to have patronised the construction of numerous buildings - both religious and secular, in the country. The tombs of Gharīb Shāh and Bahrām Shāh in

¹ J. Westland, Op.cit., P. 15; W. S. Hunter, Op.cit., II, P.228; S. C. Mitra, Op.cit., Pp. 320 - 21; A. Jalil, Op.cit., P. 137.

² W. S. Hunter, Op.cit., II, P.228.

³ O. Malley, Op.cit., P. 24.

⁴ S. C. Mitra, Op.cit., Pp. 320 - 21; A. Jalil, Op.cit., Pp.280 ff.

⁵ Ibid.

Jessore town¹, a mosque at Gopālpūr², a tomb at Meherpūr³, a mosque and a residence-cum-darbar hall at Paigrām Qasbā⁴, the Masjidkūr mosque and other ruins at Amādi already cited bear evidence to this. But what makes Khān Jahan so renowned and famous is that he embellished his capital city with numerous buildings, which will elaborately be discussed in chapter IV.

Khān Jahan died in 1459, the year which also records the end of his master's rule (Mahmūd Shāh I) in Bengal. Sultān Bārbak Shāh thus succeeded his father to the throne in 1459 and ruled Bengal till 1474. Much is not known of the territory under study during the rule of this new Sultān. But it is conspicuous that he conquered a considerable part of south-west Bākerganj and annexed it with Khalīfatabād. His mosque of Mirzaganj (1465) on the western side of the river Burishwar supports this contention⁵. It may thus be logically conjectured that the river Burishwar, which in the upper part takes the name of Barisal river, and the Arial Khān formed the eastern boundary of Khalīfatabād during the reign of Bārbak Shāh.

The Husain Shāhī rulers, who had usurped the power from the Habshī kings, held sway over the whole of Bengal. For our purpose here some mention may be made on the administrative set up of the Husain

¹ See chapter IV, Pp. 233-35.

² Appendix A.

³ Ibid.

⁴ See chapter IV, P. 249.

⁵ Ibid., Pp. 214-16.

Shāhī Bengal. It is known from the Āin that the Mughal Bengal had 19 political divisions, each called a Sarkār.¹ These divisions were perhaps modelled on the mint towns of the pre-Mughal Bengal, which each indicated a separate but definite administrative unit. Several of such mint towns which appeared in the Husain Shāhī regime, were Sātgaon, Fathābād, Mahmūdābād and Khalīfatābād.² It is said that the Bāklā of the Āin, comprised of the eastern Bākerganj,³ was under the sway of the Husain Shāhī rulers and included in the Fathābād division.⁴ Thus we see that the boundary of the Khalīfatābād under the Husain Shāhīs remained the same as was under Bārbak Shāh. The Reāz states that 'Alā' Uddīn, the founder ruler of the dynasty, after arriving as an adventurer in Bengal, settled at a place called Chāndpūr in Rādhā district (West Bengal).⁵ But Blochmann⁶ is inclined to identify the Chāndpūr in question near Alāipūr or 'Alā' Uddīn's town on the Bhairab, east of Khulnā in Khalīfatābād region. It is also said that Husain Shāh's son Naṣrat Shāh erected a mint at Bāgerhāt, a place in the province of Khalīfatābād, and minted coins therefrom in the life time of his father in 922/1516.⁷

¹ Āin (Jarret and Sarkar), II, Pp. 142 - 55; JASB, Pt.II, 1873, Pp.215-18;

² S. Lane-Poole, The Coins of the Muhammadan States of India in the British Museum, London, 1885, Pp. 45, 47 - 48, 50 - 55; H. N. Wright, Op.cit., Pp. 172 - 80; A. W. Botham, Catalogue of the Provincial Coin Cabinet of Assam, Allahabad, 1930, Pp. 166 - 69, 172 - 73.

³ Āin (Jarret and Sarkar), II, P. 127.

⁴ HB., I, P. 18; M. R. Tarafdar, Husain Shahi Bengal, Dacca, 1965, P.61, f.n. 2.

⁵ Reāz us-Salāṭīn (Eng. Tr.), P. 128, f.n.2.

⁶ See chapter IV. P. 255.

⁷ Ibid., P. 255 and Appendix C.

The last Husain Shāhī coin, discovered till now, from this mint is that of Sultān Ghyās Uddīn Mahmūd Shāh, dated 942 (?) which is now preserved in the Calcutta Museum¹. It also appears that the names of Husain Shāh, his brother Yūsuf Shāh, and his sons Nasrat Shāh and Mahmūd Shāh are found in connection with several parganās of the undivided Jessore district (modern Jessore, Faridpūr and Khulnā districts), such as parganās Nasrat Shāhī, Mahmūd Shāhī and Yūsuf Shāhī.² Furthermore, a mosque inscription, containing date 925 A. H./1519 A. D. and the name of Husain Shāh, has very recently been discovered from under-earth in the locality of Bārabāzār³. It is supposed to have been originally set up in the Sādīkpūr Mosque⁴, about a mile and a half from Bārabāzār. Two other mosques in the locality - the Godār Masjid and the Sāt-gāchhiā Masjid, have recently been brought to light and are attributed to this period⁵. It is important to note that in the epigraph Muḥammad, the builder of the Mosque, is recorded as an Wazīr of Husain Shāh. From this it may tentatively be assumed that under Husain Shāh Khalīfatabād was likely to have several small administrative units, one of which, no doubt, was Bārabāzār, being ruled by Muḥammad. In the locality of Bāgerhāt and other places some other public works

¹ Appendix C.

² JASB, 1873, Pp. 228 ff.; Reāz us-Salātīn (Eng.Tr.), P.129; O. Malley, Jessore Gazetteer, Op.cit., P.25; S. C. Mitra, Op.cit., P. 376.

³ Chapter IV, Pp. 198-99.

⁴ Ibid., P. 199.

⁵ Ibid., Pp. 148-51 & 201-04.

are ascribed to the Husain Shāhīs. A ten-domed mosque in the village of Krishnanagar (Bāgerhāt)¹, a single domed mosque at Aroshnagar² and another at Suvarārā on the bank of the Bhairab³ bear testimony to this. From such epigraphic and numismatic evidences, and the remarks of Blochmann it can be surmised that Khalīfatabād was under firm sway of the Husain Shāhī rulers of Bengal.

After the fall of the Husain Shāhīs, Bengal passed to the hands of the Sūr-Afghāns under the leadership of Sher Shāh, who is known to have conquered Mahmūdābād and held sway over Khalīfatabād and Fathābād⁴. Consequently he became the absolute monarch of the whole of Hindūstān, and as he then had to govern this outlying province from Delhi, Bengal became a problem to him as it had been to the Turkish Sultānate of Delhi. Because of the constant rebellion of his governors and troubles in Bengal, Sher Shāh divided this province into a number of smaller areas - Sarkārs and gave those to be governed by several tribal chiefs. This suggests that several Zamīndārs of Bengal, traditionally styled as 'Bāra Bhūyās', had their origin from this time, who rose into prominence in the late Karrānī regime. These Zamīndārs or the Bhūyās had been dependents of

¹ See chapter IV, Pp. 146-48.

² Ibid., Pp. 204-05.

³ Ibid., Pp. 205-07.

⁴ Ann (Jarret and Sarkar), II, P. 135; S. C. Mitra, Op.cit., Pp. 444 - 45.

the kings of Gaur but frequently maintained independence by force of arms¹. After the dissolution of the Karrānī kingdom in the beginning of the last quarter of the 16th century, these zamīndārs set up independent principalities in different corners of Bengal and fought the Mughals at least upto the first decade of the 17th century in defence of their respective homes. For our purpose some mention should be made here on the activities of some of these zamīndārs or Rājās like - Protāpāditya of Jessore and Rām Chandra of Baklā, for without them the history of Khalīfatabād would certainly remain an incomplete one.

The Jessore zamīndārī was founded by one Sridhar, the father of the famous Protāpāditya. About him O. Malley² writes " one Rām Chandra, a kayastha of Eastern Bengal, came with his three sons, Bhabānand, Gunānand and Sivanand, to the capital of Sulaimān Karrānī, king of Bengal (1564 - 72), where he obtained an appointment. Sridhar or Srihari, the son of Bhabānand, and Jonākiballabh, the son of Gunānand, became favourites of Dāūd Khān, who succeeded his father, Sulaimān Karrānī, as king of Bengal. By him Sridhar was given the title of Rājā Vikramāditya, while Jonākiballabh was also raised to the high office under the name of Basant Rāi". Anyway, Sridhar Vikramāditya was, no doubt, an important official in the court of Dāūd Khān Karrānī, and even rose to the post of Wazīr after the murder of the Amīr-ul-Umarā Lūdi

¹J. Wise, 'The Bara Bhuyas of Bengal', JASB, Pt. I, 1874; Pt. I, 1875.

²Jessore Gazetteers, Op.cit., Pp. 25 - 26.

Khān¹. Subsequently when Dāūd Khān rebelled against the Emperor Akbar and the imperial army was marching against Gaur, Dāūd Khān fled from his kingdom entrusting all his wealth to Vikramāditya and Basant Rāi, with order to remove it to some places of safety. On the fall of Dāūd, Srihari Vikramāditya, however, fled with his own wealth and government treasure in his custody, and set himself up there in the extreme south of the present Satkhirā Sub-division in Khulnā district, and made his capital at Iswaripūr, a place sufficiently remote and difficult of access and is about 12 miles from Kāliganj on the Ichhāmātī². This is known as the kingdom of 'Yashohara', of which the colloquial equivalent is Jesar³. The present Jessore district is said to have been named after this kingdom⁴. Sridhar Vikramāditya was succeeded to this newly founded principality of Jessore by his son Protāpāditya, who is well known to all as one of the most powerful zamindārs of Bengal in the late 16th and early 17th century. Protāpāditya is said to have established his capital at 'Dhumghāt', a strongly fortified post that occupied a strategic position at the confluence of the Jamunā and the Ichhāmātī rivers. J. N. Sarkar points out that the Bahāristān, the travel-diary of Abdul Latif and the

¹J. Westland, Op.cit., pp. 23 - 24; W. W. Hunter, Op.cit., II, P. 202; HB, II, P. 225.

²J. Westland, Op.cit., pp. 23 - 24; HB, II, P. 225; O. Malley, 24-Parganas District Gazetteers, Calcutta, 1914, P. 27.

³O. Malley, 24-Parganas Gazetteers, Op.cit., P. 27.

⁴J. Westland, Op.cit., P. 25; W. W. Hunter, Op.cit., II, pp. 202 - 203.

contemporary European writers, particularly the Jesuits, all testify to his personal ability, political pre-eminence, material resources and martial strength, particularly in war boats¹. 'His dominions, either those which he inherited or those which he obtained by enlarging what he inherited, extended over the deltaic lands bordering on the Sundarbans, embracing that part of the 24-Farganās district which lies east of the Ichhāmātī river, and all but the northern and north-eastern part of the Jessore district². J. N. Sarkar³ and W. W. Hunter⁴ admit this view. On the north-east of Protāpāditya's dominion lay the region of Fathābād (Faridpūr) which, at the time of Emperor Jahāngīr, was in possession of Zamīndār Majlis Qutb⁵. About 20 miles south-west of Faridpūr town was the zamīndārī of Bhushnā, appropriated by Rājā Mukundrām and his son Satrajit⁶. Adjacent to the Protāpāditya's kingdom on the east lay the domain of another powerful Zamīndār Rājā Rām Chandra of Baklā, with capital at Kachūā (now in Bauphal Police Station in the present Patuākhālī Sadar Sub-division). His territory was perhaps extended on the west to the rivers Baleswar-Madhumatī⁷. He was the

¹ HE, II, P. 237.

² J. Westland, Op.cit., P. 24.

³ HE, II, P. 237.

⁴ Op.cit., II, P. 202.

⁵ Baharistān (Eng. Tr.), I, P. 59; A. Rahim, Op.cit., II, P. 192.

⁶ A. Rahim, Op.cit., II, P. 192.

⁷ B. C. Patanda, Chandrawāpī Itihāsa, Barisal, 1320 B. S., Pp. 5 - 14.

son-in-law of Protāpāditya and son of Zamīndār Parmānanda Rāi of Akbar's time¹, who trace their origin from Danuzmardhana Deva of Chandrawīp². We thus see that the major part of the pre-Mughal Khalīfatabād (Jessore portion) was appropriated by Protāpāditya, while the rest (Bākerganj portion) was under Rām Chandra. The view is, however, supported by Beveridge³ who, relying on the account of the Jesuit Priests - Fernandez and Josa who visited Bengal in the 1590's, holds that Jessore and Bāklā were at this time being ruled independently by Protāpāditya and Rām Chandra.

Although Akbar conquered Bengal in the early seventies of the 16th century, yet that was more like an armed occupation than a settled administration. Under him the Mughal rule was confined in the North Bengal, while a vast tract of Eastern and Southern Bengal was beyond his reach, and held by the powerful Afghān and Hindu Zamīndārs - the Bāra Bhūyās. This failure was probably due to his governors, who did or could not make any serious attempt to subjugate these zamīndārs and bring them under the direct control of the government, rather contended themselves with securing their (zamīndārs) nominal submission. Hence the territory (Khalīfatabād, i.e. Jessore-Khulnā-Bākerganj) under study, as located in the South Bengal, experienced no exception to this

¹ Ain (Jarret and Sarkar), II, P. 136.

² HB, II, P. 359; S. C. Mitra, Op.cit., P. 470.

³ 'were the Sundarbans Inhabited in Ancient Times?', JASB, 1876, Pp. 71 - 76.

general rule. Nevertheless, only a small portion of it in the north - the fiscal divisions of Sayyidpur, Ahmadnagar, Murgāchhā and Malikpur -, was taken from Pratāpāditya by Akbar's General Khān-i-Azam and was given to Bhaveswar Rāy (a soldier under Khān-i-Azam), the ancestor of the 'Chānchrā Rāj Family' of Jessore¹.

But it was with the reign of Jahāngīr that a definite landmark in the history of Bengal commenced. To crush all these independent zamīndārs and impose a uniform administrative system over the entire territory, a new policy was now adopted, which proved eminently successful. J. H. Sarkar² remarks, 'while the governors of Akbar's time adopted a simple, straightforward and uniform policy in regard to the zamīndārs and allowed them to enjoy practical independence so long as they professed loyalty and paid tributes to the Emperor, the governors of Jahāngīr's time especially, Islām Khān, followed a more diplomatic and tortuous line of action. The zamīndārs, big and small, seemed to have been played off one against the others, with promises of imperial favour and reward, sometimes in the shape of territories, obviously with a view to preventing a unified and concerted resistance, until all of them, one after another, were deprived of their independence and reduced to vassalage'. With a view to achieving this object Subāhdār Islām Khān turned his attention to the final subjugation of the

¹ W. W. Hunter, Op.cit., II, Pp. 202 - 204; H. Blochmann, Contribution to History and Geography of Bengal (his articles in JASB being compiled in this book), Calcutta, 1968, P. 9.

² HB, II, P. 234.

turbulent zamīndārs of Birbhum, Pachet, Hizli, Bhushnā, and compelled them, including Mūsā Khān, the son of 'Isā Khān and the chief of Bengal zamīndārs, to surrender. The viceroy then devoted his whole energy in subduing Rājā Protāpāditya of Jessore, who was the second powerful enemy after Mūsā Khān to the consolidation of the Mughal rule in Bengal, and had broken previously his pledge of military assistance in the war with Mūsā Khān. Accordingly in 1611 Islām Khān despatched a strong fleet, with re-inforcement of the war boats from Musa Khān and other zamīndārs who had submitted previously, under Mirzā Nathan and a land force under General Ghyās Khān. Simultaneously another force was sent against Rājā Rām Chandra of Bāklā so that no assistance might reach the Jessore king from this side, and that in case Bāklā was speedily conquered imperial contingent might be free to proceed against Jessore from the south-east and completely overpower Protāpāditya. The imperial force, however, marched south-eastwards towards Jessore along the Bhairab and the Ichhāmatī and reached Salkā at the confluence of Jamunā and Ichhāmatī. Here in the first naval engagement Protāpāditya was heavily defeated, and retired to his capital at 'Dhumghāṭ'. Meantime the expedition sent against Rām Chandra had triumphed after a seven-days fight. Rājā Satrajit escorted Rām Chandra to Islām Khān, who deprived the latter of his kingdom and also of his personal liberty like Mūsā Khān and Anowār Khān, and kept him confined at Dacca¹.

After the conquest of Bāklā, the expeditionary force, according to the previous arrangement, moved towards Jessore to join

¹ HB, II, p. 268.

the army engaged in fighting Protāpāditya. After the brilliant success at Salkā, the imperial force marched ahead, and finally reached at Kāgārhāt, about 5 miles north of Dhumghāt¹, where a fierce battle took place, in which Protāpāditya was severely discomfitted. This second defeat sealed the fate of Protāpāditya and ended the Jessore campaign. Thinking further resistance abortive the king submitted to the imperial commander Ghyās Khān. Consequently the king was brought to Dacca, where he was kept confined in an iron cage and died at last in Benaras on the way to Delhi as prisoner². His sons were also imprisoned at Dacca but ultimately released owing to the intercession of the viceroy Ibrāhīm Khān Fath-i-Jang³. His kingdom was, however, annexed and placed in-charge of the commander Ghyās Khān, while Khwāja Tāhir Muḥammad Bakshī was sent to assess its revenue⁴. Adequate arrangement were also made for the direct administration of Bāklā, and was partly put in-charge of Sayyid Makīm and his brothers⁵, and partly under Rām Chandra⁶, who were all designated as Jāgīrdārs.

¹ HE, II, P. 268.

² Ibid., P. 269.

³ Ibid., Pp. 269, 300.

⁴ Ibid.; Baharistan (Eng. Tr.), I, PP. 144, 156 - 57; A. Rahim, Op.cit., II, P. 122.

⁵ T. K. Roychowdhury, Bengal under Akbar and Jahangir, Calcutta, 1969, Pp. 64 - 65.

⁶ Baharistan (Eng. Tr.), I, Pp. 131 - 32; A. Rahim, Op.cit., II, P. 196.

It is interesting to note that although Bengal was subjugated only under Emperor Jahāngīr, yet the entire territory in 19 Sarkārs was included in the rent list of 1582, made by Akbar's renowned Finance Minister Rājā Todar Mall. This suggests that these Sarkārs in regard to their areas, were, perhaps, modelled, more or less, on the administrative divisions of pre-Mughal Bengal. Of these Sarkārs we are here mainly concerned with Khalīfatābād, which in the pre-Mughal period was larger in area than that existed under the Mughals. While under the Later Ilyās Shāhīs and the Husain Shāhīs the Chitrā appears to serve as the northern boundary of Khalīfatābād¹, during the Mughal rule the Bhairab seems to have served this purpose. According to the account in the Āin the territory of Khalīfatābād, comprising of the south-west Jessore and west Bākerganj, was surrounded by the Sarkārs Sātgaon on the west, Mahmūdābād and Fathābād on the north, and north-east². Several mahals of the Sarkār Mahmūdābād³ like 'Naldī and Shahuzial⁴, which were

¹ Supra, Pp. 44-45 & 48.

² Āin (Jarret and Sarkar), II, Pp. 127 - 28.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Naldī and Shahuzial are found to have been located beyond the rivers Bhairab and Kabādāk in the late 19th century map of the Jessore district. While the former comprised of a portion of the present Jessore Sadar Sub-division and a large part of the Narāil Sub-division, the latter formed of the south-east Chuādāngā and western Jessore Sadar Sub-division. See J. Westland, Op.cit., Map. of Jessore district.

also the fiscal divisions of the undivided Jessore district in the British period¹, lay above the Bhairab, while the Rasulpūr or Jessar (identified with the present Jessore town²) and the Khālispūr (which is perhaps identical with that of the present Khulnā Sadar Sub-division) mahals of Khalīfatābād³ are still located to the south of the river Bhairab. It may thus be surmised that the Bhairab was the northern boundary of the Mughal Khalīfatābād. As regards its western limit it is said that the Sarkār Sātgaon comprising 'a small portion in between the Hooghly and the Saraswatī, western Nadiā, south-western Murshidābād and the whole of modern 24-Parganas district' extended in the south to the Hātīāgarh below Diamond Harbour and in the east to the Kobādāk river⁴. From this it becomes conspicuous that the Kobādāk formed, as it did in the pre-Mughal period, at this time the western boundary of Khalīfatābād. In the east, like that in the north, at least a portion was detached from the pre-Mughal Khalīfatābād and added, no doubt, with Sarkār Fathābād which included a considerable part of Bakerganj, i.e. a portion in the north and south, the islands of Dakshin Shāhbāzpur (Bholā), Sandwīp and Sidhu at the mouth of the Meghnā⁵. To the north-east of this Sarkār

¹ W. W. Hunter, Op.cit., II, Pp. 322 ff.

² H. Blochmann, Op.cit., P. 9.

³ Alin (Jarret and Sarkar), II, P. 146.

⁴ Ibid., Pp. 127 - 28; H. Blochmann, Op.cit., P. 9; O. Malley, 24-Parganas Gazetteers, Op.cit., P. 26.

⁵ Alin (Jarret and Sarkar), II, P. 127; H. Blochmann, Op.cit., P. 9; Reāz us-Salātīn (Beng. Tr.), P. 356.

(Fathābād) was the Bāklā which, comprising of the mahals Ismāīlpūr or Bāklā, Adilpūr or Idilpūr, Srīrāmpūr and Shāhzādāpūr, extended along the Sea shore¹. The mahal Bāklā, renamed Ismāīlpūr by the Mughals, was the capital of the Sarkār itself, which was situated on the bank of the river Tetuliā near Kachua², now in the Bauphal Police Station in the north-east corner of the present Patuākhālī district³. The other three mahals of this Sarkār are very likely identical with the parganas of the same name of the 19th century British Bakerganj⁴. The Srīrāmpūr mahal or pargana seems to be located in the eastern half of the district, for a village in the Malchhiti Police Station (now in Jhālākāti Sub-division⁵) is still known by this name. The pargana Shāhzādāpūr was within the jurisdiction of the court at Barisāl⁶, while the Idilpūr is said to be located in the Mehendiganj Police Station⁷ (now in Barisāl Sadar south Sub-division), which belonged to the jurisdiction of the Dacca district until 1816⁸. This account is very much akin to that of the Āin which records that Bāklā was formed of portions of Dacca and Bakerganj⁹. Thus we see that the river Patuākhālī, and its extreme left hand branch which,

¹ Āin (Jarret and Sarkar), II, P. 123.

² District Census Report (Bakerganj), Karachi, 1961.

³ J. C. Jack, Bakerganj District Gazetteers, Calcutta, 1918, Pp.16 - 17.

⁴ W. W. Hunter, Op.cit., V, Pp. 239 ff.

⁵ Bangladesh Population Census (Bakerganj), Dacca, 1974.

⁶ W. W. Hunter, Op.cit., V, P. 242.

⁷ J. C. Jack, Op.cit., Pp. 16 - 17.

⁸ Ibid., P. 22.

⁹ Āin (Jarret and Sarkar), II, P.128; H. Blochmann, Op.cit., P. 10.

flowing below the present Bauphal Police Station (old Ismā'īl-pūr mahal), meets the river Tetuliā at its mouth, formed the southern boundary of Bāklā. Similarly the river Barisāl (from Mīrzaganj), an off-shoot of the Ariāl Khān, and the Nayābhāgni, a right hand channel of the Meghnā, which empties itself into the Ariāl Khān, constituted the western and north-western limits, while the Meghnā itself and its right bank distributary together with the river Tetuliā, which separated Dakshin Shāhbāzpūr from the rest of the Bakerganj district, formed the eastern limit of the then Bāklā. While in the Sultānī period the river Buriswar was supposed to be the eastern boundary of the Khalīfatabād¹, under the Mughals the river Biskhālī in the south Bākerganj (now Patuākhālī), and the Jhālakāṭī-Mundā rivers in the upper part appear to have served this purpose. By this boundary line, the western Bākerganj, consisting of the major part of the Pirojpur Sub-division, western portion of Jhālakāṭī and Barisāl Sadar (north) Sub-divisions, was separated and added with Khalīfatabād. The area in between the boundaries of Bāklā and Khalīfatabād was thus, no doubt, left to be occupied by the Pathābād Sarkār with a view to making its continuous frontier in the south and linking it up with the islands of Dakshin Shāhbāzpūr (Bholā), Sandwīp and Sidhu as mentioned above.

This territorial extent of Khalīfatabād with the same designation perhaps remained in force till the first quarter of the 18th century, when in 1722 Nawāb Jāfar Khān alias Murshid Qulī Khān issued his 'Kāmil Jama' Tumārī' or perfect rent-roll. By this settlement the 34 Sarkārs

¹Supra, Pp. 47-48.

of the Bengal Sūbah, made by Prince Shujā' in 1658¹, were redistributed and divided into 13 chāklāh². According to this rent list the territory under study appears to have been known as Chāklāh Jessore in place of Sarkār Khalīfatābād of the Ā'in. Moreover, the Madhumatī-Baleswar-Haringhātā was now made the eastern boundary of the Chāklāh, for the land beyond the river (Bākerganj) was transferred to be included in the Chāklāh Jahāngīrnagar³. Anyway, the name Khalīfatābād did not altogether disappear, and survived by the name of Havelī Khalīfatābād (in the Ā'in a mahal of the Sarkār itself) at least upto the last quarter of the 19th century, for in the assessment report of the Surveyor General in 1870-71 it appeared as one of the 103 fiscal divisions of the undivided Jessore district⁴.

Under the Mughals Khalīfatābād was sufficiently important to have a separate Fauzdār or Military Governor. During the reign of Emperor Shāhjahān the Fauzdār was Mīrza Shafshīkān⁵, great-great-

¹ JASB, Pt. I, 1873, P. 219.

² Ibid.; W. W. Hunter, Op.cit., V, P. 221; Reāz us-Salātīn (Eng.Tr.), P.255; A. Rahim, Op.cit., II, P. 95; A. Karim, Murshid Quli Khan and His Times, Dacca, 1963, P. 79. Following are the thirteen Chāklāhs: (a) Bandar-Balāsor, (b) Hizli, (c) Murshidābād, (d) Burdwān, (e) Hooghly or Sātgaon, (f) Bhushnā, (g) Jessore, (h) Akbarnagar (Rājmahal), (i) Ghorāghāt, (j) Kuribari, (k) Jahāngīrnagar (Dacca), (l) Sylhet and (m) Islāmābād (Chittāgong).

³ W. W. Hunter, Op.cit., V, P. 221.

⁴ Ibid., II, P. 320.

⁵ O. Malley, Jessore Gazetteers, Op.cit., P. 32.

grandson of Shāh Ismā'īl, king of Persia, who died here in 1663 A. D. His headquarters appears to have been at Mīrzānagar on the Kobādāk river, where there are considerable ruins¹. His family still survives, though in reduced circumstances, at this place which was probably so called in memory of the Fauzdār Mīrzā Shafshikān, the Hindu name being Trimohini². During the reign of Emperor Aurangzeb, while Ibrāhīm Khān was the Subahdār of Bengal, Nūrullah Khān was the Fauzdār of Jessore, Hooghly, Burdwan and Midnapur, who (Fauzdār) had his residence also at Mīrzānagar. The places Nūrullahnagar, south of Mīrzānagar and Nūrullahpūr, east of it, still bear the name of this Fauzdār. Although but a very small village now, points out Hunter³, the collector in 1815 writes of Mīrzānagar as one of the three largest towns in the district. In 1696 Shovā Singh, a zamindār of Cheto-Barda in the Ghātāl-Chandrakonā Sub-division of Midnapur, forming a confederacy with Rahīm Khān, the leader of the Orissā Afghāns, rebelled against the Mughals, took Burdwan and slew its Mughal Jāgīrdār Krishnarām, and having plundered the neighbouring territories created a great terror and panic in the land⁴. On getting this news the Subahdār ordered the Fauzdār Nūrullah Khān to take the fields against the rebels. Accordingly the Fauzdār, who had no aptitude for war and spent his time in trade and amassing wealth, unwillingly marched from Mīrzānagar. But on the approach of the rebellious Afghāns

¹ See chapter IV, Pp. 171-72 & 238-43.

² Reāz us-Salātīn (Eng. Tr.), P. 147; O. Malley, Jessore-Gazetteers, Op.cit., P. 32.

³ Op.cit., II, P. 208.

⁴ HB, II, Pp. 392 - 95.

he was seized with panic, shut himself up in the fort of Hooghly and begged for assistance from the Dutch governor at Chinsura¹. The rebels, however, availed the chance of Fauzdār's weakness, and laid siege to the city of Hooghly. They carried on their attacks with such vigour that the Fauzdār became alarmed for his personal safety, and during the night having crossed the 'river in a boat, made his escape to Jessore. The garrison, finding their ~~their~~ commandant had fled, opened the gates and the rebels got quiet possession of that opulent city without any loss². After this incompetence of Nūrullah Khān Emperor Aurangzeb dismissed him and appointed Sabardast Khān, a son of the viceroy Ibrāhīm Khān, in his place³. This new Fauzdār was an energetic leader of far different mettle and soon proved himself worthy of the post. By a sweeping campaign he defeated all these rebellious Afghāns and drove them headlong out of the country east of the Bhāgīrathī. 'Wherever trace could be found of their whereabouts, they were captured and slaughtered, and in a short time the districts of Burdwan, Hooghly and Jessore were purged of the defilement caused by the Afghān raiders. The tracts that had been desolated by the ravages of these rebels once again became fertile⁴.

Less than twenty years later, during the viceroyalty of Murshid Qulī Khān, the government of Jessore was usurped by one

¹ C. Stewart, Op.cit. (Indian Re-print), 1971, P. 329.

² Ibid.

³ O. Malley, Jessore Gazetteers, Op.cit., Pp. 32-33; HB. II, Pp. 393-94; District Census Report (Jessore), Karachi, 1961.

⁴ Reāz us-Salāṭīn (Eng. Tr.), P. 207.

Sitārām Rāy¹, whose headquarters was at Mahmūdpur, commonly known as Muḥammadpur, now a small village 14 miles east of the Māgurā town and 2 miles from the right bank of the Madhumatī². Sitārām Rāy pillaged and raided the lands adjoining to his zamīndārī, and also quarrelled with the imperial garrisons and Fauzdārs. Mīr Abū Turāb, the then Fauzdār of the chāklāhs of Bhushnā and Jessore, tried to capture this rebel, but failed, even was severely wounded³. 'When this news', points out Ghulām Husain Salīm⁴, 'reached the Nawāb, his body trembled from fear of Emperor's resentment. Appointing Hassan 'Alī Khān, who had married Jāfar Khān's wife's sister and was descended from a noble family, to be Fauzdār of Bhushnā, and supporting him with an efficient force, Nawāb Jāfar Khān directed him to capture that troublesome villain (Sitārām). The Nawāb issued mandates to the zamīndārs of the environs insisting on their not suffering Sitārām to escape across their frontiers, and also threatening that, should the latter effect his escape across the frontiers of anyone, he would not only be ousted from his zamīndārī but be punished. The zamīndārs from all sides hemmed him in, when Hassan 'Alī Khān arrived and captured Sitārām together with his women, children,

¹ O. Malley, Jessore Gazetteers, Op.cit., P. 33; District Census Report (Jessore), Karachi, 1961. This Sitārām was a descendent of Mukundram, a powerful zamīndār of Fathābād and Bhushnā during the time of Emperor Akbar.

² O. Malley, Jessore Gazetteers, Op.cit., P. 159.

³ Ibid., P. 34; District Census Report (Jessore), Karachi, 1961.

⁴ Beṣṣ us-Salātīn (Eng. Tr.), Pp. 266-67.

confederates and adherents, and sent them with chains round their necks and hands to the Nawāb Jafar Khān. The Nawāb enclosing Sitārām's face in cow-hide, had him drawn to the gallows in the eastern suburbs of Murshidābād on the high way leading to Jahāngīrnagar and Mahmūdābād, and imprisoned for life Sitārām's women and children and companions. Bestowing his zamīndārī on Rāmjiban, the Nawāb confiscated to the state Sitārām's treasures and effects, and extirpating his family, root and branch, he sent an account of the affair to the Emperor! Sitārām was thus captured and executed in 1712.¹ After his fall Jessore was almost entirely divided among the three great zamīndārs. The Rājā of Maldāngā held the zamīndārī of Mahmūdshāhī to the north, and the Rājā of Nātorē, named Rāmjiban, held the zamīndārī of Bhushnā which included the Naldī Parganā in the north-east and the present district of Faridpur, and this latter tract was apparently the zamīndārī of Sitārām Rāy. The third but the most important division was given to the commonly known Chānchrā Rājā of Jessore, whose zamīndārī extended over the major part of the old Khalīfatabād, falling in between the Baleswar and the Kobādāk. The Rājā of the family was, at this time, one Krishnarām (the remote successor of Bhabeswar Rāy²) who held the estate till 1729. After his death, the territory was in possession of his successors until 1869³. All these Rājās, however, collected the revenue of the

¹O. Malley, Jessore Gazetteers, Op.cit., P. 35.

²Supra, P. 55.

³For details of the Chānchrā Rāj Family, see W. W. Hunter, Op.cit., II, Pp. 202 ff.

tracts within their jurisdictions and made over to the Mughal authorities. They were almost independent in their areas and not interfered if payments were regular. They were kept in check by the Fauzdars who were posted in the Sarkars or Chaklahs by the viceroys or Nawabs.

Some mention should in this connection be made on the state of activities of Bakerganj, part of which was once included in the Sarkar Khalifatabad. Although Islam Khan established the Mughal authority in the district, yet the Arakanese (Maghs) and the Portuguese frequently caused much trouble to the land. They were, however, effectively checked by Shāyestā Khan and then the land passed definitely under the direct rule of the Mughals, and the local Rājas, like those of Jessore, once again became loyal to the imperialists. But with the transfer of the Bengal capital from Dacca to Murshidabad, these local zamindars fought against themselves, and the constant unrest prevailed although the land. To suppress these rebellions Murshid Quli Khan sent one Agā Baker, after whom the district is named Bakerganj¹. In recognition to the service of Agā Baker the Nawab granted him a zamindari of Pargana Buzurgumedpur, comprising of the present Bakerganj Police Station as well as some parts of Kotwālī and Bauphal Police Stations. This Agā Baker was a de facto ruler of Bakerganj from 1741 until his death in 1753². His influence in the district was inherited by Rājā Rājballabh, who was for sometime the dewan of Naib Nazim. Soon Rājballabh rose against the Murshidabad

¹ District Census Report (Bakerganj), Karachi, 1961.

² H. Beveridge, The District of Bakerganj, its History and Statistics, London, 1876, Pp. 43 - 47; J. C. Jack, Op. cit., P. 20.

Nawāb, and in order to strengthen his position, allowed a company of Portuguese mercenaries to be settled in Shibpūr in the present Bākerganj Police Station. On getting this news, Nawāb Mīr Qāsim arrested the Rājā and his son Kishen Dās and caused them both to be drowned in the Ganges¹. This unfortunate event, however, formed one of the causes of war between the British and the Nawāb, which finally decided the fate of the latter, in a word, the Muslims in Bengal².

Under the British rule the greater half of the old administrative division of Khalīfatābād formed part of the Jessore district, while the rest went under the jurisdiction of Bākerganj district, which were created in 1786³ and 1797⁴ respectively. It will perhaps be better if a few words are added on the geographical extent of these two districts, which have both undergone a long series of changes with regard to area from the date of their establishment as separate units. When first constituted in 1786, its magisterial jurisdiction extended over the present districts of Faridpūr, Jessore and Khulnā. Subsequently Kushtīā and Nawāpārā were transferred from Murshidābād to Jessore, but Jhenidah was transferred from Jessore to Nadiā. Another change in jurisdiction took place in 1811, when the tract east of the Madhumatī was transferred to Faridpūr, which was soon afterwards created a separate district in 1815⁵.

¹J. C. Jack, Op.cit., P. 20; District Census Report (Bakerganj), Karachi, 1961.

²Ibid.

³J. Westland, Op.cit., P. 25; W. W. Hunter, Op.cit., II, P. 170; O. Malley, Jessore Gazetteers, Op.cit., Pp. 43 - 44.

⁴J. C. Jack, Op.cit., P. 22; District Census Report (Bakerganj), Karachi, 1961.

⁵W. W. Hunter, Op.cit., II, Pp. 169 - 70.

In 1860's separate sub-divisions were created with headquarters at Jessore, Jhenāidah, Māgurā, Narāil, Khulnā and Bāgerhāt; and in 1863 there was a further re-adjustment of boundaries, by which the land to the south between the Kobādāk and the Ichhāmāti was transferred to the 24-Parganās. In 1882 the sub-divisions of Khulnā and Bāgerhāt were separated from Jessore and formed into an independent district of Khulnā with the Sātkhira Sub-division of the 24-Parganās; while the Bangāon Sub-division of Nadiā was added with Jessore¹. But consequently it was again separated from. As regards Bākerganj it is said that in 1797 it included the Kachuā Police Station (now in Bāgerhāt Sub-division) to the west of the Baleswar as well as the islands of Dakshin Shāhbāzpūr (Bholā) and Hātīā, but not Gaurnadī, which with the eastern part of Mādāripūr was only transferred to Bākerganj in 1806, nor the Parganā Idilpūr (identified with Mehendiganj Police Station²) which belonged to the jurisdiction of Dacca until 1816. Due to the defective means of communication, the two above mentioned islands were soon transferred to Noākhālī. In 1859 Pirojpur Sub-division was formed, and in 1861 the Madhumatī-Baleswar was made western boundary having the whole of Kachuā Police Station been transferred to Jessore (now Khulnā)³, and in 1869 Dakshin Shāhbāzpūr was re-transferred to Bākerganj from Noākhālī. In 1871 another sub-division was created at Paṭuākhālī, now an independent district. Another important change soon occurred, when in 1873 the sub-division of

¹O. Malley, Jessore Gazetteer, Op.cit., Pp. 43 - 44; and 24-Parganas Gazetteer, Op.cit., P. 57.

²Supra, Pp. 59-60.

³W. W. Hunter, Op.cit., V, P. 158; J. C. Jack, Op.cit., Pp. 22 - 23.

Mādāripūr, which was formed in 1854, was separated from Bākerganj and added with Faridpūr¹. Since then till today the district remains almost the same with regard to its area and boundary.

It thus appears that since its foundation by Khān Jahān in the first half of the 15th century, Khalīfatabād, with gradual annexations and extensions, was under control of the kings of Gaur till the beginning of the last quarter of the 16th century, when it went once again under the infidels who ruled for less than half a century. After their fall, however, Khalīfatabād felt the impact of the Delhī rule under the Mughals. But a change was noticed this time in the sphere of its territorial jurisdiction i.e. it became smaller in area than that of the Sultānī period. Under the late Mughals the territory did no more remain to be designated as Khalīfatabād, and became divided between Chāklāh Jessore and Jahāngīrnagar, and in the British period among the districts of Jessore, Khulnā, Bākerganj and Faridpūr as it is today².

¹ W. W. Hunter, Op.cit., V, P. 256.

² See Map, Pl.I.

CHAPTER - III

DEVELOPMENT OF MUSLIM ARCHITECTURE IN BENGAL

The Muslim architecture in Bengal, that developed on lines of its political and cultural identity, has no doubt acquired, not unlike those of Guzarāt, Deccan, Mālwa, Punjab or Jaunpūr, a distinct place in the history of Indo-Islamic architecture. Conditioned mainly by the geographical surroundings, the climate and the geology of the land, this building art exhibits an interesting synthesis of the developed ideals of the two opposing creeds - the Muslims and the Hindus (including the Buddhists), and thereby attains a distinct individuality of its own that was maintained for a period of about two hundred and fifty years. But with the establishment of the Mughal rule Bengal experienced gradually a new form of architecture largely in imitation to that of North India, which continued to exist until the coming of the British in the beginning of the third quarter of the 18th century.

At the very outset the Muslims had no architecture of their own, but it is surprising that in the course of a few years time they not only made it rapidly developed but brought it to such an extent that it became one of the World's leading art. The process of achieving such an outstanding success may be summarised in the following words of Marshall¹: 'Wherever the Muḥammadans established themselves — whether in Asia, or in Africa, or in Europe they invariably adapted to their own needs the indigenous architecture which they found prevailing there. In the lands first conquered by them — in Palestine, for example, or in Syria or in

¹ 'The Monuments of Muslim India', Cambridge History of India, III, 1928, Pp. 568 - 69.

Egypt - this was inevitable, for the reason that the Arabs possessed little or no genius for the art of building, and if their places of worship were to be as attractive as those of rival creeds, it was indispensable that they should impress into their service the builders and artists of the newly conquered territories. Later on this deficiency was made good by wholesale conversions among their subject races, and in no long space of time the followers of the Prophet found themselves heirs by blood as well as by the right of conquest to the arts and learning not only of the vast Sāsānian Empire but of the greater part of the Graeco-Roman Orient as well as of North Africa and Spain. Under the sway of the Muslims the cultural development of all these countries received a powerful stimulus and, thanks to the freer intercourse and increasingly closer ties established between them, Islām was able to evolve for itself a new culture, which rapidly became common to the whole Muslim Empire, and at the same time to elaborate novel forms of architecture especially adapted to its religious and social needs. But though Islamic architecture thus acquired a fundamental character of its own and found expression in standardised forms and concepts in general use throughout the length and breadth of the Empire, it still remained true that almost every country within that Empire - from Spain in the West to Persia in the East - developed a local Muslim style of its own based primarily on indigenous ideals and stamped with a strong national individuality'. Endowed with such a highly developed building traditions the Muslims, who were predominantly of Afghān, Persian and Turkī blood, established their power permanently in India by the close

of the 12th century. They, not unlike their compatriots in other countries, looked at the initial stage towards the country's native citizens - the Hindus - for the solution of the problems they faced. These new subjects were culturally so different which the Muslims had never before experienced elsewhere. While the Muslims, inspired by the ideals of Islām, believed in the unity and the existence of one God, the Hindus were wonted to create new gods and goddesses and establish a personal relation with them. The differences between the culture of these two opposing creeds have been accurately and elaborately described by P. Brown¹.

Yet in spite of all these conspicuous contrasts of mind and ideal, a happy compromise was made between the conquerors and the conquered, which is best illustrated in the building art as well as in other fields of social and cultural life². In Delhi, Multān and wherever else Islamic traditions established themselves in sufficient strength, the influence of the land was little felt in the succeeding styles of the Muslims. But in Bengal, the more distant part of the Empire, where the conquerors also of Turkī blood were relatively few in number and little in touch with the outer world of Islām, their architecture took its character largely from the pre-existing monuments of the locality, i.e. the Buddhist and the Hindu monuments of Mohāsthān, Maināmatī, Pāharpūr and Gaur. But unfortunately the destructive forces of nature and still more the destructive agency of man have spared few monuments

¹Indian Architecture (Islamic Period), Bombay, 1942, P. 1.

²Ibid.

of the Hindu period. Yet on the strength of such scanty remains as have survived it may well be inferred that, although stone was freely employed where it could be procured, brick, timber and bamboo were the principal building materials in use. Among other important features of this older Bengali architecture were a peculiar form of curvilinear roof, square brick pillars of stunted proportions as well as more slender ones of stone, carved or moulded surface decorations of almost ultra-refined elegance and even the pointed arches of small dimensions constructed on the corbel system¹. These were all the main characteristics of the style which the Muslims found prevalent on their arrival in Bengal. And having assimilated and amalgamated all these with those of their own architectural traditions of western and central Asia the Muslims produced a distinctive style, which henceforth came to be designated as the 'Islamic Architecture in Bengal'.

Brick made of the easily available alluvial clay of the land was the chief material for the Islamic architecture in Bengal. Terracotta made of the same material was used for the purpose of decoration. Stone - mainly black-basalt, grey sand-stone and granite - was used, but sparingly and for emphasis and ornamentation. Bengali Muslim architecture may thus be described as both 'brick style'² and 'brick and stone style'³ architecture. Lime was another important element which the Hindus in their trabeate system of construction are

¹J. Marshall, Op.cit., P.600.

²S. K. Saraswati, 'Indo-Moslem Architecture in Bengal', JISOA, IX, 1941, P.33; MARG, XXXII, March, 1974, P. 14.

³A. H. Dani, Muslim Architecture in Bengal, Dacca, 1961, P.11.

known to have used in concreting the floor as evidenced from the excavations at Mohāsthān. But in the arcuate constructions of the Muslims i.e. in making true arches, domes and vaults, it was used mainly as mortar with a view to keeping together the masonry. This difference in the use of lime has interestingly distinguished the brick masonry of the Muslim period from that of the pre-Muslim. Mention should also be made that in the pre-Mughal monuments lime has been used as plaster, but generally on the parapet, roof and dome in order to make the building water-tight¹. But in the Mughal period it was universally used on the surface of the walls. This latter practice helps one to differentiate the pre-Mughal monuments from those of the Mughals in Bengal. However, on such other differences and stylistic grounds the Islamic architecture in Bengal can be studied under two main chronological phases: the pre-Mughal and the Mughal.

The pre-Mughal architecture, commonly known as the Sultānī architecture of Bengal shows a continuous development which may be said to have started with the rule of the dependent governors (1204 - 1338) who ruled the country with the seat of government at Lakhnawātī recognising nominally the then Delhī authority. Although by the first quarter of the 14th century almost the whole of Bengal (save the south Bengal) was brought under Muslim control, the main building activities were confined to north and west Bengal. Muḥammad bin Bakhtiyār Khalzī, the founder of the Muslim rule in Bengal, is known to have constructed mosques,

¹ A. H. Dani, Op.cit., P. 11.

madrassas¹, and khānqas, and his example was followed by his successors which all centred round the town of Lakhnawati². But unfortunately not to speak of these, no monument of the next one hundred years survives to tell the architectural history of this period. The earliest extant monuments, constructed in the period of governors' rule not however at

¹The madrasa of Bakhtyār Khalzī, though not extant now, is probably the earliest known example of its kind in Bengal, even perhaps in the whole of India. The earliest extant example of madrasa in Upper India is that of 'Alā' Uddīn Khalzī to the south-west of the Quwāt-ul-Islām mosque at Delhī. This new structural form is generally considered to be of Persian origin. Appearing first in Khurāsān towards the beginning of the 10th century, the madrasa appears to have been initially no more than a private school built for the study of the Sunnite Theology. It was often built by the teacher himself near his house or a mosque. See A. Godard, The Art of Iran, London, 1965, P. 285; A. B. M. Husain, 'Persian Influence on the Formation of Indo-Muslim Architecture', Written for Professor A. B. M. Habibullah felicitation volume. The first state madrassas, however, are known to have been founded in Ghaznī at the beginning of the 11th century to 'combat shī'ism, promote sunnism and train state officials'. See Oktay Aslanapa, Turkish Art and Architecture, London, 1971, P. 78. And see also A. B. M. Husain, Persian Influence. Op. cit. In subsequent architectural history of Persia and India we hear of the construction of madrassas frequently. In Bengal also, after that of Bakhtyār Khalzī, a number of madrassas were known to have been constructed but they all have unfortunately disappeared. See A. Karim, Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, Dacca, 1959, Pp. 42 - 44.

²Tabaqāt-i-Nāsiri (Eng. Tr. by Raverty), I, Pp. 559 - 60; HB, II, P. 14.

the capital, are the mosque (1298) and the tomb (c. 1300) of Zafar Khan Ghazi at Tribeni in Hooghly. Not unlike all other conquered places of the Muslims these Islamic buildings in Bengal were built of the materials taken from the local Hindu temples demolished for the purpose¹. With the availability of the materials the Muslims had also the availability of local craftsmen. The result of these combination was only natural that the local Hindu architectural traditions would make an impact on the buildings of the conquerors, a fact which will be realized from the following discussion.

Although the two buildings just mentioned are in ruins, enough still have survived to show the emergence of a style through the synthesis of the Hindu-Muslim architectural traditions. In their general pattern these buildings follow the Muslim ideals already developed under the Mamluk rulers of Delhi, but in detail of material enrichments they fall back almost wholly on the treasures of the conquered people. The Hindu features of the buildings are the bold and deep stone carvings depicting

¹ Not only the buildings of the time of dependent governors were built of the materials taken from the dismantled Hindu temples, but in fact most of the extant monuments of the Sultanī period. Even some monuments of the Mughal era such as the Kumarpur tomb (c. 1655 - 56), the Jahānābād tomb (c. late 17th century) in Rājshāhī bear evidence to this. See, A. B. M. Husain in *JVRM*, 1972, I, Pp. 84 - 88; 1974, 3, Pp. 79 - 82.

creeper, rosette, chain and bell motifs and the representations of Ganeshas including two pot-bellied figures (incarnations of Vishnu)¹. These stone carvings of the present examples must have been readily taken from the Hindu monuments and not done under the Muslim direction, for the representation of living figures is not displayed in Muslim religious buildings. The use of rectangular cut-stones without mortar as building material, the facettled monolithic pillar divided by raised carvings, and the terracotta depicting almost the same motifs as noticed in the stone carvings are some other local features of these buildings. From now onwards both stone carving and terracotta², the latter being very popular, continued as important architectural ornaments throughout the Sultānī period, even in some buildings of the Mughal era such as to be seen in the Sādi Mosque (1652) at Egārosindhur in Mymensingh³, and the Komlāhpūr mosque at Gournadī (late 17th century) in Barisal⁴.

Conditioned by the extremely humid climate of the land the mosque of Zafar Khān Ghāzī consists of an oblong covered prayer chamber. It is the earliest existing example of a Bengali mosque - a compact

¹A. H. Dani, Op.cit., P. 44, Pl. II, No.4.

²Terracotta art is very old in Bengal and appears to have begun from the 4th century B. C. See A. Goswami, Indian Terracotta Art, Calcutta, 1959, P. 13 and also A. B. M. Husain, 'The Ornamentation of the Sultani Architecture in Bengal', AJBSA, I, 1978, P. 4.

³A. H. Dani, Op.cit., Pp. 251 - 52.

⁴See chapter IV, Pp. 174 - 75 and Pl. XIX, Fig. 2.

building, in which the other necessary elements of a standard mosque such as the open courtyard with surrounding *līwāns*, the ablution pond and the minarets¹ are absent. Appearing for the first time in this building this particular mosque-style with some alterations and additions had been practised in Bengal for the next two hundred and fifty years. Mention should also be made here that the Tribeni mosque introduces a type of multi-domed mosque in Bengal, in which the number of doors in the east equals the number of *mīhrābs* in the qiblah wall and the number of domes over the roof can mathematically be well realized by multiplying the number of front doors with the number of the sides. Accordingly the mosque in question contains ten domes above, for it has five doors in the east and two in each of the north and south sides. This scientific method of construction has been copied in almost all the subsequent multi-domed mosques in Bengal. It is, however, said that the oblong plan of the mosque is an adaptation from the *Quwāt ul-Islām* mosque at Delhi, which in turn appears to have been ultimately taken from the oblong covered *zullah* of the first mosque in Islām². Similarly the multi-domed feature of the mosque might have

¹With two exceptions to be cited a little later in this chapter, all the existing mosques in Bengal are without *ma'dhanas*. The absence of mosque-cum minaret in Bengal may be explained in the way that the religious orthodoxy of the Bengal rulers perhaps led them to avoid it, for the Prophet's mosque at Medina originally had no minaret. See A. B. M. Husain, The Manara in Indo-Muslim Architecture, Dacca, 1970, Pp. 16 - 17.

²A. H. Dani, Op.cit., P. 51.

been inspired by the domical vaults over the zullah, over the front corners and the entrance gateways of the Quwāt ul-Islām mosque¹, which again appears to have been influenced by such type of vaults of the Ghaznavid and Seljūk mosques in Persia².

It is worthwhile to mention some other important characteristics of the Tribeni mosque, which played a vital role in the development of Islamic architecture in Bengal for centuries to come. For the first time in the history of Islamic architecture in Bengal the present mosque introduced a system of arched facade, which is rather uncouth here. But the practice, as we shall see later on, became highly developed in the Adina mosque at Hazrat Pānduā. The immediate source of this feature of the Bengal monuments was perhaps the arched screen of the Quwāt ul-Islām mosque at Delhī and the Arhā-i-din ka Jhompra at Ajmer. This Indian form of the feature was very likely derived from the arcaded fronts of the brick-built mosques of the Persians, who had themselves drawn their inspiration from Arab structures of the early centuries of Islām³. In their turn the Arabs perhaps borrowed the arched motifs from the vaulted palace of Tāg-i-Kisrā at Ctesiphon (C. 3rd century A. D.) of the Sāsānians⁴, who again had possibly acquired it from the Parthian buildings as evidenced by the palace-facade at Hatra (2nd century A.D.),

¹ P. Brown, Op.cit., P. 10; A. B. M. Husain, Persian Influence, Op.cit.

² See Oktay Aslanapa, Op.cit., Pp. 56 - 57; A. U. Pope, Persian Architecture, New York, 1965, Pp. 106ff.

³ P. Brown, Op.cit., P. 11.

⁴ See A. U. Pope, Op.cit., P. 54, Figs. 43 and 44 facing page 56.

now in 'Irāq¹. However, the facade arches of Tribeni mosque spring from the excessively short ponderous piers, abnormally thick, square above and below, with bracket capitals. Pillars of similar type are also noticed in the Adina mosque and in the Qadim Rasūl building, but are seen nowhere else in India and are really very unique². Internally the mosque under discussion is divided into ten square bays, each of which is roofed over with a dome on the pointed arches spring from stone pillars. Together with these arches the corbelled pendentives of an interesting kind appear at the corners to make up the 'phase of transition' from square to the circular base of the dome, a practice which hereafter had long continued in Bengal and became one of the distinguishing features of the Sultani architecture. These pendentives are formed of oversailing courses of bricks set cornerwise and edgewise alternately giving thus an appearance of a delicate pattern of honey-comb in a simplified form, and perhaps for this distinctive quality A. B. M. Husain³ furnishes it with the epithet 'Bengali pendentive'. But more important element of the building is its beautiful engrailed arch of the mihrab niche, which henceforth repeatedly appeared in the Bengal monuments both for constructional and decorative purposes. This feature in its most elaborate and beautiful form was widely used both in Bengal and in Upper Indian architecture under Shāhjahān and his successors. As to the sources of these engrailed and

¹ See A. U. Pope, Op.cit., P. 54, Figs. 43 and 44 facing page 56.

² P. Brown, Op.cit., P. 37.

³ AJBSA, Op.cit., P. 2.

the pointed arches¹, the latter being already cited, of the Bengal monuments of the Islamic period there is a great controversy among the art historians and it will be discussed in chapter IV. It thus appears that the buildings of the period marked a fundamental change in the local architectural traditions of the old so far as the concept of space and clarity of the mosque is concerned, and prepared the ground for the development a distinctive style under the independent Sultānate of Bengal.

By the middle of the 14th century Bengal became independent under Shams Uddīn Ilyās Shāh and this independence of Bengal was maintained for the next two hundred years. Being thus free from the yoke of the Delhi authority, the architecture of Bengal of the period in question became also isolated from the contact of the Delhi architecture. This no doubt created a vacuum in the field of Bengal architecture. But soon it was made good by another source - the Persian, which is well understood by the frequent insertion of Persian elements in the architecture of the period. It should now be mentioned that the Persian influence in the architecture of the period in question is not a new thing. But the only difference is that while in the previous period the Persian elements were drawn via Delhi, in the present time this was perhaps by way of direct contact. It is worthwhile to mention that some of the independent Sultāns of Bengal are known to have maintained relation with that country. As for example Sikandar Shāh's son and successor Ghiyās Uddīn Azam Shāh (1389 - 1410) sent an envoy inviting the famous Persian poet Hāfiẓ to complete the Persian verses he had un-

¹ Pointed arches are notice for the first time in Bengal in the Tribeni mosque and became a distinguishing feature of the Sultānī architecture from now onwards.

successfully tried to compose¹. The other example is that Jalāl Uddīn Jadu's son and successor Shams Uddīn Ahmad Shāh (1431 - 35) is known to have despatched an envoy to the Tīmūrīd king Shāh Rūkh (1405 - 47) of Persia seeking help against the aggressive design of Ibrāhīm Sharqī (1402 - 36) of Jaunpūr². In spite of all these the architecture of independent Bengal was not altogether devoid of Delhi influence. This may be explained in the way that after the sack of Delhi by Tīmūr round about 1399³ the artisans and craftsmen might have come, not unlike other newly risen kingdoms of this sub-continent, to Bengal and while served here they naturally incorporated in the building art of the land several of their own architectural traditions brought with them from Delhi.

With the independence of Bengal the capital was shifted from Lakhawatī to Hazrat Pānduā and naturally the main building activities of the time were around the capital. The crowning glory of the early Ilyās Shāhī style, which shows the continuation of the building art of the previous period and at the same time incorporates several new elements that were to develop and elaborate in the succeeding years, is best

¹ Reāz us-Salātīn (Beng. Tr.), Pp. 83 - 84; Abid Ali, Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua (edited and revised by Stapleton), Calcutta, 1931, Pp. 25 - 27; HB, II, Pp. 117 - 18; M. R. Tafardar, Husain Shahi Bengal, Dacca, 1965, P. 11.

² C. Stewart, History of Bengal, London, 1813, Pp. 62 - 64; JASE, 1952, P. 168, f.n. 1; M. R. Tafardar, Op.cit., P. 5.

³ Firishta (Tr. by Briggs), I, Pp. 283 - 87; S. W. Haig (ed.), Cambridge History of India, III, Cambridge, Pp. 198 - 99.

illustrated in the Jāmi' masjid at the capital built by Sikandar Shāh, son of Ilyās Shāh. Such a vast and ambitious structure of 507 ft. by 285 ft. is planned on the orthodox style achieved for the first time in the Great mosque of Damascus (705 - 15) built by al-Walīd. It has been suggested that the boldness and the strength of the building is an outward expression of the heroic and the resounding success which Sikandar Shāh achieved against Fīroz Shāh Tughlaq of Delhi¹. Though, however, the model was obviously the Damascus mosque, yet in its conception, interior design and details the Adina mosque is purely Bengali. But the building is architecturally a failure, for it failed to integrate its various beautiful parts. It was perhaps due to the inexperienced local craftsmen, who could not carry out such a vast design, and the soil and climate which did not permit the orthodox style to have been implemented successfully in Bengal. No wonder, therefore, that the Adina mosque was the first and last of its kind in Bengal. Considering the different component parts as a whole P. Brown² rightly calls the building the 'forum of some ancient classical city rather than a self-contained Muslim house of prayer', but while considered separately the several parts and details really deserve high appreciation, for the 'arcaded aisles are dignified; the vaulted liwan is well proportioned and pleasing and the mihrāb is as exquisite a piece of carving as can be found in India³.

¹ A. H. Dani, Op.cit., P. 58.

² Op.cit., P. 37.

³ J. Marshall, Op.cit., P. 602.

Nevertheless the building is really very important, for its different component parts exhibit the evolution of art and architecture of the period. The stone carving and the terracotta of the Adina mosque mark in some respects a clear departure from those of the early period. While the stone carvings of the mosque and tomb of Zafar Khan Ghazī are bold and deep in the Hindu manner, those of the present building are shallower and more delicate in the Muslim design, which in the same style appeared immensely in some Husain Shahī monuments. The screen of arches also marks an advance over the clumsy arches of the mosque of Zafar Khan Ghazī thus giving rise to a complete system of arched-facade of Bengal monuments.

Save all these the mosque speaks of many other new developments. For the first time we notice here the corner towers, but they are contained within the rectangular plan of the mosque and not attached from outside. We also find for the first time the projection of the central mihrāb, which has no doubt removed the monotonous treatment of the exterior surface of the qiblah wall. From now onwards this system had been continually practised in Bengal mosques¹. Another important device of the mosque is the introduction of an 'upper gallery'², which frequently appeared in

¹ See chapter IV, Pp. 115-218.

² A. Cunningham thinks that the existence of a gallery in the mosque was to accommodate women in the Jum'ah prayer. Following him A. H. Dani and others call it the 'Ladies Gallery'. We do not, however, have any evidence to support that women used to attend mosques in the congregational prayer. On the contrary, it is very likely that such galleries were used only by members of the Royal House or of Governor's House, and were perhaps well guarded during prayer time. A. B. M. Husain also thinks so.

several mosques of the succeeding centuries such as in the Darasbārī mosque (1479) and the Chhota Sonā mosque (1493 - 1519) at Pirozpur in Rājshāhī. But more important is the appearance of a wide central nave that divides the sanctuary into two equal halves - a device which is copied in a number of subsequent mosques in Bengal. The practice of dividing the sanctuary into two parts by a wide nave appeared for the first time in Islām in the Great mosque of Damascus and the Adīna example is perhaps derived from the same source¹. But unlike the gable roofed nave of the Damascus mosque, the nave of the Adīna mosque shows a barrel vaulted covering which is exactly copied in the nave of the Gunmat mosque (C. Husain Shāhī period) at Gaur² and in the Jāmi' mosque of old Māldah (1596)³. This barrel vault of the Adīna mosque is likely to have been derived from the Ghaznavid and Seljūk architecture of Persia⁴, which in turn might have their idea borrowed from the pre-Muslim architecture of the land such as to be seen in the Parthian palace at Hatra (2nd century A. D.)⁵, the Sāsānian palace of Tāq-i-

¹ From Bengal this practice perhaps travelled to Guzarāt and Jaunpūr as the Jāmi' masjid of Ahmedābād (1423) and the Jāmi' mosque of Jaunpūr (1470) bear the central nave. See P. Brown, Op.cit., Pls. XXXIV, No.2 and XXXII, No.2. Relying on this some tries to establish a theory of cultural contact 'connecting Bengal with Jaunpūr and Guzarāt'. See M. R. Tarafdar, Op.cit., P. 22.

² A. H. Dani, Op.cit., Pp. 133 - 36.

³ Ibid., Pp. 173 - 74.

⁴ The earliest existing Islamic building in Persia to show this important constructional peculiarity i.e. barrel vault is perhaps the Tarīk Khāna at Dāmghān (later half of 8th century). See A. U. Pope, Op.cit., P.78.

⁵ Ibid., P. 47, Fig. 33 facing page 49.

Kisrā at Ctesiphon (C. 3rd century)¹, the palace of Pīrozābād (3rd century)² and the palace of Sarvistān (5th century)³.

Two other important buildings representing the early Ilyās Shāhī style are the tomb of Sikandar Shāh attached with the Adina mosque and the tomb of Qhiyās Uddīn Azam Shāh in Dacca, the latter being the earliest extant monument in Bānglādesh. The former building is noted for setting the example of a new style of building in Bengal. Unlike the oblong multi-domed type mosque produced during the rule of the dependent governors, this tomb of Sikandar Shāh illustrates a square multi-domed type building in Bengal⁴. The type is exactly followed in several mid.15th century mosques of south Bengal - Khalīfatabād such as the Qasba mosque, the Masjidkur mosque etc. which will elaborately be discussed in chapter IV. The tomb of Azam Shāh - a Sarcophagus is formed of several stepped terraces and a keeled-type top stone, and appears to have exerted influence in the formation of the Sarcophaguses of Khān Jahan and Pīr 'Alī Muhammad Tāhir at Bāgerhāt⁵.

The building activities under the Ilyās Shāhī rule came to an end for a short-while with the appearance of Ganeshas in the scene of

¹ A. U. Pope, Op.cit., P. 54, Fig. 45 facing page 59 and also Figs.43&44.

² Ibid., Fig. 41 facing page 54.

³ Ibid., P. 59, Figs. 51 & 53.

⁴ N. Martin, Eastern India, III (Reprint), Delhi, 1976, P.649; Abid Ali, Op.cit., Pp. 138 - 39; A. H. Dani, Op.cit., Pp. 71 - 73.

⁵ See chapter IV, Pp. 224 & 232.

Bengal politics. But although Rājā Ganesh brought the end of the Muslim rule by placing his converted son Jalāl Uddīn Jadu to the throne of Bengal, he could not change the spirit of the time in favour of the Hindu rule. Due to the strong opposition of Nūr Quṭb 'Ālam of Hazrat Pānduā, Jalāl Uddīn was compelled to become a disciple of the Saint, and at last a happy compromise was made between the two contending parties. This ultimately gave birth to the dawn of a new age in which the Hindus and the Muslims alike co-operated to evolve a common cultural heritage, which nowhere else is better reflected than in the building activities of the time. The best representative example of the spirit is the Eklākḥī mausoleum (C. 1415) at Hazrat Pānduā, from which the 'Eklākḥī style' of Bengal architecture derives its name¹. Suited to the indigenous conditions and environment of the land, this building forms an evolutionary landmark as it is the initial building of its kind and serves as the prototype of the Islamic architecture in Bengal prevailed during the 15th and the first half of the 16th centuries. And as such A. B. M. Husain² rightly remarks that the independent national style of architecture in Bengal may be said to have begun with this Eklākḥī building. Let us, however, devote our attention to the architectural details of the mausoleum to see the evolution of the building art of the time. As a building form it is the earliest surviving example of its kind in Bengal and exerted overwhelming influence in the formation of all the subsequent single-domed buildings

¹ A. H. Dani, Op.cit., P. 26.

² AJBSA, Op.cit., P.5.

of the Sultānī period¹. It's form, a square chamber (internally octagonal) surmounted by a dome on squinches, is the successor monument of the Sāssānian Chāhār-tāq², followed in such buildings of the early Muslim period as the Qubbat as-Sulaibiya (C. 862)³ at Samarra, now in 'Irāq, and the tomb of Ismā'īl the Sāmānid (913 - 45) at Bokhārā. The latter mausoleum follows the Chāhār-tāq in all the aspects except perhaps the ornamentation, and may be taken as the starting point of the square single-domed buildings which were followed not only in the architecture of the succeeding dynasties in Persia such as the Ghaznavids, the Karakhanids, the Seljuks and so on, but also almost everywhere in the Muslim World. In India the earliest surviving building of this type is the tomb of Iltutmish (C. 1235) and after this building the form assumed so much popularity that it was accepted by builders of almost all dynasties and

¹ A number of single-domed buildings in Khalīfatābād to be discussed in chapter IV have been built on the model of the Eklakhī mausoleum.

² The best example of a Sāssānian Chāhār-tāq is the fire-temple at Neisar (C. 2nd century A. D.). See A. U. Pope, Op.cit., P. 71.

³ Although octagonal in plan and is generally taken to have been influenced by the Qubbat as-Sakhra at Jerusalem by Abdul Malek, the Qubbat as-Sulaibiya, the earliest known surviving tomb in Islām, has been compared by A. B. M. Husain to a Chāhār-tāq in the sense that its interior is square and its dome carried on squinches. See A. B. M. Husain, Persian Influence, Op.cit.

in the present day constitutes the largest surviving kind of historical monuments. Another important feature of the building in question is the enamelled tiles, hitherto unheard in Bengal architecture, and have been frequently used in the Bengal monuments from this time onward. This tile is also of Persian derivation, 'considered Persia's greatest contribution to ornament'¹, and said to have been ultimately derived from Babylonia². Perhaps the earliest Indian building to copy this Persian feature is the tomb of Baha' ul-hakk at Multān (1264 - 86)³. Subsequently it rapidly spread to different Indian provinces such as the Punjab, Sind, Delhi, Lahore, etc.

Of the several other features of the Eklākhi building which show the gradual development of the building art of the land, the addition of corner towers is perhaps the most important. Unlike the fluted corner towers erected within the thickness of the walls in the Adina mosque, we have here for the first time in Bengal the projected corner towers of octagonal design of which only five facets are viewed from outside⁴. These towers, topped over by cupolas, do not rise above the parapet wall and the system is preserved althrough the Sultāni period⁵. The idea of such

¹ A. U. Pope, Op.cit., P. 165.

² V. A. Smith, A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon (Revised by K. De B. Codrington), Oxford, 1930, P. 199.

³ Ibid., Pp. 199 - 200.

⁴ See A. H. Dani, Op.cit., Pl. VII, No.15 and Pl. XVIII, No.35.

⁵ In the monuments of the Mughal period corner towers general rise high above the parapet wall.

tower is very likely derived from the corner bamboo-posts of the wattle-hut of the land. Another development is represented by the variation given to the wall surface by alternate recesses and off-set projections just as the wood and wattle-hut exhibits. In order to emphasise the resemblance the architect also provides a continuous moulding in the middle of the wall just as we find long bamboo-poles in the middle of the hut at the level of the door lintel. This continuous moulding gives the building an appearance of two-stories from outside, an effect further emphasised by a series of decorated rectangular panels 'being spaced not unlike a blind storey or triforium along the upper compartments'.¹ This type of ornamentation has been noticed at Delhi in the 'Alāi Darwāza (1303) built by 'Alā' Uddīn Khalzī². Another device of the building is the pointed arch above the lintel in the entrance ways which, being new in Bengal, recalls the arch and beam combination in the Fīrozian buildings at Delhi³. This feature is subsequently found in the tomb of Khān Jahān at Bāgerhāt⁴. But of all the most notable development is the introduction of curvature of the cornices and parapets, which henceforth began to appear repeatedly in all the buildings of the Sultānī period, even in some buildings of the Mughal era such as to be seen in the Kheruā mosque (1582) and the Bibī masjid (1628) at Sherpūr in Bogrā, the Atiyā Jāmi' masjid (1609) in Mymensingh etc⁵. P. Brown⁶ rightly attributes this

¹ P. Brown, Op.cit., P. 40.

² Ibid., Pl. IX, Figs. 1 & 2.

³ Ibid., P. 40.

⁴ See chapter IV, Pp. 223 & 228.

⁵ A. H. Dani, Op.cit., Pp. 176 - 78 and 253.

⁶ Op.cit., P. 39.

feature to the humid climate of the land and writes : 'To throw off the excess of water during the heavy rainy season, it was found that the surface shaped to a curve achieved this most satisfactorily, and the readiest way to obtain such a curve in any structure, large or small, was by means of bent bamboos covered with thatch. Thus a special form of curved roof was devised for the purpose and became in course of time a fixed convention, almost all buildings of whatever material displaying this feature, or at least containing in their formation the curved cornice which represented it'. It thus appears that the Islamic architecture in Bengal had been gradually becoming more and more associated with the local practices which reached, as we shall see a little later, its maximum height in the later Ilyās Shāhī period. Now a question arises why the architecture of the period bears so much closer contact with indigenous practices and traditions. It has been stated in chapter I that during the rule of the independent Sultāns Bengal was practically surrounded by the hostile powers of Jaunpūr on the west, Orissā on the south-west and Kāmārūp on the north. Apart from these Bengal was politically isolated, as already mentioned from Delhi, the main centre of Islamic culture of the then Indian sub-continent. It is thus very likely that all these factors combinedly led the Bengal Sultāns, for their own sake, to effect a synthesis between the indigenous culture and that which the Muslims brought with them from Central and Western Asia, mainly Persia. This synthesis became, however, very much pronounced in the architectural activities. And again the local practices pre-dominate in this synthesis, for which the architectural style of the period can reasonably be called 'National'.

With the dissolution of the Ganesha regime the old Ilyās Shāhī rule was restored with the capital once again at Lakhnawati (Gaur). This new dynasty is known as the later Ilyās Shāhī dynasty in the history of Bengal. The main interests of the rulers of this dynasty lay mainly in the building art. Nāsir Uddīn Mahmūd Shāh I (1437 - 59), the first ruler of this line, laid the foundations of the citadel and the palace of Gaur¹, which by himself and his successors were further embellished with magnificent architectural specimens. Forts, khanqahs, mosques, gates, bridges and tombs were the main types of buildings of the period. They all depict a common style, made up by a uniform technique, concept and vision, and above all an ideal suited to the climate and soil of the country. The detailed account of all these buildings show the culmination of those traits that were set rolling with the monuments of the early period. The architecture thus reached its classical phase - a quality which is well understood in the balanced proportion of different component parts of a building as well as in the appropriate manner of its ornamentation. The terracotta art has now been completely assimilated and masterly applied to enhance the exuberance of the building. The marvellous blending of the decorative motifs with constructional features of the building as a whole deserves high appreciation, which goes only to the master builders of the time.

The Dākhlī Darwāza, the Tāntipārā mosque at Gaur proper and the Darasbarī mosque at Rājshāhī are some of the superb examples of the classical phase of Islamic architecture in Bengal. Built either under the

¹ HE, II, pp. 130 - 31.

patronisation of Nasir Uddin Mahmud Shah or of his son Barbak Shah (1459 - 74)¹, the majestic building of Dakhil Darwaza served as the main approach to the citadel of Gaur from the north, and provides us with the earliest existing example of a gate-building complete by itself in the true Bengali style. This massive gateway of brick, with its every part being proportionately planned, has been constructed by the genius of the masons of Bengal. What the Bengali craftsmen failed to do at the Adina masjid, that they achieved a century later in this Dakhil Darwaza which is a compact giant structure like a small intimate palace. Marshall² highly appreciates this building for its architectural dignity and power, and the virility of the building once again reveals that the Sultans still retained their grandiose ideals. As regards the appropriate arrangement of the various parts of the building P. Brown³ remarks, 'The alternation of the surfaces of its facade by means of the turrets and the bastions produces striking contrasts of light and shade, and the surfaces are enriched by a certain amount of ornamentation in terracotta consisting of such motifs as flaming suns, rosettes, hanging lamps, fretted borders, decorative niches and other patterns judiciously distributed. In design the Dakhil Darwaza implies an interesting fusion of the classic and the romantic, with traces of the indigenous or rustic. The

¹ A. H. Dani, Op.cit., P. 99.

² Op.cit., Pp. 604 - 05.

³ Op.cit., P. 40.

classic is represented by the grand shape and proportion of the portal and its arched portico, and the romantic quality may be seen in the position and slope of the corner bastions, while the influence of the country may be observed in the ingenious surface treatment by a system of vertical and upright lines and mouldings thus presenting a naively elementary pattern of rectangles'. Mention should be made that the tapering towers with their cupolas are very likely derived from the Tughlaq architecture, but these have been fully Bangalised here. Unlike the plain circular towers of the Delhi monuments such as to be seen in the Kālān (c. 1370) and the Khirkī mosques (c. 1375), the towers have here been faceted and divided by projected bands adorned further in the typical Bengali fashion with local terracotta ornamentation.

The achievement of Bākhil Darwāza was subsequently heightened by the ten-domed Tāntipārā mosque (1480), a good specimen of the later Ilyās Shāhī style of Bengali Islamic architecture. This enclosed typical Bengali mosque once again revives the old oblong multi-domed mosque plan of Zafar Khān Ghāzī in Hooghly. But unlike the Hooghly example the present mosque speaks of harmonious proportions and grace and thus incorporates the spirit of the time. Its low facade with two centred pointed archways, curved cornices and parapets, octagonal corner towers divided by mouldings, highly decorated rectangular panels in the off-sets which are demarcated by a horizontally drawn line going althrough the middle of the walls, square apartment like spaces in the interior made up by stone pillars and covered by hemispherical domes on Bengali pendentives, rich terracotta ornamentation and other details have been executed very

tastefully and accurately. For the rich and effective ornamentation Cunningham¹ calls it the 'finest edifice of all in Gaur', and this gives the building an appearance of a female like character. Marshall² supports the view of Cunningham and says that in the matter of ornamentation the 'Tāntīpārā masjid marks the zenith of the Bengal school'. Another important building of this period already cited is the Darasbarī mosque which, though has been much damaged, still bears the mark of master craftsmanship. In its style, decoration and chaste designing it resembles very much the Tāntīpārā mosque, but there is a great difference in lay-out and general features. While the Tāntīpārā is a two-aisles deep oblong mosque, the present one exhibits a three-aisles deep plan, a style which appeared a little earlier in the Bari masjid (1477)³ at Chhota Pānduā. But a new development of the Darasbarī mosque is represented by its front vārāṇḍā, hitherto unheard in the multi-domed buildings in Bengal. The type is subsequently noticed only in the Bara Sonā masjid (1526) at Gaur built by Sultān Naṣrat Shāh of the Husain Shāhī dynasty.

Mention should now be made of two other monuments which represent the later Ilyas Shāhī style. They are the Chota Pānduā minār (C.1477)⁴

¹ ASIR, XV, 1882, P.62.

² Op.cit., P.605.

³ This dating of the mosque has been fixed by an inscription. See A.B.M. Husain, The Manara, Op.cit., P.62; BPP, XIV, Pt.I, 1917, Pp.111-12. But it has been dated C.1300 A.D. by A.H-Dani, Op.cit., Pp.48-49, Pl.V, No.8.

⁴ A. B. M. Husain, The Manara, Op.cit., P. 62.

and the Fīroz minār (1487 - 90) at Gaur. The two buildings are important in the sense that they are the only two surviving maḍhanas in the whole history of Islamic architecture in Bengal¹. In some respects, however, the two manāras appear to have been inspired by the Persian influenced Qutb Manāra at Delhi, but in other features such as the decorative details they are said to have been the 'product of Bengali architecture'².

For our purpose it is now essential to divert attention to a group of monuments in the south Bengal i.e. Khalīfatabād, which are interestingly built on a uniform style called by A. H. Dani³ and others⁴ the 'Khān Jahānī style'. The style is certainly named so after Khān Jahān who flourished in the middle of the 15th century and founded Khalīfatabād. The style, however, derives its inspiration partly from the Tughlaq architecture at Delhi, but mainly from the Ilyās Shāhī art traditions of Bengal. Buildings representing the style mark some over all development of the Islamic architecture of the Sultānī period. Unlike the traditional octagonal corner towers of Bengal, these buildings exhibit towers circular in shape very akin to those of the

¹ See A. B. M. Husain, The Manara, Op.cit., Pp 16 and 61 - 66.

² A. H. Dani, Op.cit., P. 115.

³ Ibid., P. 28.

⁴ F. A. Khan, 'Development of Archaeology in Bangladesh', JVRM, I, 1972, P. 16; Nazim Uddin Ahmed, Purba Pakistāne Sthāpattya, Dacca, 1965, P. 14.

Tughlaq buildings of Delhi. The circular shape of the towers is one of the distinguishing characteristics of the Khan Jahan group of buildings in Bengal. Another development will be realized by the appearance of Chau-chālā-shaped vaults over the central nave of the Shāt-Gambad mosque in imitation of the wattle-hut, hitherto unheard in Bengal architecture, but appeared frequently from now onwards such as to be seen in the nave of the Darasbarī mosque and in the nave of the Chhota Sonā mosque at Pirozpūr in Rājshāhī. But more important development is to be seen in the single-domed buildings. Unlike the octagonal interior of the Eklākhi mausoleum, the first known square single-domed building in Bengal already cited, the present examples are all kept square both internally and externally. Another building of no less important merit in Khalīfatabād, but built after the time of Khan Jahan is the Mīrzaganj mosque (1465) in Paṭuākhālī district. The mosque, consisting of a square single-domed prayer chamber and a flat-topped barrel vaulted vārāndā in the east, marks a notable development over the simple kiosk type buildings in Bengal. Consequently the style was further developed and the flat-topped barrel vault of the vārāndā was replaced by three domical vaults such as the Khāniādighi mosque (C. later Ilyās Shāhī period) at Pirozpūr in Rājshāhī¹. Buildings of this type are immensely noticed in the 13th and 14th century Suljūk and Ottoman architecture in Anatolia²

¹ A. H. Dani, Op.cit., P. 112. The author also visited the building personally and it is now very dilapidated in condition.

² Oktay Aslanapa, Op.cit., P. 119.

and in Bursa.¹ However, these buildings of Khalīfatabād, built during and after the time of Khan Jahan will be discussed in details in chapter IV.

Under the Musain Shāhī the Muslim rule reached its high watermark and spread to every nook and corner of Bengal, which greatly stimulated the building activities of the time. Through the literary, epigraphical and other sources we come across the construction of numerous buildings throughout the entire kingdom of Bengal. The Musain Shāhī style of architecture, consisting mainly of gates, mosques, tombs and other religious buildings i.e. Qada Basūl, shows the continuation as well as elaboration of the classical architecture of the previous period. Not unlike those of earlier period the Musain Shāhī mosques are either single-domed or of oblong multi-domed type. The multidomed type is again of either two aisles² or three aisles deep, of which the latter type sometimes shows a central nave³ and sometimes a front domed vārāṇḍā⁴. Tombs and

¹ Abdullah Kuran, The Mosque in Early Ottoman Architecture, Chicago, 1968, Pp. 32 - 33.

² Two-aisles deep mosques are of two types - ten-domed and six-domed. The best example of a ten-domed mosque of the period is the Baghā mosque (1523) in Rājshāhī, while that of the six-domed is the Jhan Jhanīā mosque (1535) in Gaur. See A. H. Dani, Cp.cit., Pp. 125 and 159 - 60. Mosques of these types were built earlier than this period such as the Tāntipārā mosque already cited and the Bābā Adam mosque (1483) at Rāmpāl, Dacca. See Ibid., Pp. 154 - 55.

³ Two examples of this type are known in the Musain Shāhī period such as the Chhoṭa Sonā and the Gummat mosques. But the difference between them is conspicuous in the style of covering their respective naves, which has already been mentioned in this chapter.

⁴ The Barā Sonā masjid is the only example of the style in the period in question and its source of inspiration was no doubt the Darasbarī mosque already cited.

gate-way buildings generally follow the square single-domed mosque style. All these buildings, however, depict the usual curvature of the cornices and parapets and other constructional peculiarities, which we have already met with in the later Ilyās Shāhī architecture.

Some special mention should be made of the complex type of single-domed buildings of the period in question, which show further elaboration of the style noticed in the previous period. The Sura masjid in Dinājpur and the Lattan masjid in Gaur proper, being consisted of a square single-domed prayer chamber and a domed front vārāndā, must have been inspired by the Khāniā dīghī mosque of the later Ilyās Shāhī period. But unlike the simple domes in the vārāndā of the Ilyās Shāhī example, even in the Sura masjid, the middle dome of the Lattan mosque's vārāndā is of Chau-chālā shaped¹. Though the Chau-chālā vault appeared first in the later Ilyās Shāhī buildings, its setting in the vārāndā of the present single-domed building is no doubt new. The style is, however, further elaborated and developed. Hitherto in the history of Islamic architecture in Bengal the single-domed or oblong multi-domed buildings depict vārāndā only on one side, but in the Qadā Rasūl building (1531) at Gaur the central square domed-chamber is surrounded by vaulted vārāndās on three sides - the north, south and east². Another interesting example of a single-domed building, attributed to the Husain Shāhī period, is the Shābek dāngā mosque at Bāgerhāt³. It is neither square, nor is

¹ A. H. Dani, Op.cit., Pp. 120 - 24.

² Ibid., P. 127.

³ See chapter IV, Pp. 218-221.

covered by a usual hemispherical dome. It is a rectangular building covered by a single Chau-chālā shaped vault, the only known existing example of an independent Chau-chālā type mosque in the whole history of Islamic architecture in Bengal. It seems to have been inspired by the rectangular bay covered with Chauchālā vault of the central nave of such mosques as already cited.

The architecture thus prospered and elaborated under the Husain Shāhīs but did not evolve any creative ideal. As a result the art gradually stagnated. And this tendency has killed the 'very life in art'.¹ The robust and massive conception of the Adīna masjid and the Dākhil Darwāza is no more found to have been produced in this period. Greater emphasis was now given to the decorative aspects of the building than to its structural dignity. The chief merit of the Husain Shāhī architecture thus lies in its chaste and profuse ornamentation which, consisting mainly of multi-coloured and enamelled tiles, the terracotta, the stone carving and the painted plaster, distinguished it from any other styles developed in Bengal. The Bara Sonā masjid, the Qadm Rasūl building, the Gunmat masjid, the Latān masjid at Gaur, and the Chhoṭa Sonā and the Bāghā mosques in Rājshāhī are some of the superb examples to show the architectural ornamentation of the Husain Shāhī period at its best.

The tiles, although appeared in a number of later Ilyās Shāhī buildings since its inception in the Eklākhi mausoleum, are noticed profusely in the Husain Shāhī period. A. Cunningham² observes that the

¹ A. H. Dani, Op.cit., P. 27.

² ASIR, XV, Pp. 63 - 66.

'whole surface of the (Laṭṭan) masjid, both inside and outside, was once covered with glazed tiles in various patterns of four colours, green, yellow, blue and white, the pattern being formed of hexagons touching at the angles, with triangular pieces, alternately white and blue in the interstices', and 'apparently the back and side walls, as well as the front wall above the springing point of the arches (of the Gunmat masjid), were all faced with glazed tiles'. Besides, the Gumtī gate, the Bara Sonā masjid etc. are also worth mentioning for the use of glittering tiles¹. It is interesting to note that some of the hexagonal tile pieces of the Varendra Research Museum 'tally with the description of the hexagonal tiles of the Laṭṭan masjid², while V. A. Smith³ also suggests that some of the glazed tiles, now preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum, have presumably been taken from Gaur, perhaps from the same mosque. It has been pointed out earlier that tiles at the beginning were perhaps imported from Persia. But with the passage of time they were likely to have been manufactured in Gaur⁴. It is thus very probable that tiles of the Husain Shāhī monuments were of local derivation.

The terracotta ornamentation reached its climax during the Ilyās Shāhī period, but became over-elaborated in the Husain Shāhī buildings, when the endless varieties of motifs formed the subject matters of the

¹J. Marshall, Op.cit., P. 608.

²A. B. M. Husain, AJBSA, Op.cit., P. 5.

³Op.cit., P. 200.

⁴A. B. M. Husain, AJBSA, Op.cit., P. 5.

art. The best example of this art in the whole Sultānī architecture is the Bāghā masjid, which is said to have been entirely 'covered with it'¹. But for what the Husain Shāhī architecture is perhaps noted is the stone carving. After the Adina masjid the art appears to have fallen into disuse for many years but revived in this period. Abid Ali² rightly calls the Chhoṭa Sonā masjid as the best representation of stone-cutter's art in Bengal, which has also been highly appreciated by Cunningham³ as 'strikingly rich and beautiful'. The painted plaster or gilding, another mode of architectural ornamentation of the Sultānī period, is known to have appeared for the first time in the Eklākhī building⁴ and then in the two golden mosques of the Husain Shāhī⁵. Not only the domes of these two mosques, but also much of the surface ornament of the Barā Sonā mosque is stated to have been gilt⁶. This no doubt gave the building (Barā Sonā mosque) an impressive appearance which perhaps leads Fergusson⁷ to call it the 'first memorial now left at Gaur'. Painting was widely used in the early Muslim architecture such as in the monuments of the 'Umayyads, the 'Abbāsids, the Fātimids, and nearer to India in the Ghaznavid buildings at Lashkarībāzār in Afghānistān⁸. Painting also appears to have been used by the Tughlaqs of Delhi⁹ and the Sharqīs of Jaunpūr.¹⁰

¹ A. B. M. Husain, AJBSA, Op.cit., P. 5.

² Op.cit., P. 79.

³ Op.cit., Pp. 73 - 74.

⁴ A. B. M. Husain, AJBSA, Op.cit., P. 6.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ History of Indian and Eastern Architecture, II, London, 1910, P. 257.

⁸ A. U. Pope, Op.cit., P. 99.

⁹ P. Brown, Op.cit., P. 23.

¹⁰ Ibid., P. 45.

A. B. M. Husain¹ suggests that the Bengal paintings might have come either from Delhi and Jaunpūr, or from the distant lands of Islam.

Islamic architecture thus evolved under the independent Sultanate of Bengal had its own ideals of beauty and created forms, peculiarly suitable to the climate and the environment of this deltaic land. But it had gradually been replaced by a new form of art, known as the Mughal architecture of Bengal. This new form of architecture in Bengal took its inspiration from the already developed building traditions of Delhi, Agra, Lahore and Fathpūr-Sikrī. Nevertheless the local practices did not altogether disappear, for the Mughals had to use local bricks and craftsmanship for their buildings here. The expensive marble or stone, a distinctive quality of the Mughal architecture in Upper India, is not generally found in Bengal. However, the development of the Mughal architecture in Bengal can be considered under two main heads - the early Mughal and the latter Mughal. The monuments representing the former style exhibit a true transition from the pre-Mughal to the latter Mughal style just as we find in Upper India a transition from the sand-stone architecture of Akbar to the marble architecture of Shahjahan. The earliest extant monument of the transition period is the Kheruā masjid (1582) at Sherpūr in Bogrā². In its exterior plan and other details the mosque follows the pre-Mughal architectural traits of Bengal. Like the mosques of the earlier period it is oblong in plan with usual octagonal towers on the exterior angles and curved cornices and parapets. There are also two-centred archways,

¹ AJBSA, Op.cit., P. 7.

² A. H. Dani, Op.cit., Pp. 176-77; S. H. D. Kunda, 'Sherpūrer Itihāsha', RSPP, 1317 B. S. Pp. 36 - 38.

a distinguishing feature of the Sultānī architecture, in the east, north and south. Above the roof are the three hemispherical domes on two lateral arches springing from the side walls and the phase of transition is achieved by means of the characteristic pre-Mughal Bengali pendentives. In spite of these the building marks a clear departure at least in its over all style. For the first time this building set the example of a three-domed style mosque in Bengal, which henceforth with some additions and alterations had long continued in the land¹. But by far the best examples of the buildings, which prepared the grounds for the gradual development of the latter or real Mughal style in Bengal, are the Katra or Caravansarai, the Nim-sarai tower and the Jami' Masjid (1596), all at old Māldah. The former two buildings are of exceptional kind and are very much akin to the Caravansarai and the Hiran minār of Akbar at Fathpur-Sikri². The later building, in its ground plan, recalls the Kherua masjid,

¹ Such a mosque style in Bengal appears to have been of Upper Indian derivation and the earliest example of its kind is to be seen in the Jamāt Khāna mosque (C. 1320) built by 'Alā' Uddīn Khalzī at the Dargāh of Nizām Uddīn Auliya at Delhī. See J. Marshall, Op.cit., Pp. 582-83; P. Brown, Op.cit., Pp. 18-19. In the Mughal period the style developed and continued to have been practised althrough. This particular mosque style in Indian sub-continent might have been derived from the Iwan-i-Karkhā style of Persia.

² A. H. Dani, Op.cit., Pp. 171 - 73; Marg, Op.cit., P. 26. For further study, see E. W. Smith, The Mughal Architecture of Fathpur-Sikri, III, Allahabad, 1897, Pp. 35 - 37; A. B. M. Husain, Fathpur-Sikri and its Architecture, Dacca, 1970, Pp. 97 - 99.

but in other details introduces some new features. The first thing that draws our attention is that it is perhaps the first plastered brick building in Bengal¹, a distinguishing feature of the Mughal architecture of the country. Unlike the three equal square bays in the interior of the Kherua mosque, the central rectangular apartment of the present example is bigger than the flanking ones, which are square. Another change is noticed in its eastern facade. Here the central archway is given prominence by its projection, which is further characterised by being bounded with ornamental pinnacles. The projected mihrab also exhibits such pinnacles on its either angle. From this time onwards the projected fronton with pinnacles, which are very likely inspired by those of the Kalan and Khirki mosques of the Tughlaqs at Delhi², became a common feature of almost all the buildings of whatever kind in Bengal of the Mughal era.

The latter or the real Mughal style commenced with the monuments of Dacca, the provincial capital (1608 - 1703), and its environs, which all are dated from the mid. 17th century when the Mughal architecture in Upper India had already reached its prime. Monuments representing the style, however, took mainly the form of 'Idgahs, Katras, mosques, tombs, forts and bridges, but most of them unfortunately are now either in ruins or repaired even to the extent of giving modern outlook. An 'Idgah (1640), now in the modern city, the Bara Katra (1644) and the Chhota Katra (1663)

¹A. H. Dani, Op.cit., P. 194.

²See P. Brown, Op.cit., Pp. 24 - 25, Pl. XII, Fig. 1; A. B. M. Husain, The Manara, Op.cit., Pp. 146 - 47.

of north Indian derivation are some of the earliest known existing examples of the real Mughal style of architecture in Bengal. The characteristic features of these buildings, hitherto unseen, but very common from now onwards, are the semi-octagonal mihrāb (of the 'Idgāh), the four-centred and the multi-cusped arches, immense rectangular wall panellings, the Persian trellis pattern in plaster relief, particularly in the half-domes over the entrances and the horizontal merloned-parapet¹.

Mosques are generally of either square single-domed variety or of rectangular three-domed variety. The best example of the former type in the city of Dacca is the Allakuri's mosque (C. 1680). Being placed on a high plinth the mosque exhibits all the features current at the time. But its important element is the corner tower that rises above the horizontal parapet, and is topped over by plastered kiosk, which we do not find in the pre-Mughal buildings. The three-domed type is represented by Lalbāgh mosque (C. 1678). The building is important, because it marks an advance of the style by introducing some new features. In its interior arrangement the mosque shows a large square central chamber, which is flanked on either side by a small rectangular room - a system not known earlier in the land. All the three bays are covered by domes, and the central one being the largest its dome is naturally bigger than the flanking ones. Again all the domes exteriorly spring from octagonal drums and gain some height - a practice still unknown

¹R. E. M. Wheeler, Five Thousand Years of Pakistan, London, 1950, Pp. 122 - 23.

in Bengal. This is probably an imitation of the shouldered dome of the Lodi period at Delhi. But more important is that these domes are slightly bulbous in the Persian manner¹, hitherto unheard in the land. In Persia double dome with bulbous outline is said to have made its appearance for the first time in the mosque of Bibi Khānam (1399 - 1404) and in the Gūr-i-Mīr (1404), tomb of Timūr, - 'a type of dome which henceforth became a constant feature in Persian architecture'². The first Indian building to copy this sort of dome construction appears to have been the mausoleum of Humāyūn (1565) at Delhi³. From this time onward this Persian feature repeatedly appeared in Mughal buildings, the climax of which is to be seen in the Tāj Mahal (1664) at Agra built by Shāhjahān over the grave of his beloved wife Arjumand Bānū Begum⁴. It was from these Upper Indian sources that this new structural element of the Bengal monument is very likely directly derived. Another important device of the Lālbaḡh mosque is that to cover the rectangular side bays with domes a clever trick has been resorted to by introducing half domes on the sides, above which the actual dome springs on a further series of pendentives⁵. From this time, however, the central dome is always given prominence in the Mughal buildings, but different methods have been applied in different

¹R. E. M. Wheeler, Op.cit., Pp. 124 - 25.

²K. A. C. Creswell, 'The History and Evolution of the Dome in Persia', The Indian Antiquary, XLIV, 1915, Pp. 145, 150.

³Ibid., P. 156.

⁴M. A. Chaghtai, 'Indo-Muslim Architecture', ABORI, XXII, 1941, Pp.91-92; 'Indian Links with Central Asia in Architecture', Indian Art and Letters, XI, 1937, Pp. 87ff.

⁵R. E. M. Wheeler, Op.cit., P. 125.

monuments in reducing the size of the lateral domes. Two other mosques, which have more than three domes, are the Sāt-masjid or seven-domed mosque (C. 1680) and the Kārtalab Khān's mosque (C. 1700) at Dacca. The former is in fact a three-domed mosque with four smaller ones over the hollow corner towers¹, while the latter illustrates a new type in which the mosque proper, having been roofed over with five domes, is built on a high terrace of vaulted rooms below². This mosque has an interesting do-chālā roofed room added to its north side, and the earliest known existing examples of its kind (do-chālā building) in Bengal is the Fath Khān's tomb at Gaur (C. 1657 - 60)³. Being seated on a roomed platform the mosque of Khān Muhammad Mirdha (1706) at Dacca follows the mosque style of Kārtalab Khān, but the former depicts the usual three domes on the roof⁴.

Tombs generally follow the single-domed mosque style, but sometimes fronted with a varāṇḍā. The tombs of Hāzī Khwāza Shāhbāz (1674) and Darā Begum (C. mid. 17th century) bear evidence to this⁵. But more important to be cited in this connection is the mausoleum of Bībī Parī (C. 1684), known as the daughter of Nawāb Shāistā Khān, in the Lālbaḡh

¹ A. H. Dani, Op.cit., P. 200, Pl. LXIV, No. 93.

² Ibid., Pp. 202 - 03.

³ Ibid., Pp. 184 ff.

⁴ Ibid., P. 203; Aulad Hasan, Notes on the Antiquities of Dacca, Dacca, Dacca, 1904, P. 25.

⁵ A. H. Dani, Op.cit., Pp. 210 - 12.

fortress enclosure. The building is particularly noted because of its complicated plan consisting of a large central chamber surrounded by eight smaller ones, unusual in the architecture of Bengal, and of its Hindu form of ceiling made of overlapping black basalts¹. The flooring of the tomb by patterns of black marble and the covering of the internal walls by white marble are also exceptional in the history of Muslim architecture in Bengal, a land of monotonous brick-work². The general disposition of the tomb, however, reveals that it is the successor monument of the Persian influenced mausoleum of Humāyūn at Delhī and the Tājmaḥal at Agra³. In plan, however, the tomb of Bibī Mariam, who is said to have been another daughter of Šubahdār Shāista Khān (1664 - 76, 1680 - 88), at Nārāyanganj follows to some extent the tomb of Bibī Parī⁴.

In Bengal the Mughals produced two kinds of forts - the palace-fortresses and the river forts. The earliest specimen of the former type in Dacca is known to have been built by Šubahdār Islām Khān (1608-13)⁵, of which, except the surrounding wall and the eastern gateway with later restorations, nothing now survives. The spot is now marked by the present

¹ A. B. M. Husain, 'The Age of the Mughals : Art and Architecture', paper read in the All Pakistan History Conference at Rajshahi, 1968.

² Ibid.

³ Cf. J. Fergusson, Op.cit., P. 315, No.433; A. U. Pope, 'Some Interrelations between Persian and Indian Architecture', Indian Art and Letters, IX, No.1, 1935, Pp 121 - 22.

⁴ A. H. Dani, Op.cit., P. 216.

⁵ HB, II, Pp. 283 - 84.

prison house or jail of Bāṅglādeśh government¹. Another example of the type is the best preserved Lālbāgh fort (1678) which still retains within several structures of both religious and secular character, complete by themselves. The ruined palace-fortress at Mīrzānagar in Jessore² is also of this class. Of the river forts, which were built at the junction of the river-routes in order to keep in check the Magh and Pīrīngī pirates, the Hājīganj fort (C. 1608 - 12) and the Sonākonda fort in Nārāyanganj and the Idrakpūr fort (C. 1660) in Munshiganj are worth mentioning³. Forts of this class are also known to have been constructed outside the district of Dacca. The Sandwīp fort in Chittagong⁴ and several other forts in Bākerganj⁵ bear testimony to this.

The latter Mughal style, which was made popular in Dacca, was also carried to other cities and mofussil areas of Bengal. A study of the surviving monuments of these places reveals that a large majority of them are mosques. They, however, not unlike those of Dacca, are either three-domed or of single-domed type. The best examples of the former type are the mosque (1744) beside the dargāh of Shāh Jalāl in Sylhet⁶, the Jāmi' masjid of 'Azīm ush-Shāh (1699) in Burdwān⁷ and the

¹ A. H. Dani, *Op.cit.*, Pp. 220 - 21.

² See *chapter IV*, Pp. 238-43.

³ A. H. Dani, *Op.cit.*, Pp. 225 - 26.

⁴ S. M. Hasan, *A Guide to Ancient Monuments of East Pakistan*, Dacca, 1970, P. 72.

⁵ See *chapter IV*, Pp. 243-45.

⁶ A. H. Dani, *Op.cit.*, Pp. 238 ff.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Pp. 271 - 72.

Komlahpūr mosque (C. late 17th century) in Bākerganj¹. The latter type is represented by the Farukh Shiyār's mosque (1718) at Mohāsthān in Bogrā² and a number of mosques in Khulnā and Bākerganj³. Mention should also be made of the Qadm-i-Mubārrak masjid (1719) in Chittāgong⁴, and the Katra masjid (1723) in Murshidābād⁵, which are built typically of the Kārtalab Khān's mosque at Dacca.

With the fall of the Mughal rule and the rise of the British power there emerged a new form of architecture in Bengal, commonly known as the Victorian style⁶. The prominent dome, the stately minaret, the multi-foiled arch, the delicate tracery, which were the traditional features of the Mughal architecture of the land, have in this style gradually gone out of fashion, 'giving way first to a hybrid Anglo-Muslim style - half-European and half-Mughal', and lately to the more modern western trend - European, American and Brazilian⁷.

¹See chapter IV, Pp. 173-76.

²A. H. Dani, Op.cit., Pp. 255 - 56.

³See chapter IV, Pp. 207-13.

⁴A. H. Dani, Op.cit., Pp. 244 - 45.

⁵Ibid., Pp. 275 - 76.

⁶A. B. Rajput, Architecture in Pakistan, Karachi, 1963, P. 15.

⁷Ibid.

CHAPTER - IV

MONUMENTS OF KHALĪFATĀBĀD

To be well acquainted with Khalīfatabād it is essential to devote our attention to its historical monuments scattered over an area of about 6376 sq. miles¹ from the Kobādāk on the west to the Buriswar-Barisāland Aṛiāl Khān on the east². Unfortunately, however, a large majority of the buildings have disappeared and some are still in a miserable state of preservation due to the fateful hammerings of nature and the thoughtless piracy of local people for their personal use³. Some of the buildings, which are still in a fairly good order after a series of subsequent restorations and repairs by the successive Archaeological Departments, have been studied and published by various authors. But still some are left out. In this chapter an attempt has been made to make a review of the monuments already studied, and to catalogue and study those which are yet to be discussed and ^{Some of} which even no longer exist today.

¹ Calculation has been made on the basis of Census Reports of 1961 and 1974. The area, however, accounts for about 11 per cent of the total land area (55,598 sq. miles) of the country.

² See map of Khalīfatabād, Pl. I.

³ In the localities of Barabāzār, Mīrzānagar, Amādi, Bāgerhāt and Gaurnadī the author himself observed that a number of private houses have been made of bricks, which are exactly similar to those of the monuments still standing nearby in a miserable condition. These bricks were apparently taken from those monuments which once existed there. Some of the people of the localities, whom the author interviewed, also opine such.

Mention may be made that the buildings erected during the Sultānī period since the foundation of Khalīfatabād under Nāṣir Uddīn Mahmūd Shāh I (1437 - 59) follow mainly the architectural traits, which were then in vogue in Gaur, Pānduā and other parts of Bengal. But those buildings under the Mughal rule are largely in imitation of the style that was made popular in Dacca, the capital of the Bengal Subh from 1608 to 1703¹. The following discussion of the monuments, grouped under three main heads below, will give a clear understanding of what have just been cited above.

Part A : Religious Buildings;

Part B : Secular Buildings;

Part C : Non-extant Buildings.

Part A : Religious Buildings

The term 'Religious Buildings' is taken to mean those monuments, which are associated with the observance of the practices of Islām. They are generally Mosques, Tombs, Madrassas, 'Ibādatkhānas, Ribāts, Qadam-i-Rasūl, Hujras, etc. In Khalīfatabād, however, only two types of religious buildings are noticed : they are mosques and tombs. For the convenience of our study these buildings have again been sub-divided into following

¹ In some cases, however, they also show the influence of the pre-Mughal building traditions of Bengal. See Infra, Pp. 171 & 174-76.

sub-types:

1. MOSQUES

- i) Oblong Multi-domed Type;
- ii) Square Multi-domed Type;
- iii) Three-domed Type;
- iv) Simple Kiosk Type;
- v) Kiosk Type with a Vaulted Vārāṇḍā in front;
- vi) Single Chau-chālā Vaulted Type.

2. TOMBS

- i) Square Domical Structure;
- ii) Lone Sarcophagus.

MOSQUES

i) Oblong Multi-domed TypeThe Shāt-Gumbad Mosque, Bāgerhāt

(Pls. II(Fig.1), III, IV(Fig.1), V(Fig.1), VI, VII & VIII(Fig.1)).

About three miles west of the present Bāgerhāt town, on the eastern bank of the Ghorā-dīghī, stands the famous Shāt-Gumbad mosque. It is universally known to have been built by Khān Jahān, the founder-governor of the province of Khalīfatābād. The building is one of the best representative examples of the style, generally associated with the name of Khān Jahān¹.

¹ See chapter III, P. 97.

Plan and construction. Built in brick the mosque forms a vast rectangle and measures exteriorly, inclusive of the massive towers on the angles, 160 ft. from north to south by 108 ft. from east to west, while interiorly 144 ft. by 88 ft. only. The interior of the building can be entered from the east through eleven arched doorways, from the north and south each by seven and from the west by only one, the latter being placed at the western end of the bay close immediately to the north of the central nave. The building thus exhibits interiorly seven longitudinal aisles from north to south and eleven deep bays running east to west, each of which, except that immediately on the north of the central one, ends with a semi-circular mihrāb in the back wall. Of these mihrābs the central one, which is bigger than the flanking ones, shows a rectangular projection with re-entrant angles on the exterior side which extends upto the roof level breaking the only cornice band of the building.

All the entrance arches of the building are of two-centred pointed type and spring from the waist of the side walls. The facade archways, the central one of the north and south sides and the western one are set within slightly recessed rectangles. The rest of the archways show a slight variations. They are each formed of two successive arches, the exterior one being slightly smaller than that of the interior. These archways are of varying dimensions. While the central doorway in the east is of 9 ft. 6 ins. wide, the flanking ones are either 6 ft. or 5 ft. 7 ins. in breadth. Having been provided with geometric patterned iron grilles, all these doorways, except the central one in the east, are now always kept closed.

The exterior surface of the walls, excluding the eastern one, is variegated with vertical offset projections and double recesses. In the north and south walls the offset projections are pierced by arched openings, while those of the qiblah wall seem basically to be the projections of the mihrābs. The recesses, though now show merely the red-brick surface, were once perhaps decorated at their bases with moulded bands like those of the Nine-domed mosque¹ on the western bank of the Thākurdīghī. This system has no doubt removed the monotonous treatment of the exterior surface of the building. Another important feature of the building is its curved cornice. But unlike the usual curvilinear form, the cornice in the eastern facade shows a peculiar triangular pediment over the central archway (Pl. IV, Fig. 1). From the foot to the apex of the pediment the building is about 25 ft. in height, while about 22 ft. at each end.

The four flanking circular towers on the exterior angles are very massive and taper slightly towards the top. Each of these towers shows three boldly projected bands all round, of which the lowest one is the continuation of the cornice band of the building and the top one is the cornice band of the tower itself. Each tower is topped over by an open arched-chamber with a small dome as the crown. The arched windows, now covered by iron grilles, are of two-centred pointed form and set within slightly recessed rectangles. In other details the two towers of the front differ from those two on the rear corners. Each of

¹Infra, P. 154.

the front towers contains four cardinally set windows, while those at the back have only a pair, one on the south and the other on the north. The windows of the back towers are, however, not placed in the same axis. There is a anti-clock-wise turn and the difference will be about 45° . Each of the two front towers contains a spiral staircase of 26 steps inside and this leads to the arched-chamber above through an inner doorway¹ at the base of the tower. Bysack² writes that the enclosing staircase of the south-eastern tower is very 'dark and steep', while that of the north-east is 'well lighted and easy of ascent', and as such the people call the former 'Andhār Mānik' and the latter 'Raushan Mānik'. Unlike these two, the two at the back are solid and their arched-chambers above can only be entered from the roof of the building. Each of these two circular chambers is interiorly about 7 ft. 7 ins. high from the floor to the apex of the small dome and about 6 ft. 8 ins. in diameter. They are evidently smaller than those of the eastern ones. All these towers, however, vary from one another in respect of height. Upto the cornice band of the tower, the north-eastern one is 29 ft. 5 ins. high from the

¹In order to prevent the constant use of the roof of the mosque by the visitors, both the doorways at the base of the towers have recently been closed by brick-filling.

²'The Antiquities of Bagerhat', JASB, I, 1867, p. 133. But the author, who personally made an investigation on these two stair-cases and counted their steps individually in April, 1979, does not agree with the opinion of Bysack and feels that both the towers were originally equally lighted.

ground, while the south-eastern one is 30 ft. 10 ins., the north-western one 25 ft. 4 ins. and the south-western one 25 ft. 6 ins.

The most attractive and important architectural member of the mosque is its large central nave, which runs from east to west in longitudinal line. This nave, consisting of seven independent oblong bays of about 16 ft. 3 ins. by 12 ft. 9 ins. each, divides the interior of the building into two equal halves, and opens into north and south by seven pointed archways. It has seven chau-chālā coverings, resting directly on arches which spring from the stone pillars below. The side wings are divided into open square bays, numbering seventy in total. Each of these square bays, measuring not more than 12 ft. 10 ins. a side, is roofed over with an inverted cup-shaped dome supported by four intersecting pointed arches upon stone pillars. The phase of transition is achieved by means of the characteristic pre-Mughal Bengali pendentives¹. The building thus exhibits eighty one domes in all - four on the corner towers, seventy on the side wings and seven chau-chālā vaults over the central nave.

The huge domed roof, as noted above, has been supported by ten rows of pillars, six in each row, running from east to west and thus the total number of pillars is sixty. These all are 10 ft. 5 ins. in height from the pavement of the floor to the springing point of the arches. At present a large majority of the pillars, made of grey stone, are very thin, while six are very massive. Of the latter six five are of brick and the remaining one in the northern wing is completely of stone. Each

¹See chapter III, P. 81.

of the stone pillars is formed of two or three grey stone pieces placed one upon the other. The pieces are tightly joined with one another by a system of plug-holes and iron-cramps exactly in imitation of the Pāla method¹. The stone pillars have stepped square pedestals and capitals, while their shafts are octagonal which is demarcated above and below by a slightly raised band. The stepped square base and capital are same in size. The lower step of the pedestal is 1 ft. 10 ins. each side and the upper one 1 ft. 4½ ins. a side, while the octagonal shaft is of 4 ft. 8 ins. in circumference. The massive brick-pillars have simple square bases and capitals of 2 ft. 8½ ins. a side and the octagonal shafts in the middle are 8 ft. 9 ins. in circumference. The only massive stone pillar already cited, formed of sized black stone blocks, is wholly square and tapers slightly towards the top. Its base measures 2 ft. 9 ins. a side. It is important to note that one of the brick-pillars had been examined at the initiative of Mr. Nizam Uddin Khan² and was found to contain within the same type of facettted stone pillars already cited. Furthermore, some of the slender stone pillars still have at their bases all round the traces of brick-foundation of about 2 or 3 ins. in height.

¹ See P. Brown, Indian Architecture (Buddhist and Hindu Period), Bombay, 1954, p. 152.

² Mr. Nizam Uddin Khan is now a conservator of the Department of Archaeology, Government of Bānglādesh. The author, while visiting the building, had a talk with him.

It may thus be inferred that all the pillars of this kind had originally an outer veneer of bricks, which now have disappeared with the passage of time¹. The pilasters numbering thirty-two in total are all made of brick and topped over by black stone imposts, from where rise the intersecting arches. These pilasters also have square bases (of which two sides are partly and one side is fully exposed now) and octagonal shafts. Four facets of the shafts are visible externally.

It is also said that the northern bay close to the central nave at one time had two brick platforms - one near the central mihrāb and the other at the eastern side of the bay². Both these platforms have now disappeared and if they existed at all originally must have served some purposes, which will be discussed a little later.

About one hundred yards to the east of the building there still stands in a fair state of preservation a pointed-arched gateway for entrance to the mosque area (Pl. V, Fig. 1). The entire gate, with a thickness of 8 ft., is 26 ft. from north to south, while the archway itself is 7 ft. 10 ins. in span. As usual the cornice of the gateway is curvilinear in form. However, the existence of this gateway at once gives rise to the question if the mosque had originally been surrounded by an outer enclosure. At the time of restoration of this gateway under the supervision of Mr. Nizam Uddin Khan a continuous brick-foundation, running straightway to north and south from each end of the gateway, has been

¹ Cf. J. Westland, A Report on the District of Jessore (Revised edition), Calcutta, 1874, P. 12.

² Ibid.

discovered by an experimental excavation at about 2½ ft. below the ground level. Furthermore some old men of the locality told that they had seen a similar brick-built gate in a very dilapidated condition on the northern side of the mosque, but unfortunately no trace of it now exists. From all these it can be surmised that the mosque originally had an enclosing wall to form a *ziāda* all round it.

Decoration. The decoration of the building has been carried out mostly in terracotta and brick-setting, and a rare example of stone carving in low relief. The most conspicuous parts where these ornamentations are concentrated are the *mihrābs*, the entrance arches, the raised mouldings of the corner towers, cornice of the building and the gateway, the angles of the intersecting arches below the domes and the interior of the *chau-chālā* vaults.

The outer cornice of the building, the projected band and the cornice of the four corner towers are ornamented with lozenges. The upper part of the slightly recessed rectangle, within which each of the entrance arches is set, shows both internally and externally a single or double mouldings of ornamental bricks, while the spandrels of the arch and other spaces are decorated with varieties of designs. In the east the spandrels of the central opening arch are enriched with two large full blown rosettes, while its face at the key point is ornamented with a big lozenge placed perpendicularly (Pl. IV, Fig. 1). This lozenge patterned terracotta plaque, though now bare, must have at one time, not unlike those in the interior of the mosque, been embellished

with a diaper motif. Above are three slightly projected bands, of which the lowest one contains a series of hanging flowers, the middle one lozenges alternating with small rosettes and the top a series of four-petalled flowers. In between these bands are two sunk panels. The upper one is decorated with a scroll that forms loops containing lotus flowers. The remaining panel depicts a row of tri-lobbed arched niches. Each of these niches is further enriched with varieties of designs like palm tree, interlocking looped squares with a small rosette in the centre, the plant motifs with flowers and leaves. This whole composition is crowned by a beautiful triangular pediment (Pl. IV, Fig. 1), hitherto unheard in Bengal architecture, but unfortunately its ornamentation has now completely disappeared. This archway again is flanked on either side in the upper part by a large rosette encircled by four other smaller ones. The rest of the entrance arches are also furnished exteriorly with more or less the same sort of terracotta ornamentations.

Internally also the spandrels and the upper part of the entrance arches are mostly decorated with terracotta, the motifs of which vary from entrance to entrance. In the north wall the third entrance-arch from the east shows in its upper part a row of necklace designs (Pl. VII, Fig. 1). Each of these necklaces, being formed of three strings of bead and four simple drawn lines, depicts within its semi-circular area a small lotus flower. In the same wall the first archway from the east has in its upper part an interlocking pattern, which contains diaper motifs (Pl. VII, Fig. 2). The same place of the fourth

entrance-arch (from the north) in the eastern wall is ornamented with two intersecting scrolls with leaves and rosettes (Pl. VII, Fig. 3).

The western wall is interiorly embellished with ten engrailed arched mihrābs, with decoration copied from the Gaur style. The central mihrāb, unlike the side ones and those of other buildings in Khalīfatā-bād, is completely made of grey sand-stone and its ornamentation is carried out in Muslim pattern of carving in shallow and low relief. Most of the motifs of the decoration have disappeared, yet much is still preserved in decaying condition. The large multi-cusped arch of the mihrāb springs from the two decorated stone pilasters. The spandrels of the arch are ornamented with tree-motif which is further enriched with branches and leaves and a prominent rosette encircled by eight smaller ones. Immediately above the apex of the arch runs a horizontal band decorated with a row of lozenge alternating with a rosette, each of which is separated from the other by a vertically drawn line. The bases of the pilasters of the mihrāb arch are square, of which three facets are viewed externally, while the shafts are octagonal. The facets of the bases depict cusped arches, each containing a rosette and their spandrels also show the same rosette. The octagonal shaft is ornamented with a pair of narrow bands, each depicting a frieze of lozenge alternating with a rosette. The facets of the shafts are also enriched with intersecting scrolls, which, forming loops, contain rosettes and other decorative patterns. The mihrāb niche is interiorly divided into two halves by a slightly raised band carved with a row of lozenge alternating with a rosette. The upper part of the niches, which

takes the form of a half-dome, exhibits immediately above the dividing band a row of lotus petals, topped over with another flat band of jali-work. Above this runs horizontally a row of rosettes, of which the central rosette is the largest. The lower half of the niche, which is semi-circular in design, is ornamented with two horizontal rows of rectangular panels, nine in each row. Each of these panels, being separated from the other by a thin band, shows a cusped arch depicting a rosette in the centre and a tree-motif intertwining similar small rosette in the spandrels. From the middle of the dividing band of the niche falls down a single chiselled chain, that ends with an oblong pendant. This pendant also contains a carved cusped arch, which has a rosette in the centre and in the spandrel.

The arched-mihrāb is again enclosed by a broad rectangular border of stone. The carvings of the border have completely ~~been~~ disappeared, except that in the middle of its horizontal portion is now seen a large rosette. The border, however, is topped over by two boldly projected stepped mouldings, each of which is decorated with a row of rosettes, a row of lotus petals and a row of lozenges. Above the first moulding from the top is a frieze of blind crests, while underneath is noticed a series of tri-lobbed arched niches. This whole composition is crowned over in the middle by an inlaid square black stone panel. In the centre of this panel is a large tiered rosette encircled by seven other smaller ones (Pl. VI, Fig. 1).

All the side mihrābs, numbering nine, are entirely made of brick showing cuspings in their arches. Although much of their

ornamentations have disappeared, enough still survives to show that these all, not unlike the stone carvings of the central mihrāb, were once exquisitely decorated with terracotta. The subject matters of the ornamentations are primarily the same, but they differ in their arrangement from mihrāb to mihrāb. In this connection mention may be *made* of the semi-circular portion of the third mihrāb niche from the north, which, unlike that of the central mihrāb, has six horizontal sunk panels. Each of these panels is separated from the other by a projected band formed of several stepped-tiers of ornamental bricks. From the top the first panel is decorated with floriate motifs, the second with interlacing scrolls, the third with intersecting scrolls with rosettes, the fourth with floral scrolls, the fifth with interlocking designs and lozenges containing diaper. The last one is now bare.

The square bases of both the stone and brick pillars are chamfered on the angles, which are further enriched with a row of upright and inverted triangles. The shafts of the pillars are decorated with raised bands at intervals. The facets of the square bases of all the brick-pilasters are ornamented with a series of upright triangles, while their shafts are distinguished by mouldings at regular intervals. Each of these mouldings is decorated with a row of single motif, such as either small eight-petalled flowers, or diapers or lozenges (Pl. VI, Fig. 2).

The interior of the north and south walls shows decorative cusped arched-niches, numbering twelve in each wall. These were provided perhaps to keep lamps for enlightening the mosque during the

night. Each arch of these niches is topped over by a couple of mouldings. While each of these mouldings show rosettes alternating with diaper motifs, their interspaces depict floral scrolls. These niches, however, are so arranged that each brick pilaster is flanked on either side by a niche.

The seven chau-chālā vaults over the central nave show internally a delicate pattern formed by the intersection of rafters and horizontally drawn thin brick-bands, which is an exact copy of the bamboo frame-work of the chau-chālā thatched cottage in Bengal. This frame is further distinguished by lotus flowers in terracotta, each being placed on the meeting-point of the rafters and horizontal bands (Pl.VIII, Fig. 1). The brick-setting consisting of horizontal rows of bricks set corner-wise and edge-wise, as noticed above in the Bengali pendentives of the transition of all the domes in the side-wings is really unique in its kind and gives an appearance of a delicate carved pattern in high relief (Pl.XVII, Fig. 1). The technique continued to be used widely both for constructional and decorative purposes throughout the Sultānī period and even in several monuments erected during the Mughal period¹.

The exterior surface of the gateway-wings is relieved with vertical recesses and off-set projections. The recesses, which rise upto curved top of the gateway having crossed its cornice band, are ornamented at their bases with a pair of mouldings depicting the usual lozenge pattern. These recesses again have in their upper registers

¹Infra, Pp. 171 & 212.

varieties of rosettes. Interiorly also each of the two wings of the gateway is decorated and depicts in the upper part a pair of small eight-petalled flowers and in the bottom part a deep arched alcove. These alcoves, unlike those in the interior of the mosque proper, take a simple pointed form. The absence of engrailing here is no doubt due to the restorer's hand. Both internally and externally spandrels of the gateway-arch now depict only a pair of small rosettes, while its faces at the key-point a similar rosette only. The gentle curved cornice band, like those of the mosque and the corner towers, are decorated with lozenge motifs. Underneath the cornice band runs horizontally a sunk panel, which is embellished with rosettes in circles formed by the intersection of two leafy-scrolls (Pl. VII, Fig. 3).

Restoration and repair. In the late 19th century 'the mosque is known to have been seriously damaged and the tops of the four corner towers have fallen down'¹. 'Almost all the domes closed to the wall have been seriously damaged, four of them have been opened out at the top and twenty-four broken near the supporting arches. The entire roof is covered with a thick jungle, the roots of which have gone deep into the arches and vaults (domes) thereby damaging them seriously. Big trees of the species 'Ficus Religiosa' have grown over the walls and the roots have penetrated almost half their thickness. The people of the locality for the sake of fuel cut down these trees and jungle almost

¹ W. W. Hunter, A Statistical Account of Bengal, II (Indian Reprint), 1973, P. 229.

every year in winter and summer which serves to make them throw out their roots abundantly in all directions with renewed vigour'¹. Two Faqirs are known to have then kept the interior of the mosque free from pollution and picked up a living from the bounty of the visitors and pilgrims who came to the place². Suggestions, however, were made for the restoration of the monument in 1896³. In 1903 - 04 provisions were made to protect it against further ruin through partial restorations, when the sanctioned amount for the conservation works at Bāgerhāt was ~~Rs.~~ 15,401⁴. Out of this a sum of Rs. 500 is said to have been paid as 'compensation for destroying a great number of areca palms around the Sāt Gambuz mosque' with a view to lay its exterior open to view and to fence off the ground around the ruin⁵. In 1907 - 08 one half of the roof was repaired, when 28 of the domes with interspaces were restored by the Department of Archaeology⁶. Under special repair order 'Rs. 5,053 in addition to Rs. 5,403 previously spent were devoted to repairs' to the tomb of Khān Jahan and his Great mosque of Shāt-Gumbad in 1917-18⁷.

¹ List of Ancient Monuments in Bengal, Calcutta, 1896, P. 141.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ ASIAR, 1903 - 04, P. 53.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ ASIAR, 1917 - 18, P. 9.

⁷ Ibid.

This time most of the remaining domes together with miscellaneous items were made secure¹. In 1929 - 30 the floor was repaired at a total cost of Rs.2,996 by 'furnishing a new brick-on-edge flooring in place of the old one'². Extensive repairs were done to this fine ancient mosque, and its floor had been 'thoroughly renewed with brick-on-edge during the year 1930 - 31'³. In 1931 - 32⁴ earthen bands of considerable height were raised on three sides (north, east and south) of the building with a view to preventing the rain water from flowing into the compound. Traces of these earthen bands are still well noticed.

Under annual repair order some minor works were done to the mosque at a total cost of Rs.16,616, spent in sixteen financial years since 1947 - 48 to 1963 - 64⁵. Provisions were also made under special repair programme for the large scale restoration of the mosque in 1960 - 61⁶. This year a brick pavement of 3ft. in width was made around the base of the mosque to strengthen its foundation; drains covered with R. C. slabs were provided on each corner of the building for taking off the rain water from the compound; some of the wire-nettings of the

¹ ASIAR, 1917 - 18, P.9.

² ASIAR, 1929 - 30, P. 44.

³ ASIAR, 1930 - 34, P. 37.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Unpublished Manuscript, File No.14-A, Yrs. 1963 - 64 & 1964 - 65, now preserved in the Office of the Superintendent of Archaeology, Government of Bangladesh, Dacca.

⁶ Unpublished Manuscript, File No.14-A, Yr. 1960 - 61, Op.cit.

of the entrance-ways were replaced by new ones; a historical protection notice board (of the mosque) was fixed in the compound, and some of the domes, through which rain water percolated and damaged the walls and floor, were repaired with a coating of coaltar and pitch mixed with coarse sand¹. All these works took Rs.5,336 to be completed². A sum of Rs.30,000 was spent in two financial years of 1963 - 64 and 1964 - 65 to make some patch works to the salt affected walls and to cover the entire disintegrated floor by new brick-soling with cement³.

With a view to maintaining the sacredness of the interior of the mosque, the eleven eastern doorways, the six southern doorways, the seven northern doorways and only one doorway in the qiblah wall were provided with iron-grilles in 1974 - 75⁴. In the same year all the arched-windows of the upper chambers of the corner towers were also provided with iron-grilles⁵. To meet up the expenditure of all these works done to the mosque in 1974 - 75 a grant of Rs.61,058 was advanced⁶. In the

¹ Unpublished Manuscript, File No.14-A, Yr. 1960 - 61, Op.cit.

² Ibid.

³ Unpublished Manuscript, File No.14-A, Yr. 1962 - 63, Op.cit.

⁴ Unpublished Manuscript, File No.14-A, Yr. 1974 - 75, Op.cit. The remaining one doorway in the south wall, which is second from the west, was closed sometime before by masonry grilles.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

financial year 1976 - 77 the only one extant gateway to enter into the mosque compound from the east was completely restored and its opening was provided with collapsible iron grilles at a cost of Rs.50,000¹. In order to cover the thirty domes and two chau-chālā vaults with lime terracing a sanction of Rs.46,000 has been made for the financial year 1978 - 79², and the work is being carried on.

General observation. The mosque is now known not only as the largest extant building in Khalīfatabād but also one of the greatest Muslim religious buildings in the whole of Bengal. From outside the mosque with its four beautiful heavy corner towers and seventy-seven domes over the roof gives a wonderful spectacle to the eye (Pl. II, Fig. 1), while the 'interior is a fine spacious apartment albeit somewhat marred by the exaggerated slenderness of its stone pillars'³. Being the greatest architectural achievement of Khān Jahān, the mosque shows the continuity of the style that had already been set rolling in Bengal, and depicts side by side some new developments taking inspiration both from the land and from outside Bengal.

Dictated by the heavy monsoonic rain the building is typically a Bengali mosque - a compact building, having only the prayer chamber

¹ Unpublished Manuscript, File No.14-A, Yrs. 1976-77 & 1977 - 78, Op.cit.

² Unpublished Manuscript, Five Years Development Project File, No.21, Yr. 1978 - 79, Op.cit.

³ J. Marshall, 'The Monuments of Muslim India', Cambridge History of India, III, Cambridge, 1928, P. 604.

with an open grassy courtyard in front and a large tank on the back. The disproportionately made short doorways are also conditioned by the same factor. This covered type of mosque is preserved throughout the pre-Mughal period, though a lone example of the orthodox style¹ is known from the Adina masjid at Hazrat Pānduā. The multi-domed style of the mosque, according to A. H. Dani² and Marshall³, seems to have been borrowed from the Tughlaq architecture of Delhi. But the mosque under discussion is completely different in style from the Kālān (C. 1370) and the Khirkī (C. 1375) mosques of Delhi. While the Shāt-Gumbad is a multi-domed structure without courtyard, the Delhi examples are cloistered structures whose courtyards are divided into four sections by two arcades crossing at right angles with a judicious use of a cluster of domes over each of the meeting-point of the cloisters. Moreover, long before the appearance of the multi-domed tendency in Tughlaq architecture, this system appears to have been followed in the mosque of Zafar Khān Ghāzī (1298) at Tribeni in Hooghly. Thus the multi-domed characteristic of the Shāt-Gumbad and other subsequent mosques may be said to have taken from Bengal, which in turn was perhaps inspired by the domical vaults of contemporary Persian mosques such as those of the Ghaznavid and Seljūk periods. It may

¹ The term 'orthodox style' is taken to mean here the standard plan of a mosque, achieved for the first time in Islam in the Great mosque of Damascus (705 - 15).

² Muslim Architecture in Bengal, Dacca, 1961, Pp. 146 - 47.

³ Op. cit., P. 604.

thus be suggested that while Fīroz Shāh Tughlaq led expeditions against Bengal, he might have been impressed by the multi-domed feature of the Persian influenced Bengal mosques and introduced it first in the Kotlah mosque erected immediately after his first Bengal expedition in 1354¹. The feature then began appearing traditionally in other mosques of the time. Nevertheless the Tughlaqian influence on the Shāt-Gumbad may not completely be ignored. The bastion-like corner towers with their rounded cupolas and two-storeyed conception, extended far above the main line of the facade of the mosque, appear to have been designed in imitation of those of the Kālān and Khirkī masjids of Delhi². One thing should now be mentioned that the idea of furnishing the building with a tower on the exterior angles is perhaps of local derivation i.e., from the corner bamboo-posts of the thatched cottage appeared practically for the first time in the Khlākhi building, but in their circular shape and other details the Tughlaq influence seems to be deep-rooted. This circular shape of the corner towers is really an important feature of the building, which distinguishes the Khān Jahān group of monuments from other buildings of Khalīfatabād, even of Bengal.

The interior plan of the mosque - a large central nave with the side wings - follows a style that was first noticed in Bengal in the sanctuary of the Adina mosque, which in turn might have been derived from other earlier standard mosques, erected in imitation of the Jāmi' masjid of Damascus. The chau-chālā vaults over the central nave, hitherto unheard

¹ J. A. Page, A Memoir on Kotlah Fīroz Shāh, Delhi, 1937, P. 1.

² P. Brown, Indian Architecture (Islamic Period), Bombay, 1942, Pls. XII, Fig. 1 and XV, Fig. 1.

in Bengal architecture and noticed subsequently in the Chhota Sonā and the Lattan mosques at Gaur, appear~~s~~ to have originated from the chau-chālā hut of Bengal, but to take the place of the Persian barrel vault of the Adina mosque, just mentioned above. The triangular pediment over the central doorway in the eastern facade, which is placed to the line of the ridges of the chau-chālā vaults of the nave, may also be said to have derived from the gable ends of the do-chālā hut¹. This feature has been copied over the central doorway of the Agārośindhur mosque (1662) in Mymensingh district². The curvature of the cornice is typical of the Bengali style of architecture having been appeared for the first time in the Eklaḥī building. This special form of curved roof has been devised in imitation of the village-hut in order to throw off the excess of water during the heavy rain so common in this deltaic land. A series of projecting and recessed chases in the exterior surface of the walls (excluding the eastern wall) of the building is also suggestive of the 'frame-work of a wood and wattle hut' of the land³. The stone pillars, with square bases and capitals and octagonal shafts, and almost the same sort of pilasters with tapering tops and moulded ornamental bands that

¹ It should be mentioned here that the pediment of this mosque is much wider than the pediments of the Greek or Roman architecture, pointing thus to a separate source, distinguished from the classical examples.

² A. H. Dani, Op.cit., Pl. LXXVIII, No. 107.

³ P. Brown, Op.cit. (Islamic Period), P. 36.

support the mihrāb arches, are known to have been designed directly after the Pāla monolithic pillars¹. The decoration of the mosque, consisting mainly of terracotta and a rare example of stone carving in the central mihrāb, is decidedly of Hindu origin, but the manner of their execution is Muslim being delicate and shallow. Even the majority of the decorative motifs such as lotuses, lotus petals, rosettes, cusped-arch designs, necklaces, lozenges, chain and bell patterns, creepers, diapers etc. are of local derivation, which have already made their appearance in the early Muslim monuments of Bengal. The division of the interior side of the central mihrāb niches into a series of rectangular panels by raised bands is exactly in imitation of that of the mihrāb niches of the Adina masjid², executed in imitation of the Persian style³. The engraving of the mihrāb arches, although is sometimes suggested to have taken from the pre-Islamic Bengal monuments⁴, was probably derived from such examples as are seen in the screen of the Arhā-i-din-ka Jhompra at Ajmer, in the decorative niches in the lower part of the screen arches of the Quwwat al-Islām mosque and in the mihrābs of the tomb of Iltutmish at Delhi⁵. Pre-Islamic Indian

¹ Marg, XXVII, March, 1974, P. 36, Figs. 12-14.

² A. H. Dani, Op.cit., Pl. XI, Nos. 21 - 22.

³ Shallow Panels in square or rectangular frames is generally taken to be a Sassanian feature, later on emulated in Muslim buildings of Persia.

⁴ E. B. Havell, Indian Architecture, London, 1913, Pp. 78 - 88; R. E. M. Wheeler, Five Thousand Years of Pakistan, London, 1950, Pp. 109 - 10.

⁵ P. Brown, Op.cit. (Islamic Period), P. 13, Pls. VI, Fig. 1 and VIII; A. B. M. Husain, 'Persian Influence on the Formation of Indo-Muslim Architecture', paper written for Professor A. B. M. Habibullah Felicitation Volume.

engrailed arches are of tri-lobbed pattern which were designed to contain the statue of Buddha, but the muslim engrailings are of multi-lobbed nature and was derived in imitation of the Sāsānian examples such as to be seen in the great arch of the Tāg-i-Kisrā at Ctesiphon¹. In the Muslim architecture, prior to the example of Ajmer, such instances are seen in the Great Palace at Ukhaidir and in Sāmarrā². It is likely that similar examples existed in the Qhaznavid, Ghorid or Seljūk architecture³, which supplied many of the basic features of Muslim architecture in India. Like the engrailed arch, the origin of the pointed arch has been traced by Havell⁴ and Marshall⁵ to pre-Islamic Bengal. But this feature attained so much popularity in Muslim architecture that the views of Havell and Marshall can hardly be accepted. The earliest known buildings in Islām to exhibit this feature are those of the 'Umayyads in Syria such as the Great mosque of Damascus (705 - 15), the Qusayr 'Amra (712 - 15), 'Umar's mosque at Boṣrā (720 - 21), the Ḥammām as-Ṣarakh (725 - 30), the mosque of Qasr al-Hair palace (728 - 29) etc. According to K. A. C. Creswell⁶ and others⁷ the pointed arch of these monuments is of pre-Muslim Syrian origin

¹ A. B. M. Husain, Op.cit.; David McCutcheon, 'Hindu-Muslim Artistic Continuities in Bengal', JASP, XIII, No.3, 1968, Pp. 237 - 38.

² Ibid.; E. Kuhnelt, Islamic Art and Architecture, London, 1966, P. 53, Fig. 9.

³ A. B. M. Husain, Op.cit.; David McCutcheon, Op.cit., Pp. 237 - 38.

⁴ Op.cit., Pp. 4 - 7, 57.

⁵ Op.cit., P. 600.

⁶ EMA, I, Pt. I, Oxford, 1969, P. 443.

⁷ A. U. Pope, 'Some Interrelations between Persian and Indian Architecture', Indian Art and Letters, IX, No.1, 1935, P.106; A.B.M.Husain, Arab Sthāpattya, Dacca, 1979, P. 107.

noticed in the church at Qasr ibn Wardān (561 - 64) in north Syria. Subsequently this feature travelled from Syria to its neighbouring land of Persia and is known to have appeared for the first time in the Tārīk-Khāna at Dāmghān (later half of the 8th century)¹ and then widely used in the monuments of the Sāmānids², the Karakhanids³, the Ghaznavids⁴, the Seljūks⁵ and so on. In India such instances occurred in the screen of the Quwwāt al-Islām mosque at Delhi and the Arhā-i-dīn-ka Jhompra at Ajmer added by Iltutmish. It is from this source that the pointed arch of the Bengal monuments, noticed for the first time in the mosque of Zafar Khān Ghāzī at Tribeni (1298), was perhaps directly derived, for Bengal was then ruled by the nominees of the Delhi authority.

An important feature of the mosque, though unusual in Bengal but noticed in many congregational mosques in India⁶, is a small doorway in the qiblah wall, the idea of which might have originally been borrowed from those of the early mosques in Islām⁷. In early Islām the postern opening of the mosque is known to have been used only by the Caliphs' Governors or Imams. In this connection a reliable example is that once

¹ A. U. Pope, Persian Architecture, New York, 1965, P. 80.

² Ibid.

³ Oktay Aslanapa, Turkish Art and Architecture, London, 1971, Pp. 46 - 54.

⁴ A. U. Pope, Persian Architecture, Op.cit., P. 99.

⁵ Ibid., P. 106, Figs. from P. 107.

⁶ ASIAR, 1903 - 04, P. 53.

⁷ The earliest mosque in Islām that exhibits doorway in the qiblah side is the mosque of Kūfa (638/39). See EMA, Op.cit., P. 22.

Ziyād, the governor of Basra, says, "It is not fitting that Imām should pass through the people"¹ and thus a doorway was provided in the qiblah side of the Basra mosque communicating with the Dār al-Imāra². It is thus not unlikely that the western doorway of the Shāt-Gumbad mosque was reserved for Khān Jahān, the governor of Khalīfatābād, who had his residence³ a few yards to the north of the mosque. Of the two brick-platforms, already cited, the one near the central mihrāb was perhaps used by Khān Jahān while transacting administrative business, and the other near the eastern doorway of the bay was perhaps used by a religious teacher, who sat on it and expounded Islamic teachings to the people of students. It thus appears that the Shāt-Gumbad served triple purposes - firstly, a congregational mosque; secondly, a parliament or assembly

¹This remark of Ziyād bin Abīhī, recorded by Balādhurī and Yākūt, has been cited by Creswell. See EMA, Op.cit., P. 45.

²Having been appointed governor in 665 by Mu'awiya Ziyād bin Abīhī rebuilt the Basra mosque (635). This time the doorway was made in the qiblah wall and the Dār al-Imāra (Governor's house) was moved from the north-east to the qiblah side, so that Ziyād, from his house, could reach the mosque directly through this newly introduced doorway without being disturbed by the occupants of the mosque. See EMA, Op.cit., P.45. The mosque of Ibn Ṭūlūn in Cairo also shows doorways and the Dār al-Imāra in the qiblah side. See M. S. Briggs, Muhammadian Architecture in Palestine and Egypt, Oxford, 1924, P. 50.

³Infra, Pp. 251-52.

hall¹; and thirdly, a madrassa like the Jāmi' mosque of Isfahān² and the masjid-e-Jāmi' at Ardistan (c. 1180)³.

Some mention should now be made on the origin of the name of the building. Literally the term 'Shat-Gumbad' means sixty-domes, but in reality the mosque exhibits some eighty one domes in total. Two suggestions may, however, be made as to the origin of the name of the mosque. Firstly, the seven chau-chālā vaults over the central nave might have given the building the name of 'Sāt-Gumbad' (Sāt = seven + Gumbad = dome), which in course of time has possibly been transformed into Shat-Gumbad. Secondly, the sixty pillars, which support the huge domed-roof above, might also have originally given the mosque the name

¹ A number of instances relating to the use of mosques as parliament or assembly hall is known to us. In early days Caliphs on the first day of their reign and the governors arriving at the capital of their province, went directly to the mosque to see their new subjects and made the customary speech. In this connection a good example may be cited here: "Hajjāj arriving at Kūfa in January 695 made such inaugural speech. A few days later, on a revolution breaking out he again goes to the mosque, and reviles and threatens the mob from the pulpit". Quoted in EMA, Op.cit., P. 44. Another excellent example of this is the trial of Khālīd bin Walīd in the mosque at Homs. Abū 'Ubaydah, the Caliph's representative, Summoned Khālīd from Qinnasrīn, proclaimed an assembly in the Great mosque and standing in the pulpit, opened his trial. See W. Muir, The Caliphate, its Rise, Decline and Fall, Beirut, 1963, P. 154.

² A. U. Pope, Persian Architecture, Op.cit., P. 106; In Bengal Darasbarī masjid (1479) at Gaur may be cited as an example, See A. H. Dani, Op.cit., Pp. 108 - 09.

³ Andre Godard, The Art of Iran, London, 1965, P. 278, Fig. 190.

of 'Shat-Khumbaz' (Shat = sixty + Khumbaz = pillar). It is not unlikely that the word Khumbaz has subsequently been corrupted into Gumbad to denote the building in the well known name of Shat-Gumbad. Of these two suggestions the latter one seems to be more probable.

The Six-domed Mosque, Bagerhat
(Pl. VIII(Fig.2)).

A few yards to the north-west of the dargah of Zinda Pir¹ is an ancient mosque on the top of an artificial mound, locally known as the mosque of Reza-i-Khan. The mosque has suffered badly owing to the harshness of nature, yet enough still survives to have a clear idea of its original form and design. The superstructure has crumbled down, and all the corner towers, except that on the north-east angle, have disappeared. The southern wall and the southern portion of the east wall have fallen down, but the remaining part of the east wall, the entire north wall and the west wall are still standing in a very miserable condition almost upto the roof level.

Plan and construction. The building consists of an oblong covered prayer chamber in the typical Bengali style. It measures externally, including

¹Infra, P. 229.

the octagonal corner towers, 50 ft. from north to south by 38 ft. from east to west, with a thickness of its wall about 5 ft. 9 ins. The interior of the mosque, measuring 39 ft. 7 ins. by 26 ft. 2 ins., is divided into two longitudinal aisles and three deep bays by two stone pillars. The aisles are parallel to the qiblah wall, while the bays are perpendicular to the same. There are three doorways in the east, of which the middle one is 6 ft. 5 ins. in width and the flanking ones 6 ft. Each of the north and south walls has two door openings, the breadth of each being the same to that of the flanking ones in the east wall. All these doorways were originally arched by two-centred pointed form, still noticed in the northern doorway of the east wall and in two other doorways of the north wall. Thus by multiplying the three openings in the east with the two in the side walls it can reasonably be suggested that the interior of the building was covered by six domes, which were possibly of inverted cup-shaped design like those of other monuments of the Sultānī Bengal. These domes rested on intersecting arches rising from the stone pillars and brick pilasters, which are still extant. And the phase of transition was achieved by means of Bengali pendentives, for the beautifully arranged oversailing courses of bricks are still seen at the top of the north-west corner of the building.

The interior side of the qiblah wall has three mihrābs, corresponding to the entrances in the east wall. Here also the central mihrāb is symmetrically kept large, which is traditionally projected on the exterior side.

Mention should now be made of the two stone pillars, bases of which are still standing, while parts are lying within the uncovered prayer chamber. Like those of Khān Jahan's buildings, they are of grey stone and formed of two or three columns placed one upon the other. But one difference is conspicuous that the shaft of the pillars of the present building is twelve sided exactly in imitation of a 10th century Pāla pillar¹, while those of the Shāt-Gumbad and other buildings of Khān Jahan have octagonal shafts².

Mr. Abdul Qader³, Superintendent of Archaeology, Government of Bānglādesh, says, 'It (mosque) had a big courtyard enclosed by a brick-built boundary wall. Access to this courtyard appears to have been provided through a gateway in the east. It was a monumental gateway and was flanked by turrets at corners, the outlines of the northern turret still survive'. But nothing of these now remains save some scattered bricks all round the mosque.

No attempt has, however, yet been made to restore such an ancient mosque of the Sultānī period. At present prayer is offered five

¹ This elegantly decorated pillar with stepped square base and capital, referring to a Khamboza Prince, has recently been acquired from the Dinājpur Raj Palace, where it is said to have been set from the ruins of Bangarh, now in West Bengal. See Dinajpur District Gazetteers, Dacca, 1972, P. 58.

² Supra, P. 120 and Infra, Pp. 153 & 166.

³ An unpublished manuscript, which its author willingly handed over to me.

times daily in a thatched hut, made within the prayer chamber of the mosque.

Decoration. Decorations of the mosque have disappeared, except a little in the mihrābs and in the outer surface of the dilapidated north-wall and the northern portion of the east wall. The northern arch opening of the east wall is flanked to right and left by a pair of large rectangular panels, set perpendicularly one upon the other at an interval. Each of these panels now shows only the traces of a cusped arch with a rosette at the spandrel and a hanging motif falling down from the apex of the arch. The existence of these panels, however, leads to surmise that the same sort of panel ornamentation also furnished the fallen southern part of the east wall. The northern wall is relieved exteriorly by vertical off-sets and recesses, which are broken at regular intervals by horizontally drawn decorated bands. Each band is topped over by a series of blind crests (Pl. VIII, Fig. 2).

All the mihrābs were arched, and had engrailing at their faces, for the engrailing is still preserved in the arch of the southern mihrāb. The brick-pilasters, that support the mihrāb arches, are now ornamented with moulded bands at intervals. Interiorly the mihrāb niches are now almost bare, except two or three horizontally drawn bands with a frieze of crests on their tops and stylized hanging motifs. All these are in terracotta.

General observation. Rezā-i-Khān, to whom the mosque is attributed, is said to have been a follower of Khān Jahān¹. If at all, however, this Rezā-i-Khān was a contemporary of Khān Jahān, he must not be regarded as the builder of this mosque. On the other hand, if the mosque was built by him, it is likely that he was not a contemporary of Khān Jahān. The reason is simple. The present building differs in style from those monuments of Khalīfatābād constructed during the time of Khān Jahān. Unlike the plain surface of the walls of the Khān Jahānī buildings, the present building depicts panel decorations in the exterior surface of the east wall. Although the panel ornamentations appeared repeatedly in the Gaur monuments since the Ilyās Shāhī rule, this feature did not appear in the Khalīfatābād monuments till the end of the reign of Bārbak Shāh (1459 - 74). As for instance, the Mīrzāganj mosque (Paṭuākhalī) of Bārbak Shāh shows plain brick surface of the walls like the monuments of Khān Jahān. It may, therefore, be suggested that the Six-domed mosque of Bāgerhāt was erected either in late Ilyās Shāhī period after Bārbak Shāh or in the following Husain Shāhī period. Mr. Abdul Qader, also holds a similar opinion.

¹ S. C. Mitra, Jessore-Khulnār Itihāsa, I, Calcutta, 1963, P. 351.

A. Jalil, Sundarbaner Itihāsa, I & II, Khulnā, 1967, Pp. 306 and 313.

The Ten-domed Mosque, Bāgerhāt

This multi-domed mosque stands in the village of Krishnanagar on the left hand side of the Shāt-Gumbad - Bāgerhāt town road. It is still an well preserved building but many of its original features have been altered by later repair works done to it by the people of the village.

Plan and construction. The mosque is an oblong structure and measures, inclusive of the octagonal towers on the angles, 77 ft. from north to south by 38 ft. from east to west externally, while 62 ft. 9 ins. by 24 ft. 11 ins. internally. The 6 ft. thick walls are pierced by two-centred arched openings - five on the east, and two on each of the north and south walls. The central archway of 5 ft. 2 ins. wide is slightly larger than the flanking ones, which together with those of the side walls measure 4 ft. 10 ins. in width. The western wall accommodates five arched mihrābs corresponding to the entrances in the east wall. Here also the central mihrāb, being projected externally, is kept traditionally bigger and is about 4 ft. $4\frac{1}{2}$ ins. in breadth. The side mihrābs each is 4 ft. $1\frac{1}{2}$ ins. wide. The entrance openings are now provided with collapsible iron-grilles, except those two on the north wall which are closed by brick-filling.

The interior of the mosque is divided into two aisles and five bays by a row of four excessively short massive brick pillars. The interior of the mosque thus shows ten units of square bays. Each of

these bays is covered by a low dome resting on four intersecting arches in combination with the usual Bengali pendentives. These supporting arches of the dome are in turn supported by brick pillars and pilasters.

Decoration. Decoration of the mosque, consisting only of terracottas, is seen only in five mihrābs and in the exterior surface of the north and qiblah walls, while the other spaces have been covered with cement plaster. All the mihrābs are arched, showing engrailing at their faces. At present only the southern mihrāb arch shows rosettes at its spandrels, while all the mihrāb niches depict a common decorative motif i.e., a stylized hanging lamp of the Hindu origin. Some of the mihrāb niches have horizontal sunk panels, decorated with tendrils and scrolls. The rectangular border, that encloses the mihrāb, is now completely plain. The horizontal part of this border in the central mihrāb is crowned by a series of crests (Pl. VIII, Fig. 2), a motif noticed commonly in almost all the monuments of the locality and of other parts of Bengal. In the exterior face of the north and the qiblah walls the vertically drawn sunk panels have at their bases two boldly projected bands, decorated with lozenges, and the interspaces of these bands are ornamented with floral scrolls. The bent cornice has now been replaced by horizontal one. The brick pilasters are ornamented at their bases by a row of blind petals. The brick-setting of delicate carved pattern in high relief is seen in the pendentives of the domes.

General observation and date. The mosque does not contain any inscription, nor does it preserve any important architectural feature. The

determination of its date has thus been rendered into a difficult task. Nevertheless it appears almost certain that it was not erected during the time of Khan Jahan. The surviving features of the mosque - the octagonal shape of the corner towers, the interior arrangement and the twelve facets of the pillars, reveal its closest affinity with the six-domed mosque erected in the late Ilyas Shāhī or Musain Shāhī period. The local tradition attributes the building to the Musain Shāhī period¹ and the existing architectural style suggests that there may be some truth in the tradition.

The Sāt-gāchhiā Mosque, Bārabāzār

(Pls. IX(Fig.1)& X).

Early in 1978 this congregational mosque of Sāt-gāchhiā² was partly discovered from under a brick mound covering an area of about 78 ft. from north to south by 60 ft. from east to west. The excavated part shows a little more than three aisles in length-wise from north to south and also a little more than five bays from east to west by rows of brick pillars, which are standing at a height of 6 ft. The qiblah wall

¹ S. C. Mitra, Op.cit., Pp. 376 - 77; A. Jalil, Op.cit., Pp. 373 ff.

² Sāt-gāchhiā is a small village of Kāstodāngā Union under Kotchāndpūr Police Station in Jhenāidah Sub-division of Jessore. The mosque is about 4 miles to the west of the famous Bārabāzār and about 2½ miles from the Sādīkpūr mosque.

internally depicts four mihrābs, and a two-centred pointed archway at the end of the third bay from the north. The fourth mihrāb from the north is the largest having its aperture of 2 ft. 10 ins. in breadth. We may take this largest mihrāb as the central one, for the central mihrāb of a mosque is normally given prominence by making it comparatively bigger than the flanking ones. Assuming this to be the central mihrāb it can reasonably, therefore, be inferred that there must have been three other bays (i.e. three mihrābs, one at the end of each bay) on its south like those three on the north. We are, therefore, getting a seven-bays deep sanctuary.

The western part of the north wall, which has been cleared off internally and externally from debris, now stands to a height of 4 ft. with a thickness of 5 ft. This northern wall is pierced by only one doorway at the end of the third aisles from the west. This doorway is flanked internally on the west by a pair of niches (now converted into windows) corresponding probably to similar niches on the southern wall. Similar number of niches with the same arrangement must also have symmetrically flanked this doorway on the east. We have thus seven bays and five aisles. By multiplying the number of aisles with that of the bays we get the total number of 35 independent square bays of the mosque, each probably covered with a dome on the short massive brick pillars. It is likely that the mosque was provided with seven door openings to the east corresponding to six mihrābs and a doorway in the qiblah wall. The exterior angles of the mosque were emphasised by octagonal towers. The base of one such tower is still being displayed on the north-west angle.

The brick pillars, which are standing in rows and once perhaps supported the domes above, are very massive and short, and compare well with those of the Ten-domed mosque at Bāgerhāt. But unlike those of the Ten-domed mosque pillars of the present example are square with chamfered angles and taper slightly towards the top (Pl. IX, Fig. 1).

The four exposed mihrābs, which are still preserved in their original design, are embellished with rich terracotta ornamentation. The motifs and the execution of ornamentation are fundamentally the same to those of the Godār masjid of the same locality¹.

Close to the north of the mosque is a tank of considerable size, which contains the remains of a stepped masonry ghāt on the eastern bank. The villagers told the author, who visited twice this recently discovered ruinous mosque, that a similar masonry ghāt² also existed on the southern bank of the pond. It seems that this latter ghāt, being nearer to the mosque, was perhaps devised to have been used by the worshippers for ablution purpose.

In its general oblong plan with more than three longitudinal aisles and a postern doorway to the right of the central mihrāb the mosque bears the affinity with the Shāt-Gumbad mosque of Khān Jahān at Bāgerhāt. But the existence of the octagonal corner towers goes against the Khān Jahānī style, and this important feature together with terracotta ornamentations in the mihrābs are merely a copy of those of the Husain

¹ Infra, pp. 201-02.

² It is said that one Mr. Muzibur Rahman, to whom this pond and the land upon which the mosque itself stands belong, unearthed this ghāt a few years back and used its materials for his own purpose.

Shāhī mosques of Godār and Sādīkpūr. Moreover, the recent findings from the Sādīkpūr mosque-inscription reveal that Bārābāzār was an important centre of administration under one Muhammad¹, an officer of 'Alā' Uddīn Husain Shāh. It would not thus be improbable if it is suggested that the mosque was erected sometime during the Husain Shāhī period.

ii) Square Multi-domed Type

The Nine-domed Mosque, Bāgerhāt

(Pls. VIII (Fig. 3), XI (Fig. 1), XII & XIII (Fig. 1)).

The mosque stands on an artificial mound on the western bank of the so-called Thākurdīghī, and is less than a quarter mile to the south-west of the tomb of Khān Jahan.

Plan and construction. Built in brick the mosque measures externally, inclusive of the corner towers, 54 ft. 10 ins. a side, while internally 39 ft. 6 ins. a side. The walls are 7 ft. 8 ins. in thickness and each wall, except the qiblah side, is pierced by three arched openings. Both in height and span the central opening of each side is little larger than the flanking ones. The central archway in the east is 6 ft. 7 ins. wide, while its side ones together with the central one of both the north and

¹For details, see Sohrab Uddin Ahmed, 'Antiquities of Bārābazar', JVRM, 4, 1975 - 76, Pp. 74 - 80.

south walls are 5 ft. 9 ins. in span. Each of the side openings of the north and south walls is formed of two successive arches, and measures 4 ft. wide in the exterior and 5 ft. 3 ins. in the interior. The three arched openings of the eastern facade are set within a slightly recessed rectangle, enclosed again by a rectangular border. The same treatment is also applied in the central opening of the north and south walls, which their side openings are set within vertical narrow recessed panels. These recessed panels rise almost upto the lower cornice band and end with somewhat an engrailed pointed top. (Pl. XI, Fig. 1). This engrailed pointed top is an unusual feature in Bengal architecture and may be compared with the similar wall recesses of the north domed-chamber of the Masjid-i-Jāmi' at Isfahan (1088) and of the Hydarīa madrasa at Qazvin (early 12th century)¹. This may be taken as an example of Persian influence on Bengal architecture.

The interior of the mosque is divided into three aisles and three bays by two rows of stone pillars, two in each row. The interior thus shows nine independent square bays, and this total number of bays is mathematically realised by multiplying the number of aisles with that of the bays. The whole building is, therefore, roofed over with nine inverted cup-shaped domes, one over each independent square bay. Internally the dome is carried on four intersecting pointed arches, which in turn spring from stone pillars and brick pilasters. The phase of transition is achieved by means of traditional Bengali pendentives.

The interior face of the west wall is recessed by three engrailed arched mihrābs in the line of the three entrances in the east wall. Both

¹ A. U. Pope, Persian Architecture, Op.cit., Pls. 141 and 145.

in height and width the central mihrāb, being traditionally projected on the exterior side, is larger than the flanking ones. While the central mihrāb is 3 ft. 3 ins. in breadth and 3 ft. in depth, each of the side ones has the breadth and depth of 2 ft. 9 ins. and 2 ft. 4 ins. respectively. The apertures of these mihrābs are semi-circular in shape and half-domed over on the top.

Like those of the Shat-Gumbad mosque the pillars here are of grey stone, with stepped square bases and capitals. Their shafts are octagonal and are separated from the bases and capitals by a raised band. The brick pilasters, eight in total and two in the inside of each wall, also have square bases and octagonal shafts with square stone imposts on the top. The three facets (one fully and two partially) of the bases and five of the shafts are now visible.

The towers emphasising the four exterior angles of the mosque are circular in shape. All these have moulded bases and plain tops and do not rise above the roof level. The cornices of the building are usually curved.

Decoration. The decoration of the mosque consists only of terracotta, noticed mainly in the archways, mihrābs, corner towers and cornices.

In the eastern facade the spandrels of the principal entrance arch are now plain, but above the arch is seen three mouldings in tiers. The surrounding rectangular border is here enriched with net pattern. The flanking entrance arches are now quite plain save three mouldings above the arches. The same number of mouldings also top each of the

entrance arches of the north and south sides. The narrow vertical sunk panels in the exterior side of the north, south and the qiblah walls depict at their bases a pair of mouldings, which are further decorated with lozenges. The interspaces of these mouldings are ornamented with rosettes alternating with diapers, and sometimes with running scrolls containing small rosettes in their bends.

Interiorly also each of the nine entrance arches are richly decorated. While the spandrels depict large full blown lotus flowers, the faces of the arches at the key-point are embellished with a large lozenge which contains a square bordered small rosettes. These arches are again crowned by three moulded bands, which are again ornamented with two rows of small rosettes and two rows of lotus petals. The narrow sunk spaces between these bands are also decorated and depict necklaces, scrolls, tendrils and flowers of varying designs.

The three mihrābs are all made of brick and richly decorated. The spandrels of the central mihrāb arch are enriched with tree-motif containing flowers (Pl. XIII, Fig. 1). Above are two moulded bands, the interspace of which is decorated with vine-scrolls containing bunch of grapes in their bends. The semi-circular portion of the mihrāb-niche depicts six decorated horizontal sunk panels, each being separated from the other by a raised decorated band. The motifs of ornamentation vary from panel to panel, consisting mainly of necklace designs, lotus palmettes and different types of interlocking patterns. Dividing this semi-circular niche hangs down a chain from the apex of the half-domed top, and this chain ends with a rectangular pendant, now bare. Of the

double enclosing borders of the mihrāb the outer one shows interlocking designs and the inner one rosettes, alternately small and big. Above the horizontal portion of the border are two boldly projected horizontal bands, each being decorated with a row of rosettes bounded by a row of lotus petals. The whole composition is crowned by a frieze of ornamental crests. The side mihrābs are also decorated in the same manner, but differ from the central one only in the arrangement of their decorative motifs.

The central mihrāb is flanked on either side by an engrailed arched alcove. The arches of the alcoves are topped over by two projected decorated bands. Interspaces of these bands are also ornamented, the motifs of which are now in the decaying condition. The same type of alcoves also decorate the interior side of the north and south walls, and they are so arranged that one is placed on either side of a brick pilaster. Each of these brick pilasters is divided by five fine narrow bands, each ornamented with a row of single motif, such as either lozenges or small eight-leaf rosettes or diaper patterns (Pl.VI, Fig. 2).

The curvature of the cornice itself is a decorative element and gives the building a pleasing appearance. The two cornice bands, which run all round the building including the corner towers, are also enriched with a single row of lozenges. In between the two cornice bands is a narrow sunk panel, which, though in the southern wall is now bare, in the north wall still shows at several places ornamental square panels. Below the lower cornice band runs a thin recessed panel ornamented with a frieze of half mat-patterns of Persian derivation¹ (Pl.VIII, Fig. 3).

¹Infra, p. 185.

Excluding the two cornice bands, each of the four corner towers is decorated with six other mouldings (Pl. XI, Fig. 1). Of these six bands, the top four depict the same sort of decorative motifs - a row of lozenges bounded on the top and below by a row of lotus petals. Each of the two lower bands is decorated with a row of pellets. Their interspaces are ornamented with two rows of lozenges, each lozenge being separated from the other by a vertically drawn line.

Restoration and repair. The earliest conservation work to the building is known to have been made in 1968 - 69 at a cost of Rs. 11,556¹. The work includes the clearance of the debris from the surroundings of the building; the eradication of overgrown plants, trees and shrubs from the building itself; the repairing of the eastern wall (including its three damaged arched openings) upto to the height of 12 ft. by filling the core for a thickness of 2 ft. with undressed bricks and setting dressed bricks of the original size in the face by employing lime and surkhi as bonding materials². In the next year the work was again undertaken and the remaining three walls were internally and externally repaired; the domes and the roof were made secure by lime concrete; the four fallen corner towers were partially restored, and the ornamental brick-work was re-done to the mihrābs, the cornices, the entrance arches and other places³. The

¹ Unpublished Manuscript, File No. 14-A, Yr. 1967 - 68, Op.cit.

² Ibid.

³ Unpublished Manuscript, File No. 14-A, Yrs. 1968-69 & 1969-70, Op.cit.

work took Rs.40,459 to be finished¹. In 1970 - 71 the corner towers were completely restored, the floor was paved with brick-soling with a covering of lime concrete and the nine arched openings were provided with iron-nettings with wooden shutters at a cost of Rs.15,873².

General observation. In plan and other details the mosque resembles the square nine-domed mausoleum of Sikandar Shāh³ beside the Adina masjid at Hazrat Pānduā, the first known example of the style in Bengal. The present building is typically a covered multi-domed type Bengali mosque, having only the prayer chamber. The nine beautiful domes arranged in three rows over the roof give the building from outside an impressive appearance, but the disproportionately made dwarfish doorways have to some extent marred its general beauty. The decorative motifs of the building are primarily the same to that of the Shāt-Gumbad mosque and are mainly of local derivation, appeared already in the monuments of Gaur and Pānduā. But unlike the monuments of north Bengal, decorations here are confined to a few places, while the larger space of the building is left bare. This bareness of the walls together with the circular shape of the corner towers and other details fit well with the Khān Jahānī style. The building, therefore, may have been dated from the middle of the 15th

¹ Unpublished Manuscript, File No.14-A, Yrs. 1968-69 & 1969-70, Op.cit.

² Unpublished Manuscript, File No.14-A, Yrs. 1970-71 & 1971-72, Op.cit.

³ ASIR, XV, 1882, Pp. 93 - 94; A. H. Dani, Op.cit., Pp. 71 - 72.

century. Habiba Khatun¹ and others² also hold similar opinion.

The local tradition also relates that the mosque was built by one of Khān Jahān's officers, who had also his residence³ nearby on the same bank of the Thākurdighi. The spot is now marked only by the traces of a long brick-built wall that encloses a considerable area, now occupied by the houses of some poor refugees. Just to the east of these houses is still seen a dilapidated masonry ghāt, supposed to have been built simultaneously by the builder of the mosque and the residence.

The Masjidkūr Mosque, Khulnā

(Pl. II(Fig.2)).

Masjidkūr, which lies six miles south of Chāndkhālī under Pāik-gāchhā Police Station in Khulnā Sadar Sub-division, is now a small village immediately on the eastern bank of the Kobādāk. The village is known to have derived its name from the fact that while the pioneers of cultivation in the Sundarbans were clearing jungles along the Kobādāk, they discovered this ancient mosque from under earth and gave the site the name of

¹ BIPP, Baisāk-Chaitra, 1382 B.S., P. 112.

² Department of Archaeology and Museums : Protected Monuments and Mounds in Bangladesh, Dacca, 1975, P. 18.

³ A. Jalil, Op.cit., P. 326.

'Masjīdkūr' or the 'digging out of a mosque'¹.

Plan and construction. The mosque is a brick-built square multi-domed structure with its massive walls 7 ft. 4 ins. in thickness. It measures externally, including the corner towers, 54 ft. 9 ins. a side, while internally 39 ft. 7 ins. There are three two centred pointed arched openings, set within slightly recessed rectangles, on each of the north, south and east sides. On each side the central opening, measuring 5 ft. 2 ins. in span and 9 ft. 2 ins. in height from the pavement of the door-sill to the apex of the arch, is larger than the side ones, which are 4 ft. 2 ins in width.

The western wall is interiorly recessed by three semi-circular mihrābs, each corresponding to each entrance-way in the east wall. The mihrāb arches, springing from two engaged brick pilasters, are of engrailed pointed form and each is enclosed by an outer rectangular border. Here also the central mihrāb is symmetrically kept large with a height of 7 ft. 4 ins. upto the apex of its arch, while the side ones are of 6 ft. 8 ins. in height. The central mihrāb shows a rectangular projection on the exterior side that rises upto the roof level having crossed the only one bent cornice band of the building.

Interiorly the mosque is divided into nine equal square bays by two rows of stone pillars, two in each row. Each of these bays is covered

¹J. Westland, Op.cit., P. 16; W. W. Hunter, Op.cit., P. 226; O'Malley, Bengal District Gazetteers (Khulna), Calcutta, 1908, P. 183; ASIAR, 1923 - 24, P. 32.

by an inverted cup-shaped dome, giving thus a total number of nine-domes in three rows (three in each row) over the roof. The dome rests directly on two-centred pointed four intersecting arches, which spring from the stone pillars and brick pilasters. The phase of transition is achieved by means of the usual Bengali pendentives.

Some mention should now be made of the four stone pillars of the mosque. Like the pillars of the Shāt-Gumbad and the Nine-domed mosques at Bāgerhāt they are formed of stone pieces placed one upon the other. Most of the stone pieces are of the same grey colour like those of other monuments of Khalīfatābād, but there are one or two of a redder colour and one or two of speckled stones among them. Two of such stone pieces are cut in the angles which contain typical Hindu chain and bell motifs, but these two stones are in two different pillars - one in the south-western pillar and the other in the south-eastern one.

The circular corner towers, which do not shoot above the roof level, have moulded bases and plain plastered tops. In every details these are merely a copy of those of the tomb and several other mosques of Khān Jahan at Bāgerhāt.

The mosque compound does not exhibit at present any mark of the existence of an enclosure wall. But. J. Westland¹ says, 'There are clear traces of a wall which once enclosed the mosque and in which there must have been a gateway'. Possibly this gateway was devised in the middle of the eastern enclosure wall, for immediately to the east of the mosque is still seen a large tank which was then perhaps used for the purpose of ablution by those who used to perform prayer in the mosque.

¹Op.cit., P. 17.

Decoration. The semi-circular mihrāb niches are all decorated with horizontal sunk panels, the motifs of which are now very faint and non-recognisable. The enclosing rectangular border of the mihrāb shows group of small rosettes and sometimes fretwork in terracotta. The horizontal portion of this border is topped over by a boldly projected band, decorated with a row of little eight-leaf flowers bounded on the top and below by a series of lotus petals as in the other monuments of Bengal. Above this band is a frieze of ornamental petals. This whole composition is again crowned by a centrally placed large rosette encircled by eight other smaller ones exactly in imitation of those over the mihrābs of the Shat-Gumbad mosque.

All the entrance arches, no doubt, were once richly decorated, but now only their spandrels depict both internally and externally large rosettes in tiers. Each of these arches is seen topped over by two boldly projected bands, and their interspaces are enriched with floral scrolls. In the exterior side the space above these bands of the entrance arches is ornamented with a big rosette with similar smaller ones on its four corners. Still higher up only over the central opening of the eastern facade is an interesting well decorated bordered niche (Pl. II, Fig. 2), which may be compared with those over the frontal archway of the Dākhil Darwāza at Gaur¹.

Exteriorly at each end of the four walls of the mosque is a vertical recess, which depicts at its base a moulded band. The only one cornice band is ornamented with lozenges, each lozenge being separated

¹ A. H. Dani, Op.cit., Pl. XX, No. 38. This sort of decorative niche is noticed in the pre-Islamic Persian architecture such as in the Sāsānian Palace at Bīshāpur (3rd century). See A. U. Pope, Persian Architecture, Op.cit. Pls. 48 - 49 facing page 60.

from the other by a vertically drawn line. Underneath the cornice and parallel to it there runs all round the building a sunk panel enriched with Jaliwork and other decorative designs. Each of the four corner towers is decorated with four moulded bands at regular intervals. The top one is the continuation of the cornice band and the lower three depict either a row of lozenge pattern or small rosettes. The eight brick pilasters inside the walls are decorated with raised bands, each being enriched with a row of small alternating rosettes and lozenges. Each pilaster again is decorated at its base by a frieze of blind petals topped over with another frieze of triangles.

Restoration and repair. In the last decade of the 19th century the mosque was all in a very good order. Only the tops of the 'corner towers have fallen away but the rest of the building looks as if it would stand for ages. The roof too is kept clean, no jungle being allowed to grow except a little grass¹. Early in the 20th century some repairs to the mosque were made by the public works department, but there were certain defects in the execution of the work of this time². These defects were, however, rectified when the mosque again came in for special repairs in the financial year 1923 - 24³. Prominent among these defects is 'the use of modern size bricks in filling up gaps in the brick-work. Steps are now being taken to replace these modern bricks by old bricks of

¹ List of Monuments, Op.cit., P. 145.

² ASIAR, 1923 - 24, P. 32.

³ Ibid.

appropriate size. Other necessary repairs to the roof, floor and door-sills and fencing are also being executed, the bulk of which had to be postponed till the next season for want of funds'.¹ The mosque was, however, thoroughly repaired in 1924 - 25 at a cost of Rs. 7,856 under the supervision of R. D. Banerji, the Superintendent of Eastern Circle, Department of Indian Archaeology².

A little less than half a century later the mosque again came in for special repair in 1972 - 73, when Rs. 9,618 were spent for the purpose³. This year the damaged parts of the walls were repaired with core-filling in lime-mortar; cracks in roof and domes were filled in lime-terracings; arch openings were provided with iron-nettings; some ornamental brick-works were done to the cornice and the mihrābs; the disintegrated floor was restored with a layer of brick-soling in surkhi-beaten plaster and the barbed-wire fencing was made around the mosque⁴.

A sum of Rs. 92,000 has been extended for a thorough repairs to the building for the financial year 1978 - 79 and the work is being carried on under Mr. Nizam Uddin Khan, the Archaeological Conservator⁵.

General observation. After restorations and repairs the mosque is now one of the best preserved ancient monuments in Bengal, and is now being used for prayer five times a day. The architectural details of the

¹ ASIAR, 1923-24, P. 32.

² ASIAR, 1924-25, P. 38.

³ Unpublished Manuscript, File No. 14-A, Year 1972-73, Op.cit.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Unpublished Manuscript, Five Years Development Project File No. 21, Yr. 1978 - 79., Op.cit.

mosque - the square plan, the interior arrangement and the nine domes on the roof, the circular corner towers and the setting of door openings are very similar to those of the Nine-domed mosque at Bāgerhāt. It is thus likely that the mosque in question was built under the supervision of Burā Khān and Fath Khān, who were supposed to have governed this low-lying south-western part of Khalīfatābād as nominees of Khān Jahān. The Catchery and tombs of these officers are still located at a place, about a mile to the south of the mosque, now mostly washed away by the Kobādāk river¹.

The Qasbā Mosque, Barisāl

Qasbā is a village in Gaurnadī Police Station and is about two and a half a mile to the north of the same station. The mosque, which derives its name from the village, is situated about 200 yards west of the high road that connects the Barisāl town with that of Faridpūr. In front of the mosque is a large pond, now almost dried up.

Plan and construction. This is a typical multi-domed square structure built entirely of well-burnt red brick, save four stone pillars that support the domes on the roof. It measures externally, including the corner towers, 53 ft. a side and internally 38 ft. 4 ins. The walls

¹ Infra, pp. 250-51.

are very massive with a thickness of 7 ft. 2 ins. The interior of the mosque can be entered through arched doorways, three on each of the north, south and east sides. It is worthwhile to mention here that only the central doorway of the north and south sides is now open, while the flanking ones are closed by masonry filling¹. The central doorway is bigger than the side ones, and is 7 ft. 6 ins. wide, while the side ones are 6 ft. 9 ins. in breadth. All the doorway arches are of two-centred pointed form and set in slightly recessed rectangles.

In the interior side of the qiblah wall there are three mihrābs, which are also kept symmetrically large and small corresponding to the entrances in the east wall. The central mihrāb shows a breadth of 3 ft. 7 ins. and depth of 3 ft. 2 ins., while each of the side ones is 2 ft. 6 ins. in breadth by 1 ft. 3 ins. in depth. Only the central mihrāb is projected externally. This projection, which is rectangular in shape, extends from the floor to the cornice band of the building.

The interior is divided into nine square bays by four stone pillars. The dome rests on arches which spring directly from the pillars and the brick pilasters. The four triangular corner spaces, formed by the intersection of arches just below the base of the dome, in each bay are filled with traditional Bengali pendentives.

¹It is not known when these doorways had been closed. An old man of about 70 years of this village, who is now the mutawallī of this mosque, told the author that he saw these doorways closed early in his boyhood.

All the four pillars¹ are of grey stones, each being formed of two or three pieces placed one upon the other. Like those of the Shāt-Gumbad and the Nine-domed mosques at Bāgerhāt all these pillars have stepped square bases and capitals and octagonal shafts. The pilasters, eight in total, are entirely made of brick, and appear to have been topped over by square stone imposts.

The four corner towers have slightly moulded bases and plain tops, which do not rise above the roof level. The only one cornice band of the building is curved in the Bengali fashion.

Decoration. The decoration of the mosque consists only of terracotta, much of which have already been disappeared. It is now seen only in some limited spaces. All the mihrābs are arched and these arches are of engrailed pointed form. Each of these arches spring from two decorated brick pilasters, now in a very dilapidated condition. The spandrels of

¹ An interesting story has been recorded about these pillars, and it runs thus: 'There is a curious belief in the locality that of the four stone pillars which support the dome, one gradually decays and is reduced in size. After a few months the pillar again reaches its original dimensions, while another pillar decays. This process goes on in four pillars. To test this legend the District Engineer, according to Collector's instructions, has taken dimensions of the pillars as he found them on 11th April, 1895. This dimension will be checked on his next visit'. See List of Monuments, Op.cit., P. 226. After this we have got no information whether the Engineer checked the dimensions of the pillars or not. Nevertheless the story is certainly a baseless one and we can not simply believe it.

the arches and the enclosing borders of all the mihrābs are now plain. Only over the horizontal portion of the enclosing border is a boldly projected band, which is further crowned by a frieze of blind petals.

Among the nine doorway arches only those three of the eastern side have now a slight ornamentation in their exterior faces. The spandrels of these doorway arches are now decorated with prominently projected rosettes, while in their faces at the key-point is seen a large lozenge placed perpendicularly, which is exactly a copy of those seen in the Shāt-Gumbad and the Nine-domed mosques at Bāgerhāt. Above the arch is a moulded band, enriched with a row of lozenges. Underneath this band in the central doorway is noticed a frieze of tri-lobbed arched niches. The same place of the northern doorway is decorated with intersecting scrolls, while that of the southern doorway shows lozenge containing diaper pattern in the centre of a circle-like space formed by the intersection of the two running scrolls. This latter motif is repeatedly occurred in the Shāt-Gumbad mosque. Another interesting decorative motif is a rectangular niche higher above the central doorway of the east wall. This niche appears to have been originally richly decorated like that over the central doorway of the eastern side of the Masjidkūr masjid at Amādi in Khulnā.

The circular towers on the exterior angles are ornamented with four moulded bands, each showing a row of lozenges. Of these four, the top-most band is merely the continuation of the curved cornice band of the building, which is now bare. The four walls externally depict at each end, like the Masjidkūr mosque, a vertically drawn sunk panel,

which is decorated at the base with a moulded band. This moulding is the extension of the lowest band of the corner towers.

Restoration and repair. Since its protection in 1953 no repair work could be undertaken and as a result the mosque was hurriedly decaying¹. An amount of Rs.17,757 was, however, extended for the purpose in 1960 - 61². The jungles around the mosque were cleared; the vegetation plants and trees from the roof, domes and walls were uprooted; domes and roof were restored by 3 ins. thick lime terracing; the muddy floor was paved with brick and then cemented; a historical notice board regarding the protection of the monument was served; and all the entrance openings were provided with wire-netting frames to prevent the entry of bats and other intruding animals³. For further repairs to the building a long term conservation programme, spreading over three years, was taken up and the total sanctioned amount for the purpose rose to Rs.30,000⁴. Out of this amount Rs.5,000 were spent in 1964 - 65 in acquiring some adjacent lands in the east to improve the surroundings of the mosque; and Rs.10,000 in 1965 - 66 and Rs.15,000 in 1966-67 were devoted to the restoration works of the mosque proper⁵.

¹ Unpublished Manuscript, File No.14-A, Yr. 1960-61, Op.cit.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Unpublished Manuscript, File No.14-A, Yr. 1962-63, Op.cit.

⁵ Ibid.

During 1970's cyclonic storm the mosque was partly submerged and seriously affected by the salt-petre action¹. Thus under special repair order B.80,012 were extended in 1972 - 73 for immediate restoration of the building². The work commenced under the supervision of the Archaeological Conservator Mr. Munir Ahmed³. The restoration work of the year includes the clearance of the site and dressing of the earth around the mosque for proper drainage of rain water; the replacement of the old brick-soling of the floor by new ones and the extensive repairs to all the walls internally and externally and corner towers by original size bricks by lime-surkhi mortar; the 4 ins. thick lime terracing over the roof and all the domes, and some ornamental brick-works to the mihrabs, the corner towers and other places⁴.

General observation and date. The exact date of construction of the mosque and its builder's name is not known, for it contains no inscription tablet. Nevertheless the mosque is traditionally said to have been built early in the 16th century by one famous Sābhī Khān⁵, who

¹ Unpublished Manuscript, File No.14-A, Yr. 1972-73, Op.cit.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ H. Beveridge, The District of Bakerganj, its History and Statistics, London, 1876, Pp. 36 ff.; List of Monuments, Op.cit., P. 226; S. K. Saraswati, 'Indo-Moslem Architecture in Bengal', JISOA, IX, 1941, P.36; J. C. Jack, Bengal District Gazetteers (Bakerganj), Calcutta, 1918, P.148. The following account of Sābhī Khān is known from Beveridge's History of Bakerganj District: 'According to an account Sābhī Khān was a Kotwāl

is also credited to have constructed a metalled road through the marshes in the neighbourhood. But in every details - in plan, in measurement, the arrangement of the interior apartments and the domes on the roof, the setting of door openings, the design of the corner towers etc. the Qasba mosque is a replica of the Nine-domed mosque at Bāgerhāt and of the Masjidkūr mosque at Amādi in Khulnā Sadar Sub-division. Moreover, the decorative motifs of the mosque are exactly the same to those in the Shāt-Gumbad mosque. This strong affinity of the mosque with Khan Jahān's buildings suggests that it might have been constructed in the middle of the 15th century, when the area was also conquered for the first time by the Muslims under Khan Jahān. This dating of the building is also supported by A. H. Dani¹, Rabiba Khatun² and others³.

and Kotwālīpārā (now under Gopālganj Sub-division in Faridpūr) is said to derive its name from him. The following story is told to account for his beneficence. He was, it is said, the son of a wealthy merchant, but was stolen from his home during his infancy and brought up in forests. In course of time he grew upto man's estate and became a hunter. Meanwhile his father's house was attacked by enemies, who killed his father and drove his mother out into the jungles. There Sābhī Khan found her one day while he was hunting and, in ignorance of their relationship, he took her as his wife. They lived together for a while, but one morning the mother observed a spot on the sole of Sābhī Khan's foot and knew thereby that he was her son. She told him the miserable discovery she had made. So Sābhī Khan went to a holy man, and asked him how he should expiate the terrible sin he had involuntarily committed. The answer was that he should atone for it by doing works for the public good and then he set about making roads and building mosques. His roads transverse parts of Gaurnadī and Kotwālīpārā thanās and are still in use'.

¹ Op.cit., P. 148.

² Op.cit., P. 105.

³ Protected Monuments and Mounds in Bangladesh, Op.cit., P. 1.

iii) Three-domed Type

The Three-domed type mosque developed in Bengal only during the Mughal period¹. Only two mosques of the type in the region of Khalīfatābād have been discovered, which have not been studied before.

The Mosque at Mīrzānagar, Jessore

This is the only extant building in the Nawāb-bārī complex at Mīrzānagar² in Keshabpūr Police Station. The building is very much dilapidated. The outer surface of the walls has been seriously damaged, the four octagonal corner towers have disappeared and the superstructure has crumbled down. Nevertheless enough still survives to reconstruct an idea of its original form and design.

Internally it is a rectangle of 50 ft. 8 ins. from north to south by 14 ft. from east to west. The interior of the mosque is divided into three equal bays, each being a square of 14 ft. a side, by two lateral arches. These two lateral arches, each with a thickness of 4 ft. 4 ins., are still standing in their original design. The domes, which once covered the interior of the mosque, directly rested on these arches and the side walls. And the phase of transition was achieved by means of the pre-Mughal Bengali pendentives, for the oversailing courses of bricks set corner-wise and edge-wise are still seen across the upper angles of the northern bay.

The building provides access through three four-centred arches on the east, and one on each of the north and south walls. The

¹ See chapter III, P. 105, f.n. 1.

² Infra, Pp. 239-40.

central opening is traditionally larger than the side ones. In front of these openings there are three semi-octagonal mihrābs, the central one being large, inside the qiblah wall. These mihrābs are arched, which are also of four-centred design. The central mihrāb shows a projection on the exterior side, now badly damaged. Each of these mihrābs and the doorways of the north and south walls is internally flanked on either side by an arched-niche of four-centred type. The floor is now paved with rough brick-soling. The interior side of the walls and the two lateral arches still depict at places fine polished plaster.

The building is fronted by a plastered platform of 69 ft. by 49 ft. It is now covered with grass.

J. Westland¹, who for the first time wrote on the Mīrzanagar ruins, calls it the residence proper of the Nawāb or the Fauzdār. Following him A. H. Dani² and others³ simply call it a residential building. But the different architectural members of the building just described suggest that it is a mosque, and is still being used for the same purpose having been covered recently with a tin-made chau-chālā hut.

¹Op.cit., P. 38.

²Op.cit., P. 247.

³List of Monuments, Op.cit., Pp. 138 - 40.

The Komlāhpūr Mosque, Barisal

(Pls. XIX & XX).

This is a beautiful and well preserved Mughal mosque of the usual three-domed variety in the village of Komlāhpūr¹, which has been declared a protected monument under section 10(1) of the Antiquities Act, 1968 (XIV of 1968) by the Government of Bānglādesh on November 20, 1975, vide letter No. L.B/1A-46/75/572².

Plan and construction. The mosque stands on a low podium of about 1½ ft. high. It is of oblong plan with octagonal corner towers and measures externally 56 ft. 6 ins. from north to south by 26 ft. 6 ins. from east to west, while internally 44 ft. 6 ins. by 14 ft. 6 ins. The walls are 6 ft. thick, and show three multi-cusped arch openings on the east and one on each of the north and south sides. The central opening, which is given prominence by a slight projection bounded by octagonal slender turrets, is the largest being 4 ft. 3 ins. wide, while the side ones including those two on the side walls are of 3 ft. 6 ins. in breadth. Just above the central doorway arch there is a vacant space which, as the local people say, was originally occupied by an inscription tablet.

The octagonal corner turrets, though now rise only to the horizontal parapet level, appear to have originally shooted above the parapet and topped over by plastered solid cupolas, a feature which is still

¹ Komlāhpūr is situated about 6 miles on the north-east of the Qasbā mosque and about 1½ miles to the east of the Barisal-Faridpūr high road, under Gaurnadi Police Station in the district of Bākerganj.

² Unpublished Manuscript, File No. 84-E, Op.cit.

preserved in a single-domed Mughal mosque¹ of the same locality.

The interior of the mosque is divided into three bays by two massive lateral arches, each with a thickness of 4 ft. 6 ins. While the central bay is kept square of 14 ft. 6 ins. side, the side ones are 14 ft. 6 ins. by 10 ft. 6 ins. All these three bays are covered by slightly bulbous domes, the central one being larger. While the central dome is crowned with a lotus finial, the remaining ones exhibit finials of kalasa type. It is important to note here that the architects perhaps did not face any problem in covering the central square bay with a dome, but it is really difficult to cover a rectangular apartment with a dome circular at the base. To meet up the problem the architects adopted a clever trick. The upper part of the rectangular side bays here is first made square by introducing half-domed vaults on the east and west walls, on which the actual dome is placed on a further series of pendentives.

Inside the qiblah wall there are three mihrābs corresponding to three entrances in the facade. All these mihrābs, being set within slightly recessed rectangles, show cuspings in their arches and semi-octagonal apertures. The central mihrāb depicts a rectangular projection on the exterior side, which is bounded on either side by an ornamental octagonal slender turret.

Decoration. Although a Mughal building, much of its ornamentation consists of terracotta of the pre-Mughal Bengal (Pl. XIX, Fig. 2).

¹Infra, p. 211.

The exterior surface of the central opening is richly embellished and the spandrels of the arch show curly scrolls enclosing a large full blown lozenge bordered rosettes, while at the key point is noticed a kalasa motif. The enclosing border of the archway is also filled with floral scrolls and other designs. This border is again enclosed by a series of rectangular panels in plaster, which also enclose the exterior surface of the remaining doorways. At the base all round the building runs a continuous moulded band, which is crowned by a frieze of blind merlons. The corner towers are divided by mouldings at regular intervals.

The mihrābs are now barely plain, except that their semi-octagonal apertures show in their upper parts a slightly projected band topped over by a frieze of blind merlons. The cusplings of the mihrāb arches, cited above, are really very unique. Internally each of the northern and southern doorways is flanked on either side by an arched alcove of four-centred design, which has no doubt removed the monotonous treatment of the interior side of the walls.

Restoration and repair. In order to protect the building from advanced decay and ruin, the villagers are known to have undertaken measures for its restorations about ten years back. A considerable part of the outer walls, the four corner towers and the entire floor of the mosque were thoroughly repaired with cement and sand plaster¹. Suggestions have also been made recently by the Superintendent² of Archaeology for its complete restoration.

¹The information was collected by the author himself on April 20, 1979, by interviewing some people of the locality and two teachers of a Junior Madrassa beside the mosque.

²Unpublished Manuscript, File No.84-E, Op.cit.

General observation. Architecturally the mosque is really interesting, for it represents the synthesis of the real Mughal style of Dacca and the pre-Mughal building traditions of Bengal. While the former is represented by the appearance of bulbous domes with lotus finial, the prominence of the central opening with bordering pinnacles, the corner towers rising above the horizontal parapet, the semi-octagonal mihrābs, the four-centred arches, the central chamber bigger than the side ones corresponding to similar arrangement of the domes on the roof, above all the plastering and panelling, the latter is best reflected through terracotta art and the octagonal shape of the corner towers.

In the locality the building is known as Maṣūm Khān's mosque, probably after the name of the builder, but the inscriptional tablet, which once the mosque is supposed to have contained, is missing. Its exact date of construction is thus difficult to determine. Nevertheless a conjectural dating of the mosque may be made on the basis of its architectural styles and characteristics. A close study of the mosque architecture of Bengal during Mughal rule reveals that the style of dividing the interior of a three domed mosque into three bays - the large square central chamber and the flanking smaller rectangular ones, and the process of covering these rectangular bays with domes by means of half-domed vaults on the sides are noticed for the first time in the Lālbāgh mosque (C. 1678)¹. These two characteristic features together with other details of the Lālbāgh mosque are not wanting in the present example, and on ground of style the Komlāhpūr mosque appears to have been erected in the late 17th century, later than 1678.

¹ R. E. M. Wheeler, Op.cit., Pp. 124 - 25; A. H. Dani, Op.cit., P. 198.

iv) Simple Kiosk TypeSultānī PeriodThe Mosque near the Tomb of Khān Jahān, Bāgerhāt

To the west of the mausoleum of Khān Jahān, and within the outer enclosure wall is a brick-built structure, locally known as the mosque of Khān Jahān¹.

Plan and construction. It is a single-domed square building, measuring externally, including the corner towers, 40 ft. a side and internally 26 ft. a side. The walls are 7 ft. 2 ins. in thickness. The interior of the mosque can be entered from the north and south sides by a two-centred pointed archway (both are now closed by masonry filling), while from the east by three arched entrances. The central archway is larger than the side ones and is equal in width and height to those two of the side walls. The qiblah wall is internally recessed by a semi-circular mihrāb, which exhibits a rectangular projection that rises upto the roof level.

The hemispherical brick dome, that covers the single square room of the building, is crowned by a kalasa finial. The dome is internally carried on half-domed squinches on the upper angles of the square room, and these squinches in turn spring from eight stone brackets projected out of the walls. The four corner towers are circular and have moulded bases like those of the mausoleum beside. The two cornice bands,

¹Infra., P. 221.

that run all round the building, are curved.

Decoration. Internally all the terracotta decorations have now been hidden by cement plaster, put by the local people, yet the beautiful cuspings of the mihrāb arch are still observable. The mihrāb is flanked on either side by a cusped arched alcove, and similar alcove is also seen to right and left of the doorways of the side walls. The two bent cornice bands are decorated with lozenges. Save these two cornice bands, the corner towers are embellished with five other mouldings. From the top the first moulding is ornamented with a row of triangles, the second with a row of lozenges, the third with a row of triangles, the fourth with a row of lozenges and the fifth or the lowest band depicts a slight variation in the arrangement of the decorative motifs. Here we notice four lozenges alternating with a rosette.

Restoration and repair. Some repair works were made to the surrounding walls, the roof, dome and cornices of the building in 1917 - 18¹. In recent years the mosque has been repaired, as noticed above, but these repair works have caused the disappearance of many of the important decorative features of the building.

General observation. In many of its features the mosque is a replica of the tomb beside. But yet it differs in some other points, such as the placement of the three entrances in the facade, the existence of the mihrāb inside the qiblah wall etc., and this difference is due to the

¹ ASIAR, 1917-18, P. 9.

different purposes for which they were intended. The set of three entrances with the central one larger than the flanking ones, which may be a derivation from the western Asian architectural practice¹, has no doubt augmented the importance of the building because of its first application in the history of Islamic architecture in Bengal. This design, which henceforth is found to occur repeatedly in a number of Muslim religious buildings in Bengal, is also adopted almost universally in the Temple architecture² of the land. The architectural style of the mosque bears the closest resemblance with the tomb beside and thus it might have been erected in the same period, i.e. mid.15th century.

The Ranbijoypur Mosque, Bagerhat

(Pls. IV(Fig.2) & XI(Fig.2)).

At a point of the Bagerhat town - Shat-Gumbad road from where another road strikes off towards the dargah of Khan Jahan on the south, there is a magnificent building known as the Fakirbari or the Ranbijoypur mosque.

¹The derivation may be an adaptation from such three arched-entrance design as is seen in the facade of the Bab al-'Amma, Jaussaq al-Khakanī, Samarra. See K. A. C. Creswell, A Short Account of the Early Muslim Architecture, Penguin Books, 1958, p. 260.

²The Jor-Bangla temple (early 17th century) in Pabna, the Krishna Balaram temple (1616) in Burdwan and the Madan Mahan temple of Bankura (1694) may be cited here as examples.

Plan and construction. Built in brick the mosque consists of a large single square hall, measuring 54 ft. a side exteriorly and 35 ft. 6 ins. a side interiorly. The walls are abnormally thick of 9 ft. and are pierced with three arched doorways in each side except the qiblah wall. Each of the doorways consists of two-successive two-centred pointed arches - the external one being slightly smaller than that in the interior side, a practice which is noticed in some doorways of the Shāt-Gumbad and the Nine-domed mosques in the locality. In each side the central entrance way is kept traditionally large, being of the height of 9 ft. 4 ins. and the breadth of 5 ft. 2 ins. exteriorly and 6 ft. interiorly. Each of the flanking ones is of 8 ft. 6 ins. in height, and 4 ft. 3 ins. in breadth externally and 5 ft. 1 in. internally.

Corresponding to the three entrances in the east wall, there are three mihrābs inside the qiblah wall. The aperture of the central mihrāb is 4 ft. in depth and breadth, while that of the side ones have a depth and breadth of 3 ft. only. The central mihrāb shows a rectangular projection with double re-entrant angles on the exterior side, which extends upwards breaking the only curved cornice band of the building but does not rise above the roof level.

The towers emphasising the four exterior angles of the building are circular in Khān Jahānī style. They are slightly moulded at their bases and completely plain on the tops, and do not shoot above the roof.

The large hemispherical brick dome, that covers the square room, rests on four half-domed squinches and four arches, which rise from the brick pilasters, two inside each wall.

Decoration. The decorations of all the nine entrance arches have disappeared save the only one projected band on the top of each arch, which is ornamented with a row of lozenges. The single curved cornice band is also decorated with lozenges, while the six moulded bands of the towers have either triangles or lozenges.

All the three mihrābs are arched and these arches, which spring from two decorated brick pilasters, are again engrailed and pointed. In the central mihrāb the interior of the semi-circular niche depicts seven horizontally raised bands. From the top the first band is ornamented with a row of lozenges, each lozenge being separated from the other by a vertically drawn line; the second and fifth each with a series of triangles; the third and sixth each with a row of lozenges and rosettes, which are arranged in such a way that one lozenge is followed by a rosette; the fourth with a row of rosettes and the seventh with a series of hanging flowers. Each of these bands is followed by a shallow recessed panel. From the top the first panel is now plain; the second depicts floral scrolls; the third rosettes in circles formed by the intersection of two scrolls and the remaining have lost their ornamentations. Dividing this interior, however, hangs down a stylized chain and bell motif. The spandrels of the arch are now plain but the upper part of the slightly recessed rectangle, within which the arch is set, now depicts two boldly projected decorated bands. The interspaces of these bands are ornamented with floral scrolls. This all is encircled by a decorated broad rectangular border, the horizontal part of which is crowned by a frieze of crests.

Each of the side mihrābs depicts practically the same sort of decorative treatment like the central mihrāb, differing only in some minor points. Instead of seven raised bands and seven shallow recessed panels of the interior of the central mihrāb, we have here only five such bands and decorated panels. And again in place of the two projected bands over the arch of the central mihrāb, here we see only one such band.

The central mihrāb is flanked to right and left by an engrailed arched niche. The same type of niche also decorates the interior side of the north and south walls. The eight brick pilasters, that support the dome through arches and squinches, have moulded bands at regular intervals. The square base of the pilaster is ornamented with a row of blind petals.

Restoration and repair. Keeping in view its architectural value the mosque was declared protected in 1961 under the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act of 1904, and consequently an exhaustive estimate amounting to Rs.60,663 was prepared to meet the cost of thorough repairs to the monument, which was in an advanced stage of decay¹. This total amount was spent in five financial years and the year-wise expenditure was: Rs.10,015 in 1964-65; Rs.16,745 in 1965-66; Rs.10,050 in 1966-67; Rs.15,000 in 1967-68 and Rs.8,903 in 1968-69². After five years' conservation works the stability of the monument was ensured and the outlook considerably improved, but yet some parts of the mosque were still left untouched for

¹ Unpublished Manuscript, File No.14-A, Yrs. 1968-69 & 1969-70, Op.cit.

² Ibid.

which a separate sanction of Rs.59,342 was made for the financial year 1972-73¹. This year the work was started under the supervision of the Archaeological Conservator Mr. Abdul Hakim, and the four corner towers and the mihrābs were completely restored with some ornamental brick works to them, the roof and all the domes were entirely restored by lime terracing; the surface of the floor was dismantled 4 ins. deep and re-done in surkhi-beaten concrete; the decayed bricks from the walls were replaced by new ones of original size and the nine arched-openings were provided with iron-grilles².

General observation. Architecturally it is one of the interesting monuments in lower Bengal. In structural solidity, massiveness and graceful proportion the mosque of Ranbijoypur compares well with the virile Dākhil gate at Gaur. Though, however, restored and repaired in a number of times, yet the mosque has still retained its original character intact and supplies us with an example peculiarly Khān Jahānī in style³. An important aspect of the building is that the dome, which is now plastered smooth, was originally decorated exteriorly with circular rows of bricks set corner-wise at regular intervals (Pl. XI, Fig. 2). This is an unusual decorative technique in Bengal architecture, and may have been ultimately derived from such similar circular rows of bricks as are seen on the dome of the mausoleum of Ismā'īl the Sāmānid at Bukhārā⁴. This feature, according to

¹ Unpublished Manuscript, File No.14-A, Yr. 1972-73, Op.cit.

² Ibid.

³ Pakistan Archaeology, No.5, Karachi, 1968, p. 241.

⁴ A.B.M. Husain, 'The Ornamentation of the Sultānī Architecture in Bengal', AJBSA, I, 1978, p.6; A. U. Pope, Persian Architecture, Op.cit. Pl.No.77.

Mr. Abdul Qader, was also noticed on the dome of the Singrā mosque of the locality, but now disappeared.

The Bibī-Begnī Mosque, Bāgerhāt
(Pls. XIV(Fig.1), XV & XVI(Fig.1)).

About 200 yards west of the Ghorādīghī is a gigantic square single-domed structure, known as the mosque of Bibī-Begnī, which is a replica of the Ranbijoypūr mosque.

Plan and construction. Built entirely of well burnt bricks the mosque measures externally, with its corner towers, 53 ft. 4 ins. a side and internally 32 ft. 10 ins. a side. It's massive walls are of 10 ft. 3 ins. thick and are pierced by three arched doorways in the east and one on each of the north and south sides. The central opening in the east, measuring 9 ft. 7 ins. in height (from the pavement of the door-sill to the apex of its arch) and 5 ft. 8 ins. in span, is little larger than the flanking ones, each of which has a height and breadth of 8 ft. 8 ins. and 4 ft. 3 ins. respectively. Both in height and breadth each of the doorways of the north and south walls is approximately the same to that of the central doorway in the east wall.

Just in front of the three eastern entrances there are three mihrābs inside the qiblah wall. The central mihrāb, which is traditionally

large, has the depth and breadth of its aperture of 4 ft., while the apertures of the flanking mihrābs are 3 ft. in breadth and depth. The central mihrāb again depicts a rectangular projection which, unlike those of other mosques of the locality, marks a partial departure in its style having been bounded by a circular pinnacle on its either angle.

The large square hall is covered by only one brick dome, hemispherical in shape. The dome rests on half-domed squinches and arches supported by eight brick pilasters. The solid circular towers on the exterior angles of the building have moulded bases and plain tops, and do not rise above the roof level in the usual way.

Decoration. Of the decorative features of the mosque, little now remains. The entrance arches, although now plain, were once perhaps decorated like other mosques of the locality.

The only curved cornice band of the mosque is decorated with a row of lozenges. Excluding this cornice band the corner towers are enriched with eight more moulded bands at intervals. Of these eight bands the first, the third, the fifth and the seventh from the top have the usual lozenges in rows, while each of the second, the fourth and the sixth has a row of triangles. And the lowest one depicts tooth patterns. The sunk spaces above and below the lowest band are ornamented with an interesting brick-design (Pl. XVI, Fig. 1) and the usual net pattern respectively. This brick-design compares well with the similar mat-pattern of the south-west *Īwān* of the *Masjid-i-Jāmi'* (12th century) at Isfahān and the shrine of Bāyazīd at Bistān (1120)¹,

¹ See A. U. Pope, *Persian Architecture*, *Op.cit.*, Pl.Nos. 108 and 167.

and thus it may be taken as another indication of Persian influence on Bengal architecture.

The decoration of all the mihrābs is wrought more or less in the same manner. All the mihrāb arches are engrailed and pointed, which spring from two decorated brick pilasters. The decoration is now best preserved in the central mihrāb (Pl. XIV, Fig. 1). Here the spandrels of the arch are ornamented with prominent rosettes. The interior of the mihrāb niche is divided into five horizontal sunk panels by raised bands. While the first, the third and the fifth panels from the top depict net pattern, the second and the fourth each is filled with small eight-petalled flowers arranged in rows. Unlike the usual rectangular bands the mihrāb niche here is flanked on either side by six horizontal rows of square panels, three in each row. Ranging upto the apex level of the mihrāb-arch from the pavement of the floor, each of these six rows is separated from the other by a raised horizontal decorated band. Each of the square panels depicts a crused-arch, enriched with either geometric patterns or flowers of various designs. Above the mihrāb-arch are two boldly projected horizontal bands, each being ornamented with a row of lozenges and a row of tooth patterns bounded above and below by a row of lotus petals. The interspace of these two bands is filled with a frieze of tri-lobbed arched-niches, thirteen in number. And the whole composition is crowned by a row of ornamental petals.

Restoration and repair. Like the Ranbijoypur mosque, the Bibi-Begni mosque was also declared protected in 1961¹. Having been buried long

¹ Unpublished Manuscript, File No. 14-A, Yr. 1967-68, Op.cit.

under vegetation the mosque was in a highly disintegrated condition and consequently a phased programme, spreading over five years, was drawn up for its restoration and the total estimated cost amounted to Rs.72,366¹. Out of this total amount Rs.47,985 were spent in four years since 1964-65 to 1967-68², and during these four years 'the entire vegetation growth around the building, including the accumulated debris, has been cleared and the major part of the disintegrating masonry carefully repaired. Walls were so heavily damaged that they had to be repaired both externally and internally filling the core for a thickness of two feet with undressed bricks and lime-surkhi and setting plain and dressed bricks of original size in face. All the walls including the arched entrances have also been reconstructed upto the cornice level. Due care has been taken to restore the terracotta ornamentations and panel decorations whenever there was any trace. The collapsed turrets, with their ornamental facets have been dug out from the debris and restored partially³.

Still more some parts of the mosque were yet to be restored and for the purpose the remaining amount of Rs.24,381 of the total estimated Rs.72,366 was devoted to in 1968-69⁴. This year the remaining parts of the corner towers were repaired, the interior side of the qiblah wall together with its decorated mihrābs and the disintegrated floor were restored, and iron-grilles were provided in the entrance openings⁵.

¹ Unpublished Manuscript, File No.14-A, Yr. 1967-68, Op.cit.

² Ibid.

³ Pakistan Archaeology, Op.cit., P.242.

⁴ Unpublished Manuscript, File No.14-A, Yrs.1968-69 & 1969-70, Op.cit.

⁵ Ibid.

General observation and date. The name of the mosque itself suggests that it belonged to one Bibī Begnī. Now the question arises who was this Bibī Begnī? The local tradition relates that this Bibī Begnī was one of Khān Jahān's wives, while S. C. Mitra¹ tries to make her a concubine of Khān Jahān and after her death this building was erected over the grave in commemoration of her name. But the problem is that the building now does not exhibit any trace of a sarcophagus or grave within. Nevertheless it is not certain that the building had originally no such grave, for no excavation has yet been made in the interior of the building. On the other hand, the building contains three mihrābs - one of the basic characteristic elements of a mosque. But does the existence of these mihrābs absolutely prove this to be a mosque? Modern researches reveal that a number of tombs in Islamic Persia such as those at Tāyyābād, Turbat-i-Jām, Tūruk, and subsequently the tomb of Sultān Oljeitū (1305 - 13) at Sultānīya or the Imāmzāda Duvāzda Imām (1036) at Yazd contain mihrābs; and Andre Godard² call this type of tombs 'funnerary mosques'. Similar instances also occurred in India such as to be seen in the tomb of Iltutmish (C.1235), that of his son Nāṣir Uddīn Maḥmūd (1231)³, the tomb of Ghyās Uddīn Tughlaq (1325) and that of his successor Fīroz Shāh Tughlaq (dec. 1388)⁴, all in Delhi. Several other tombs of the Sayyid (1414 - 51) and Lodī

¹ Op.cit., Pp. 352 - 53.

² Op.cit., P. 293.

³ A. B. M. Husain, Persian Influence, Op.cit.

⁴ P. Brown, Op.cit. (Islamic Period), Pp. 21 & 25.

(1451 -1526) periods such as the Bara Khān Ka Gumbad in the neighbourhood of Delhi¹ and the mausoleum of Sher Shāh Shūr (C. 1540) at Sasarām in Bihār² also bear this feature. It thus appears from the above evidences that the local tradition which connects the building in question with a tomb may not completely be ignored, although it is now well known as a mosque and is being used for the same purpose. However, whoever might be this Bībī Begnī and what the building was actually intended for, it betrays in all respects the architectural style of the time of Khān Jahan and may therefore be dated in the mid.15th century³.

The Chuna Kholā Mosque, Bāgerhāt

(Pl. XVI (Fig. 2)).

The mosque, being situated about one and half a mile to the north-west of the Shāt-Gumbad mosque, takes its derivation from the name of the village Chuna Kholā. It is a typical example of the single-domed square building, now very dilapidated in condition, for at many places two or three layers of bricks have fallen down.

Plan and construction. Built wholly of brick the mosque, including the corner towers, measures externally 41 ft. a side, while internally 25 ft.

¹ P. Brown, Op.cit. (Islamic Period), Pp. 28 - 29.

² Ibid., Pp. 90 - 91.

³ Protected Monuments and Mounds, Op.cit., P. 18.

4 ins. a side. The massive walls, 7 ft. 4 ins. in thickness, are pierced with archways - three on the east and one on each of the north and south sides. The central doorway is 4 ft. 5 ins. wide, while each of the flanking ones is 2 ft. 9 ins. width. The width of the north and south-walled doorways is the same to that of the central one in the east wall. Inside the qiblah wall there are three mihrābs corresponding to the entrances in the east wall. The central mihrāb shows an usual rectangular projection on the exterior side, which rises up to the roof level.

The single-square apartment is covered by a brick dome, hemispherical in shape. The dome, which is now in a fair state of preservation after restoration, is internally carried on half-domed squinches on the upper angles of the room. It is important to note that the squinches of this building have neither any bracket-support nor any pilaster support and spring directly from the waist of the wall.

The four corner towers, which are badly damaged, are circular in Khān Jahānī style. The three cornice bands, which are also broken at several places, are curved in the typical Bengali style.

Decoration. The decoration of the mosque is of no exceptional interest. Each of the entrance arches of the north and south walls and the central one of the east wall are exteriorly enclosed by a rectangular border. This border of the central entrance way in the east is filled with interlacing circles containing within the mat-pattern of Persian derivation¹, while those of the northern and southern walls depict the usual net-pattern. The spandrels of these entrance arches still bear the traces

¹Supra, Pp. 185-86.

of large rosettes. Above this border is noticed a boldly projected decorated band, which is topped over by a frieze of ornamental petals with a centrally placed kalasa motif.

The three curved cornice bands are all decorated. The middle one has dental motifs, while each of the rest two depicts a row of lozenges. Under the lowest cornice band runs in a parallel way a slightly recessed panel all round the building. Its decorations do not show any uniform design and are mainly net patterns, interlacing circles and an interesting interlocking pattern (Pl. XVI, Fig. 2). The broken corner towers also have moulded bands and their decorative motifs are lozenges and tooth-patterns.

The arches of the mihrābs are engrailed and are all separately enclosed within a rectangular border. This border of the central mihrāb is ornamented with net pattern, but those of the side mihrābs are filled with two intersecting floral scrolls. The spandrels of all the mihrāb arches are decorated with prominent rosettes.

In the central mihrāb the interior of the semi-circular niche is divided into three horizontal sunk panels by raised decorated bands. From the top the first and the third panels are decorated with a frieze of arched niches of multi-cusped design, while the second one depicts one row of lozenges and one row of pellets. Dividing this hangs down a stylized chain and bell motif. In the outer face of the mihrāb the enclosing rectangular border is topped over by a moulded band, which is again crowned by a frieze of ornamental petals with a centrally placed kalasa motif.

Unlike those of the central mihrāb, the shallow horizontal panels of the side mihrāb niches are ornamented with net pattern only. Save these decorated mihrābs and entrance arches, the entire surface of the walls is plain like other buildings of Khān Jahan in the locality.

Restoration and repair. The mosque was declared protected on September 12, 1975 under section 10(1) of the Antiquity Act of 1968¹. Under a phased programme an estimate of Rs.1,19,605 was framed for the complete restoration of the mosque². Out of the aforesaid amount Rs.15,000 were spent for the restoration of the dome in 1976-77 and Rs.30,000 were spent in 1977-78 for the repairing of the eastern facade³. The total estimated amount was, however, revised on 11 April, 1979 and augmented to Rs.1,33,674⁴.

General observation and date. Local legends relate that the mosque was built by one of Khān Jahan's officers and the style confirms it.

¹ Unpublished Manuscript, File No.14-A, Yrs. 1976-77 & 1977 - 78, Op.cit.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

The Singrā Mosque, Bāgerhāt
(Pl. V(Fig.2)).

Plan and construction. This is a dilapidated brick-built square single-domed mosque, situated about 200 yards to the south of the Shāt-Gumbad mosque. It measures externally, with towers on the exterior angles, 40 ft. each side and internally 25 ft. 8 ins. a side. The walls are 7 ft. 2 ins. thick. The interior of the mosque is entered through three arched doorways in the east and only one on each of the north and south sides. The principal doorway in the east wall is 5 ft. 10 ins. wide and its flanking ones are 3 ft. 7 ins. wide. The doorways of both the north and south walls are 4 ft. 10 ins. in span. Immediately in front of the central doorway is an arched mihrāb inside the qiblah wall and this is the only mihrāb of the mosque. The mihrāb, the aperture of which is 3 ft. 7 ins. in breadth, has a rectangular projection with re-entrant angles, which usually rises upto the cornices of the mosque.

The shallow pointed arches in the middle of the walls in combination with Bengali pendentives and the half-domed squinches support the only brick dome that covers the single-square hall of the mosque. These squinches and arches, like those of Khan Jahan's tomb and of his mosque beside, spring from stone brackets. These brackets have all now fallen down.

The exterior surface of the building is greatly damaged and in many places the core of the walls for a thickness of about 1½ ft. has fallen down. The four corner towers are circular, of which the north-eastern one has completely disappeared and none of the remaining three

now retains its top side. There are two curved cornice bands, which are now preserved only in the exterior face of the qiblah and the south walls.

Decoration. The spandrels of the doorway arches are decorated with rosettes, while their upper parts show moulded bands. The two cornice bands are decorated with lozenges, while space in between them is ornamented with a frieze of tri-lobbed arched niches. The five moulded bands of the corner towers, still preserved in the north-western one, depict lozenge patterns.

The arch of the mihrāb, which spring from the two decorated brick pilasters, has engrailing at the face and prominent rosettes within a single circle at the spandrels. The semi-circular niche depicts four horizontal decorated sunk panels, each being demarcated by a raised band, and also a hanging motif. Above the arch is a moulded band, below which runs a sunk panel enriched with intersecting scrolls with flowers. All these are enclosed within a broad rectangular border filled with net pattern. Immediately above this border is another prominently projected band, crowned finally with a frieze of blind petals.

The mihrāb is flanked to right and left by an engrailed arched-niche, which also flank the north and south doorways of the mosque in the inside. The exterior surface of the dome, which is now plain after restoration, is said to have been originally decorated with circular rows of bricks like the dome of the Ranbijoypur mosque¹.

¹Supra., P. 183.

At about sixty-eight feet to the east of the mosque a 3 ft. thick brick-foundation of a wall from north to south has been discovered from under earth in the month of June, 1978, while the C & B. workers were making road beside the mosque. This discovered part of the wall shows in the middle a projection both in front and behind of 8 ft. across, which corresponds to the central doorway of the mosque. The continuation of this wall is also noticed partly on the north of the mosque. All these clearly suggest that the mosque was originally surrounded by an outer wall and the existence of the projection in the eastern enclosure wall was certainly meant for a gate-way to enter into the mosque compound like that of the Shāt-Gumbad mosque.

Restoration and repair. The mosque, like the Chuna Kholā masjid, was declared protected on September 12, 1975 under section 10(1) of the Antiquity Act of 1968¹. Measures were taken to restore the building under a long term programme at a total estimated cost of Rs.1,19,637². Out of this amount Rs.15,276 were spent in 1976-77, when only the dome was restored with lime and surkhi-beaten plaster³.

General observation. Both in construction and decoration the mosque is typical of Khān Jahān's single-domed mosques of the locality and may therefore be dated in the mid.15th century.

¹ Unpublished Manuscript, File No.14-A, Yrs. 1976-77 & 1977-78, Op.cit.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

The Mosque of Zindā Pīr, Bāgerhāt

(Pl. IX(Fig.2)).

Plan and construction. Close to the north-west of the tomb of Zindā Pīr is still standing a miniature single-domed square structure. Built in brick it measures, inclusive of the octagonal corner towers, 25 ft. each side externally and 16 ft. 2 ins. a side internally. The thickness of the walls is the same to that of the tomb beside and is only 4 ft. 5 ins. The building has three tow-centred pointed archways in the east and only one in each of the north and south sides. The central opening is kept traditionally bigger. Straightway to this opening there is only one mihrāb inside the qiblah wall, which has the usual rectangular projection on the exterior side.

The single brick-dome of the mosque has lost its upper part, and is now covered with jungles. The grassy floor of the mosque always remains muddy and damp. The dome rests on half-domed squinches, which in turn spring from brick pilasters. The cornice of the building has disappeared. Nevertheless the four walls are now preserved in a good condition after restoration by the custodian of the majār¹.

Decoration. The octagonal corner towers are divided by moulded bands. The exterior surface of the four walls is repeatedly broken by vertical offsets and recesses, which has no doubt removed the monotonous treatment of the building, at least externally. The decorations of the entrance arches have disappeared. The eight brick pilasters that support the dome are decorated with ornamental bands at intervals.

¹Infra, Pp. 229-30.

The only mihrāb of the mosque depicts usual decoration in terracotta. The mihrāb arch, which is set within a slightly recessed rectangle, is engrailed and has now lost ornamentations of its spandrels. Above the arch are two projected bands, each being ornamented with a row of small rosettes, a row of lozenges and two rows of lotus petals. The decaying ornamentations of the interspace of these two bands are still observable. The surface of the semi-circular mihrāb niche depicts three horizontal sunk panels by raised ornamental bands. The two upper panels are now bare but the lowest one is enriched with a row of cusped arched-niches. The rectangular border of the mihrāb is filled with an interlocking pattern (Pl. XVI, Fig. 2) like that seen in the Chuna Kholā mosque. The upper part of this border is crowned by a frieze of blind petals.

Restoration and repair. One Mr. Golzar Ahmed, to whom the majār of Zindā Pīr now belongs, have made some repair works recently to this mosque.

General observation. Lying beside the tomb of Zindā Pīr¹ and betraying the same architectural practices - the repeatedly variegated offsets and recesses of the exterior surface of the walls, the octagonal shape of the corner towers etc., the mosque might also have been constructed by the same Zindā Pīr.

¹The tomb of Zindā Pīr will be discussed in the section TOMB, Pp. 229 ff.

The Sādīkpūr Mosque, Bārābāzār

This is a single-domed square mosque and is situated about 1½ miles to the west of the Bārābāzār market place¹ in the district of Jessore. The mosque takes its name Sādīkpūr after the name of the village. In the locality the mosque is well known as 'Chirāgdāni masjid', for it stands on the southern bank of a large pond called Chirāgdāni, a few yards north of the Bārābāzār-Tāhīrpūr road. The mosque has recently been dug out by the villagers from under a brick mound and is being used as Friday prayer house.

Plan and construction. It is a ruinous square structure with octagonal turrets on the exterior angles, and measures 32 ft. a side externally, while 20 ft. 2 ins. a side internally. The 5ft. 11 ins. thick walls, which are now standing upto the height of about 5 ft. only, are pierced by doorways - three in the east (central one being larger than the side ones) and one in each of the north and south sides. Brick pilasters are seen inside the four walls, which suggests that the single square prayer chamber was originally covered by a dome. The qiblah wall provides three mihrābs, now in a very dilapidated condition. The central mihrāb, which is traditionally bigger and projected externally, is 3 ft. wide and 2 ft. 3 ins. deep.

Decoration. The building is now devoid of decorations, but yet some are still preserved in the interior of the mihrāb niches. The interior of the

¹ Bārābāzār is about 12 miles north of the present Jessore town.

central mihrāb niche has a row of blind crests and two horizontal rows of rectangular panels, four in each row. Each of these panels is further enriched with a cusped arch containing a small rosette in the spandrel. Dividing these horizontal rows of panels into two equal parts there hangs down a stylized chain that ends with a rectangular pendant. This pendant is enriched again with a cusped arch having a rosette in the centre. The northern mihrāb niche depicts the same sort of hanging motif, which is flanked on either side by twenty-five small square rosetted-panels, arranged in rows. The southern mihrāb niche has the same sort of ornamentation like the central one and depicts three rows of engrailed arched panels and a hanging device.

Date. The date of the construction of the mosque is known from the following inscription: 'This mosque was built during the reign of 'Alā' ud-Dunyā wad-Dīn Abūl Muzaffar Husain Shāh Sultān (may Allāh perpetuate his kingdom) by Muhammad, the minister (may his father be fortunate) of the honoured king, appointed for that area, in the second of Rabi-al Ula, the year 925 A. H. (1519 A. D.).'¹

¹The epigraph is now preserved in the Varendra Research Museum, Rājshāhī. See Schrab Uddin Ahmed, Op.cit., pp. 74 ff.

The Godār Mosque, Bārabāzār

(Pls. XVII & XVIII).

Plan and construction. Having been situated at a distance of half a mile from Bārabāzār market place and a mile to the east of the Sādīkpūr mosque, the Godār masjid is typically a square single-domed structure of the Sulṭānī period. The four exterior angles of the building are flanked by octagonal towers. Including these towers the building is 32 ft. a side externally and internally 20 ft. 2 ins a side. The walls, which are 5 ft. 10 ins. in thickness, rise upto the height of 15 ft. from the ground and provide three two-centred pointed archways in the east and one in each of the north and south sides¹. The central opening is the same in width to those of the north and south walls, and measures 4 ft. 6 ins. The flanking openings in the east wall are 3 ft. wide only.

The interior side of the west wall is recessed by three mihrābs. The central mihrāb is traditionally large and projected on the exterior side, and its aperture has a depth and breadth of 2 ft. 3 ins. and 3 ft. respectively.

The single-square prayer chamber is surmounted by a hemispherical brickdome, which has now lost its upper part. The dome is about 18 ft. in diameter and is supported on half-domed squinches and shallow pointed arches in the middle of each wall. These squinches and arches in turn

¹Mr. Sohrab Uddin, who wrote on this mosque, has omitted in his account the existence of the doorways of the north and south walls.

See Op.cit., Pp. 72 - 73.

spring from eight pilasters, each pilaster being placed at an interval of 6 ft. Of these pilasters, which are of 6 ft. in height, four are of black stone and four of bricks. Each of the stone pilasters, being formed of two or three stone pieces by placing one upon the other, depicts square pedestal and octagonal shaft and is divided into sections by slightly raised bands. These stones are supposed to have procured from some Hindu buildings of the locality¹. The brick pilasters in details copy their stone counterparts.

The only one cornice band of the building is curved in the typical Bengali style.

Decoration. The decoration of the mosque consists only of terracotta. All the mihrāb arches are engrailed and their spandrels are embossed with prominent rosettes (Pl. XVII, Fig. 1). Immediately above these arches is a single projected band, enriched with tooth pattern. The interior of the semi-circular niche of the central mihrāb depicts two horizontal rows of rectangular panels, each row being separated from the other by a slightly raised decorated band. Each of these rectangular panels, being enclosed by a fretted border, is further decorated with a cusped arch having rosettes in the spandrels. Immediately above these two horizontal rows of panels is noticed a frieze of blind crests as we have seen exactly in the Sādikpūr mosque, and in the Six-domed mosque at Bāgerhāt. However, the interior of the niche also depicts a hanging motif. The broad rectangular border of the mihrāb is decorated with a heavy curly scroll with

¹ Sohrab Uddin Ahmed, Op.cit., P.73.

branches and flowers. Crowning the horizontal part of this border runs a frieze of blind crests, which is divided equally by a centrally placed kalasa motif. The side mihrābs are also furnished with more or less the same sort of ornamentations in terracotta.

Internally the north and south walls show at each end a decorated arched niche. A beautiful type of decoration is seen in the bordered fretwork, noticed in the rings of supporting arches and half-domed squinches of the dome inside the building (Pl. XVII, Fig. 1). Although this type of ornamentation is almost a general characteristic of Khalīfatābād architecture, the placement of it above the ring of interior arches seen unusual. Both inside and outside, the base of the dome is ornamented with a row of blind petals. The exterior surface of the walls, including the four corner towers, is richly embellished with horizontal moulded bands at intervals. Each of these bands of the walls is topped over by a row of blind petals, while underneath is seen bordered fretwork (Pl. XVII, Fig. 2). The curved cornice band is decorated with a row of lozenges.

Restoration and repair. The mosque was once hidden in a thick jungle. One Mvi. Abu Bakr Siddiqui is known to have cleared the jungle in and around the mosque in 1334 B. S. and made it eligible for Jum'ah prayer¹. Since then it has been using for the same purpose. The author visited the mosque twice and in his second visit in April, 1979, he saw the mosque under repair by the people of the village.

¹ A. Jalil, Op.cit., P. 279.

General observation and date. Abdul Jalil¹ holds that this mosque resembles exactly the Ranbijoypur mosque of Khān Jahān and was therefore erected in the mid.15th century. S. C. Mitra² also is of the same opinion. But a close examination reveals that there is a gulf of difference in architectural details between these two buildings. While the Ranbijoypur mosque is virile and massive, the present one is weak having a light construction; while the former depicts circular corner towers and blank surface of the walls, two of the distinguishing features of the Khān Jahānī buildings, the latter shows octagonal corner turrets and exquisite terracotta decorations in the outer surface of the walls. This must have been developed at a later date in the region of Khalīfa-tābād. Moreover, in the design of its corner towers, in its measurement and mihrāb decoration, in the arrangement of the door openings etc. this mosque resembles exactly the Husain Shāhī mosque of Sādikpur in the same locality and may thus be placed in the Husain Shāhī period. Mr. Sohrab Uddin³ also holds the same opinion.

It has been suggested that the name of the building 'Godār mosque' signifies that it is the 'first mosque or the mosque belonging to the initial period of Muslim occupation'⁴. But this does not seem to be tenable, because long before its erection in the Husain Shāhī period,

¹Op.cit., Pp. 279 - 80.

²Op.cit., P. 319.

³Op.cit., P. 80.

⁴Ibid., P. 71.

the area was brought under Muslim control by Khān Jahān. The name must therefore point to some other meaning which is not known now. In any case the building should be regarded as a Husain Shāhī mosque, erected sometime during the period.

The Aroshnagar Mosque, Khulnā

In the village of Aroshnagar¹, which is about two miles north-east of the Tālā Police Station in Sāth-khīrā Sub-division, is still seen the remains of an ancient mosque on the western bank of a pond. The villagers are known to have discovered this mosque from a brick mound on 29th Chaitra, 1365 B. S.² Only the four walls with octagonal towers on the exterior angles of the mosque are now standing at a height of 3 ft. Friday prayer is now offered in it having been covered with a thatched hut on bamboo posts. The building measures, inclusive of its corner towers, 27 ft. a side externally and 17 ft. side internally. The mosque originally provided access through three doorways - one on each side except western side. At present the northern and southern doorways are closed. Each of the four walls inside still bears the trace of two brick pilasters, which suggest that the building was covered by a single dome. The qiblah wall accommodates three mihrābs, which have all now been plastered smooth with

¹ A village of Māgurghonā Union Council under Dumuriā Police Station in Khulnā Sadar Sub-division.

² A. Jalil, Op.cit., P. 483.

cement and sand. The central mihrāb, which is traditionally bigger, is projected on the exterior side, now dilapidated.

The date of the erection of this mosque is fixed by an Arabic inscription which reads: 'The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: He who builds a mosque in this world, Allāh builds for him seventy castles in the Paradise. (This mosque) was built in the time of 'Alā' ud-Dīn Husain Shah, the Sultān (may Allāh perpetuate his kingdom), in the year 907 A. H. (1502 A. D.).'¹

The Suvarārā Mosque, Jessore

(Pl. XIV(Fig.2)).

Less than three miles south of the Abhoynagar Police Station in Jessore Sadar Sub-division and on the eastern bank of the old Bhairab there stands in the village of Suvarārā an ancient brick-built single-domed mosque, now dilapidated. The superstructure of the mosque has

¹This stone inscription tablet, according to the people of the village, is procured from the debris of the mosque. While visiting the place in April, 1979, the author found the epigraph in possession of Sk. Fazlur Rahman, who resides close beside the mosque. The author took a photograph of it and handed over to A. K. M. Yaqub Ali, Asstt. Professor, Department of Islamic History & Culture, Rājshāhī University. He has given the above reading of the inscription. The epigraph is now preserved in the Varendra Research Museum, Rājshāhī.

crumbled down, and the four walls, which are still standing upto the roof level, have been covered with plants and trees. Nevertheless Jum'ah prayer is offered in it having been covered with a thatched roof on the four dilapidated walls of the building.

The square structure, inclusive of its four octagonal corner towers still in situ, measures externally 29 ft. a side. The mosque has only one two-centred pointed archway on each of the north, south and east sides. The interior face of the walls has been much altered, for which no pilaster support for the dome above now exists. However, the qiblah wall accommodates three mihrābs, of which the central one is the largest and projected on the exterior side. Except the cusplings of the arches and a row of blind petals on the top all the ornamentations of the mihrābs have disappeared.

The exterior surface of the walls is repeatedly variegated with vertical offsets and recesses exactly in imitation of the Zindā Pīr's mosque at Bāgerhāt. The corner towers are embellished with moulded bands in pair. Each of these bands has dabber marks at regular intervals, a feature which is immensely noticed in the Chhoṭa Sonā mosque at Gaur. The lowest pair of bands is topped over by a row of blind crests and the sunk space in between these two bands is filled with a row of blind square panels.

According to S. C. Mitra¹ and Abdul Jalil² this mosque was built during the time of Khān Jahān. But unlike the circular towers and the

¹Op.cit., P. 344.

²Op.cit., P. 297.

set of three entrances in the facade of Khān Jahān's single-domed mosque at Bāgerhāt, the Suvarārā mosque shows octagonal corner towers and only one entrance in the east facade. In this connection the mosque seems to be a copy of the Husain Shāh's mosque at Aroshnagar and may thus be ascribed to the Husain Shāhī period.

Mughal Period

The Atārou Mosque, Sāthkhirā

(Pl. XXI (Fig. 1)).

A little more than two miles east of the Tālā Police Station in Sāthkhirā Sub-division there is a plastered single-domed Mughal mosque in the village of Atārou. Unlike the complete square, the mosque forms a slight rectangle and measures, inclusive of the octagonal corner towers, externally 19 ft. from north to south by 17 ft. from east to west, while internally 13 ft. by 9 ft. 3 ins. Built on a plinth of about 2 ft. 6 ins. high the mosque provides access through three multi-cusped arched entrances - one on each of the north, south and east sides. The northern and southern openings are little smaller than the eastern one, and each of the former two openings is internally flanked at the waist by an arched niche of four-centred design. Inside the west wall is a semi-circular mihrāb within a slightly recessed rectangle. The mihrāb shows a simple rectagular projection on the exterior side.

Though the building forms a rectangle, yet interiorly the upper part of the room has been made square by introducing half-domed vaults on the north and south walls. These half-domed vaults together with the pendentives in plastered net-work on the angles support the dome above. The dome is slightly bulbous and crowned with a finial.

The four octagonal corner towers are divided into sections by mouldings in plaster and rise high above the horizontal parapets and terminate in a ribbed cupola. The horizontal parapets are faced with a row of merlons in plaster.

To accommodate the Friday congregation the local inhabitants have extended the mosque towards the east. The mosque is now in good order after some repairs by the local people.

The mosque although does not appear to contain much of architectural pretensions, one thing of it really deserves attention. The single-domed mosque in the Mughal period, even in the Sultānī period almost invariably take the form of a complete square. But the present example forms a slight rectangle, which seems to have been influenced by the rectangular side bays of a three-domed mosque, noticed for the first time in the Lālbaḡh mosque at Dacca¹. Not only this, the system of supporting the dome of the Atārou mosque is exactly the same to those of the side bays of the Lālbaḡh mosque. These two important characteristics of the Atārou mosque may lead one in fixing its date of construction in the late 17th century, when the area was under full control of the Mughals.

¹See A. H. Dani, Op.cit., P. 198.

The Tālā Mosque, Sāthkhirā

This mosque is situated a few yards north of the Tālā Police Station on the western bank of a large pond. Having been placed at the back of a plastered platform of about 3 ft. high, the mosque proper forms a small rectangle of 28 ft. by 22 ft. externally and 19 ft. by 12 ft. internally. The interior of the mosque can be entered by three four-centred archways - one on each side except the west, which accommodates in the interior side a cusped-arched semi-circular mihrāb. Each of the doorways was originally slightly projected and bounded by slender pinnacles, for their traces are still recognisable. The projection of the mihrāb is also furnished with such pinnacles on its either side. The parapets are horizontal, above which rise the corner towers. The dome with a finial, that covers the interior of the mosque, is supported below by the same device adopted in the Aṭārou mosque.

About half a mile north-west of the mosque and in the village of Tetuliā is another dilapidated single-domed mosque in a thick jungle. The dome has fallen down, but the four walls are still standing at a considerable height. The four octagonal corner towers have lost their tops, fragments of which are now lying at the feet of the mosque. Measuring 25 ft. 7 ins. by 15 ft. 8 ins. internally, the mosque seems to be a duplicate copy of that at Tālā. But a minor variation in the Tetuliā mosque is represented by three arched openings in the facade instead of only one of the Tālā mosque. However, on ground of style these two buildings come closer to the Aṭārou mosque and may thus be dated in the same period, i.e. late 17th century.

The Chāksrī Mosque, Bāgerhāt

The mosque is situated about 9 miles south-west of the Shāt-Gumbad mosque and a few yards south of the Chāksrī bāzār under Rāmpāl Police Station in Bāgerhāt Sub-division. It is a plastered square single-domed mosque with a measurement of 25 ft. a side externally and 15 ft. side internally. Standing on a plinth of about 1½ ft. high the building is flanked on the exterior angles by circular towers, which, having been divided into sections by moulded bands in plaster, rise above the horizontal parapets and terminate in a solid cupola in the usual Mughal fashion. There is a slightly projected fronton in the middle of each side except the qiblah wall, which has a semi-octagonal mihrāb in the inside and a projection of the mihrāb on the exterior side. The fronton is bordered by a slender pinnacle and is pierced by a multi-cusped archway, the northern one now being closed by brick-filling. The projection of the mihrāb is also enriched with a pinnacle on either side. The dome, which has inside a row of basal leaf ornamentation, is internally carried on half-domed squinches but externally on a plain octagonal drum.

The mosque is now fronted with a modern pillared building to accommodate the Friday Congregation, and has suffered much from later repairs conducted by the local people.

Comparing the mosque with that of the Bībī masjid (1628) at Sherpūr S. M. Hasan¹ tries to fix its date of construction vaguely from

¹ A Guide to Ancient Monuments of East Pakistan, Dacca, 1970, p. 125.

the 17th century. But the Chāksrī mosque is far developed in style, and unlike the simple square Bibī masjid, the present one is distinguished by projected fronton with enclosing ornamental pinnacles, the plinth upon which the mosque stands, the octagonal drum below the dome etc. and all these make it nearer in style to the Allākūrī's mosque (C. 1680) at Dacca. On ground of style the Chāksrī mosque may, therefore, be dated in the late 17th century.

The Bāgmārā Mosque, Barisal

This is a brick-built single-domed mosque on the southern bank of a large pond in the village of Bāgmārā, about a mile to the south-west of the three-domed Komlāhpūr mosque.¹ It is a dilapidated square structure measuring 14 ft. a side internally and is emphasised on its exterior angles by octagonal towers². These towers project above the horizontal parapets and are topped over by a plastered kiosk consisting of a cupola and an eave-cornice. A single arched-doorway is provided in each side except the west wall, which is recessed inside by a semi-octagonal mihrāb. Of the opening arches only the eastern one is cusped and is further

¹Supra, P. 173, f.n.1.

²Only the north-eastern tower is now preserved in its entirety, while the other three have lost their tops.

distinguished by a slight projection with semi-octagonal pinnacle on its either side. The same type of ornamental pinnacle also flank the mihrāb - projection on its either angle. The eastern facade, around the doorway only, is ornamented with rectangular panels in plaster.

The single brick-dome is slightly bulbous and is crowned with a lotus finial. The dome rests directly on the walls and the phase of transition is achieved by means of Bengali pendentives of the Sultānī period, the traces of which are still preserved on the four upper angles of the room. Internally each of the north and south openings and the mihrāb are flanked on either side by an arched niche of four-centred type.

Though much damaged, the mosque is still being used as Friday prayer house. In the locality the mosque is attributed to Maḥmūd Khān, who built the three-domed mosque of Kowlāhpūr (C. late 17th century).¹ And the style of the building confirms the local tradition.

The Uttar-Bāurgātī Mosque, Barisāl

About a mile due east of the Bāgmārā mosque is the village of Uttar-Bāurgātī which contains a single-domed mosque, now seriously damaged and turned into a cow-shed. Having been placed at the back of

¹ Supra, Pp. 173-76.

a plastered podium of about 1½ ft. high the mosque proper forms a square of 19 ft. 6 ins. a side internally. The building is flanked on the exterior angles by octagonal turrets. These turrets must have once risen above the horizontal parapets, because the broken plastered kiosks of the turrets are still lying at the feet of the building. The mosque provides access through only one four-centred archway on each of the north, south and east sides. As the exterior surface of the building is very much broken it is difficult to say whether the eastern doorway was originally projected and bounded by pinnacle. Corresponding to the eastern opening there is a semi-octagonal mihrāb in the qiblah wall. The mihrāb is arched, which is of multi-cusped type. Internally the mihrāb and each of the northern and southern doorways are flanked on either side by a four-centred type arched niche. The single dome of the mosque, which is still extant, is slightly bulbous and crowned with a lotus finial. The dome and roof are now covered with plants and vegetations.

The villagers say that the mosque was built by one Shāban Khān, the younger brother of Masūm Khān. There may be some truth in this tradition, for this mosque is built on the same architectural style of Masūm Khān's mosques of Komlāhpūr and Bāgmārā. The mosque of Uttar-Bāurgātī may, therefore, be dated in the late 17th century.

Close to the north of this mosque is another ancient single-domed mosque, now renovated. It is merely a copy of the above mentioned one and might have been erected at about the same time.

v) Kiosk Type with a Vaulted Vārāṇḍā in front

The Masjidbārī Mosque, Patuākhāli

(Pl. XXIII).

The Masjidbārī¹ mosque is the only known example of the type in the whole region of Khalīfatābād, which is situated in the village of the same name under Mīrzāganj Police Station in the present district of Patuākhāli. At the time of the Sundarban resumptions this mosque was discovered from a dense jungle. The mosque was in good order while Beveridge² visited it in 1874.

Plan and construction. Built entirely in well-burnt brick the mosque as a whole is an oblong structure and measures, inclusive of the octagonal corner towers, 49 ft. 2 ins. from east to west by 34 ft. 9 ins. from north to south exteriorly. The whole building, however, consists of a square single-domed prayer chamber (with an additional semi-octagonal tower on the south-east and north-east angles) and a vaulted vārāṇḍā in the east. This vaulted vārāṇḍā is entered by five arched-openings - three on the east (the central one being the largest) and one on each of the north and south sides. The prayer chamber also provides access through three arched entrances on each of the north, south and east walls, which are of 6 ft. 6 ins. in thickness. Inside the qiblah wall there are three semi-circular mihrābs corresponding to

¹The village of Masjidbārī is situated about 8 miles south of the Mīrzāganj Police Station.

²Op.cit., p. 35.

three eastern entrances. The hemispherical brick dome, that covers the prayer chamber, is internally carried on half-domed squinches on the upper angles and the shallow pointed arches in the mid-walls. These arches and squinches are again supported by brick-pilasters.

The octagonal corner towers do not rise above the roof level. The cornice of the mosque is curved in the usual Bengali fashion.

Decoration. The decoration of the mosque, consisting only of terracotta, is now confined to the three mihrābs. The arches of all the mihrābs are cusped, and spring from two decorated conventional brick-pilasters. Above the arches, however, are noticed two moulded bands. The interspaces of these bands are enriched with either creeper devices or a row of decorated tri-lobbed arched niches. The semi-circular interior of the mihrābs is ornamented with horizontally drawn sunk panels, separated from each other by a decorated raised band. The enclosing rectangular borders of the side mihrābs are embellished with fretwork, while that of the central mihrāb is filled with floral scrolls. Above this border is a frieze of ornamental petals and the whole composition is finally crowned by a centrally placed large rosette within a beaded circle, which seems to have been copied from those found over the mihrābs of the Shāt-Gumbad mosque at Bāgerhāt.

Date. The date of the erection of the mosque is fixed by an inscription which reads: 'The Prophet (blessings of Allāh and peace be on him) has said: whoever builds a mosque, Allāh shall build for him seventy castles

in the Paradise. This mosque was built in the reign of the Sultān, the mighty pillar of the Church and the state, Abūl Muzaffar Bārbak Shāh, son of Sultān Mahmūd Shāh, by the exalted Khān Azyāl Khān, son of ud-Dīn in the year 870 A. H. (1465 A. D.).¹

Restoration and repair. The question of preserving the mosque was at first mooted by Hāi Shāhib Hara Krishna Biswās, Assistant Settlement Officer of the area, and the mosque was thus declared 'a protected monument under section 3(3) of the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, VII of 1764, vide Government Notification No.3471, dated the 17th July, 1913'.² The earliest repair work to this ancient mosque appears to have been done in 1917-18, when Rs.3,000 were spent 'for removing the jungle, for cutting encroaching trees, for clearing away rubbish and dressing the ground around the building for a certain distance, besides the adjustment of the facing bricks on the east side, the grouting of cracks with repairs to the dome etc.'³ Some other special repairs were also made to it in 1921-22.⁴

¹The inscription tablet was first procured from the debris of the mosque by J. H. Reilly, the Commissioner of the Sundarbans in the early years of the 2nd half of the 19th century, and having been deciphered by Captain W.N. Lees, it was published with text and translation in JASB, 1860, Pp. 406-07. Later on it was republished by a number of authors. See H. Beveridge, Op.cit., P.35; J.C.Jack, Op.cit., P.151; S.C.Mitra, Op.cit., Pp.370-71; S. Ahmed, Inscriptions of Bengal, IV, Rajshahi, 1960, Pp. 81-83; A.H.Dani, Op.cit., Pp. 148-49.

²J. C. Jack, Op.cit., Pp. 151-52.

³ASIAR, 1917-18, P.9.

⁴ASIAR, 1921-22, P.28.

Since 1921-22 no repair work appears to have been made to the mosque. As a result the mosque was badly affected and disintegrated at many places by the salt-petre action¹. Under special repair order a sum of Rs.10,000 was thus spent for the purpose in 1966-67². The mosque was thoroughly repaired in 1977-78 at a great cost of Rs.90,000³. The restoration work of this year includes the removal of the vegetation growth from the walls and the roof, the patch-work to the surface of the walls, the ornamental brick-works to the mihrābs and lime terracing to the roof and the dome⁴.

General observation. In its dwarfish three arched-doorways with the central one bigger and the blank walls without ornamentation the mosque keeps up the building tradition of Khān Jahān. Nevertheless the mosque marks some developments over the Khān Jahānī style of architecture. Unlike the circular corner towers of the Khān Jahānī buildings, the Masjidbārī mosque shows for the first time the octagonal corner towers in the architectural history of Khalīfatābād. But the more important is the addition of a flat-topped barrel vaulted vārāndā in the east, which is really an important architectural development over the simple square single-domed type buildings in Bengal. The earliest specimen

¹ Unpublished Manuscript, File No.14-A, Yr. 1962-63, Op.cit.

² Ibid.

³ Unpublished Manuscript, Five Years Development Project File, No.21, Yr. 1978 - 79, Op.cit.

⁴ Ibid.

of the style appears to be the Gopālganj mosque (1460), four miles north of the Dinājpur town¹. The style was later on elaborated as evidenced by the Khāniā-dīghi mosque (later Ilyās Shāhī period)² and the Lattan masjid (Ḥusain Shāhī period)³ at Gaur. The style continued even in the Mughal period⁴.

vi) Single Chau-chālā Vaulted Type

The Shābekdāngā Mosque, Bāgerhāt

(Pl. XIII (Fig. 2)).

This is a small structure, situated on the northern bank of a pond in the village of Shābekdāngā⁵. The mosque is known after the name

¹R. E. M. Wheeler, Op.cit., P.112; S. M. Hasan, Op.cit., P. 114.

²The varāṇḍā of the Khāniā-dīghi mosque at Gaur (now in Rājshāhī) is covered with three domes. See A. H. Dani, Op.cit., Pp. 112-13.

³The Lattan mosque in Gaur (India) represents further development of the style, for among the three domed-coverings of the varāṇḍā the central one takes the form of a Chau-chālā vaulted type. See A. H. Dani, Op.cit., Pp. 122 - 23.

⁴As for example the Darā Begum's tomb (late 17th century) at Dacca. See Ibid., Pp. 210-12.

⁵The village of Shābek-dāngā is situated on the south-west of the Shat-Gumbad Railway Station in Bāgerhāt Police Station.

of the village. It is now renovated. A plastered masonry vārāṇḍā without covering is added on the east side, while on the south a minaret approached by flight of steps is also built in recent times. The entire exterior surface of the walls and the roof has been plastered smooth with cement and sand, the corner towers have all disappeared, the only doorway and the mihrāb have been given a modern look. Still the mosque retains enough of its old features.

Plan and construction. Unlike the traditional single-domed square type, it is oblong in plan with the outside dimension 26 ft. from north to south by 20 ft. from east to west, while internally 18 ft. 4 ins. by 11 ft. 4 ins. The walls are not so massive like those of the Khān Jahānī group of monuments and are only a little less than 5 ft. in thickness. The mosque has only one doorway in the middle of the east wall and corresponding to it there is a mihrāb in the qiblah wall, now covered entirely with cement plaster. The single oblong prayer chamber is covered by a Bengali chau-chālā type vault, which rests directly on the four walls.

Decoration. The mosque is really of outstanding merit in regard to its minute decoration in terracotta. Not a single-space in the interior, except the doorway and the mihrāb niche, is left undecorated. The interior of the vault shows an exact copy of the bamboo frame of a chau-chālā thatched cottage, in which each of the crossing-points of the rafters and horizontal brick-bands is further distinguished by a knot in the form of a lotus flower exactly in imitation of those found in the interior of the chau-chālā vaults over the nave of the Shāṭ-Gumbad mosque (Pl.VII, Fig. 1).

The four walls are internally richly decorated with ornamental rectangular panels - large and small. Each part on either side of the doorway and the mihrāb depicts two large panels - one upon the other at interval. The upper panel is flanked to right and left by a pair of smaller ones, one above the other, while the lower one has only one smaller panel on its either side. Each of the large panels of the east and west walls is ornamented with a large cusped arch with its spandrels and interior having been decorated with rosettes and other designs, while the smaller flanking ones are enriched with small trees with flowers. Each of the north and south walls also depicts in the middle a pair of large rectangular panels, one upon the other. Each panel depicts a tree with expanding branches and flowers. The upper panel is flanked on either side by a pair of smaller ones, while the lower one depicts only one such small panel on its either side. Again at each end of both the north and south walls are five other small rectangular panels, which are placed one upon the other at regular intervals. Each of these panels is filled with an inverted and an upright decorated cusped arch motifs.

General observation and date. In its ground plan and shape the Shābek-dāngā mosque is very similar to the so-called kitchen in the dargāh of Khān Jahān at Bāgerhāt. It thus may be described as the second example of an independent chau-chālā type structure not only in Khalīfatābād but perhaps also in the history of Muslim architecture in Bengal. We do not, however, have any record of its exact date of construction. But the rich terracotta ornamentation in panels, which compares well with the panel

decorations of the Chhoṭa Sonā and the Bāghā mosques in Rājshāhī, suggests that the Shābekdāngā mosque might have belonged to the Ḥusain Shāhī period.

TOMBS

i) Square Domical Structure

The Tomb of Khān Jahān, Bāgerhāt

Less than a quarter mile to the south of the Ranbijoypur mosque is a high artificial mound on the northern bank of the so-called Thākurdīghī, the top of which is occupied by the dargāh of Khān Jahān. The whole dargāh complex is surrounded by an oblong outer-wall, in the middle of which is another enclosing wall. Within this wall are the tomb of the saint himself and the tomb of his dewan Muhammad Tāhir. Close to the wall, but outside of it to the west is the single-domed mosque already described¹, while on the east is the so-called kitchen².

The outer-wall with its four flanking circular towers on the exterior angles forms a vast rectangle of 220 ft. from east to west by 212 ft. from north to south. This outer-wall with a thickness of 2½ ft.

¹ Supra, Pp. 177-79.

² Infra, Pp. 236-38.

rises upto the height of about 5 ft. 6 ins. from the ground level.

Each of the four corner towers, which rise about one ft. above the wall and are topped over by a solid cupola, is divided by moulded bands decorated with lozenges. This outer-wall now renovated, is pierced by arched gateways - three on the south and one on each of the north, east and west sides. All these gateways are similar in plan and construction, and even have the same dimension, except that of the north wall.

The northern gateway, which is the largest, is 14 ft. 8 ins. high from its pavement, 8 ft. 11 ins. deep and 21 ft. 4 ins. wide excluding its flanking stepped members. The archway itself is 6 ft. 6 ins. in span.

Unlike the outer one, the inner enclosure wall forms a square of 90 ft. a side externally including its circular corner turrets. Having been divided into sections by moulded bands and topped over by a solid cupola, each of these turrets rises a few inches above the wall. The walls are 4 ft. 5 ins. thick and 4 ft. 6 ins. high. This inner enclosure wall also shows in the middle of each side, except the north, an arched gateway corresponding to each archway of the tomb proper.

With the exception of the western one, the remaining two gateways of the present enclosure wall are similar in style to those of the outer-wall. The western gateway is the largest of all in the complex and consists of three arched openings, the central opening being traditionally bigger. Excluding the flanking stepped members, this gateway is 32 ft. 3 ins. wide, 6 ft. 4 ins. deep, and 11 ft. 6 ins. high in the middle and 10 ft. 6 ins. at each end. This gateway, now closed by masonry filling, is so placed that its central opening corresponds directly to the western

archway of the tomb proper and the central archway of the mosque on the west.

The Tomb Proper

(Pls. XXI(Fig.2) & XXII).

Plan and construction. The tomb proper of Khan Jahan occupies the centre of the inner enclosure wall cited above. It is a square structure, and measures externally, inclusive of the traditional circular towers on the exterior angles, 45 ft. a side and internally 30 ft. 4 ins. a side¹. The height is some 47 ft. from the foot of the building to the top of the dome. The walls are of 8 ft. thick and their bases upto the height of 3 ft. 4 ins. all round the building are completely made of black basalt, a technique, which, like some other monuments of Bengal, was here no doubt introduced with a view to preventing the building from being affected by the ground moisture so common in this humid climate of south Bengal.

In the centre of each side of the building is an opening under a two-centred arch, with a horizontal stone lintel across the springing on the inner face. The door sills, including the pavement of the entrance-ways, are all made of the same black basalt, but the square-shaped door-jambs are of grey stone like the pillars of the Shat-Gumbad and the Nine-domed mosques of the same locality. The northern archway, which is now closed by brick-filling, is smaller in span by one foot than the others of 6 ft. 8 ins. wide each.

¹But J. Westland supplies a wrong information that the interior of the tomb is octagonal. See Op.cit., P. 13.

The large hemispherical brick dome with its kalasa finial is internally carried on the half-domed squinches and shallow pointed arches in the middle of the walls, which in turn spring from the stone brackets projected out of the walls. The corner towers, the stone made bases of which are moulded, are topped over by ribbed cupolas of brick and do not rise far above the roof. The triple cornice bands, which run rounding the corner towers, are curved in the typical Bengali style.

The sarcophagus, beneath which lies the mortal remains of Khan Jahan, occupies the centre of the floor and is placed length-wise from north to south. It consists of four rectangular stepped terraces diminishing upwards and a top of simple pointed barrel form. While the two lower terraces are of red-burnt brick, the upper ones are of black-basalt. These terraces from the bottom measure respectively as follows: the lowest step is 12½ ins. high, 22 ft. 10 ins. from north to south and 16 ft. 6½ ins. from east to west; the second step is 7 ins. high and 19 ft. 9 ins. by 13 ft. 5½ ins.; the third is 1 ft. 4 ins. high and 16 ft. 4½ ins. by 10 ft. ½ in.; the fourth is 2 ft. 1 in. high and 13 ft. 4½ ins. by 7 ft. 6 ins.; and the top or the fifth one is 6 ft. 2 ins. by 2 ft. 1 in. with a height of 3 ft. 4 ins. The three upper terraces of stone are covered all over with pious expressions in Arabic and Persian¹, but unfortunately much of them are now in a decaying condition. The whole sarcophagus, which is now enclosed by a wooden railing, is always kept hidden under a precious cloth-cover of red colour and is further covered with an open cloth-canopy of the same hue.

¹ See Appendix B.

Decoration. Both interiorly and exteriorly the entire surface of the walls is plain save the traces of plastering at several places. The inner face of the stone door-lintels is chiselled in the centre and depicts a full blown lotus flower within a single circle in low relief. Each of the triple cornice bands is decorated with a row of lozenges, while each of the moulded bands of the corner towers depicts either lozenges or triangles in rows.

An important aspect of decoration is that the two brick-made lower terraces of the sarcophagus and the floor are entirely paved with encaustic tiles of mainly yellow, black, blue-black, reddish-blue, reddish-green, green and white. Unfortunately the glazed coatings of the tiles on the floor have disappeared perhaps due to its constant use by the visitors. But the glazing of some of the tiles on the terraces is still in good state of preservation and they in design are hexagons of 4 ins. across, while those on the floor are squares of 6½ ins. a side. The substance of the square tiles is of white stone ware, and their superior quality of enamelling, now disappeared, led Bysack¹ to conclude that they might have been imported from China. There may be some truth in this suggestion of Bysack, for the exchange of envoys between Bengal and China was being made during this time². The hexagonal tiles, on the other hand, are of red-earth and show varieties of designs, such as lotuses, rosettes,

¹Op.cit., P. 130.

²S. Mandal, Bāṅglādesher Itihāsa (Madhya Yuga, Pratham Parva), Calcutta, 1963, P. 215; A. Karim, Bāṅglār Itihāsa (Sultānī Amal), Dacca, 1977, P. 315.

cusped arches etc. All these are no doubt local motifs, and the inferior execution of the glazing suggest that these hexagonal earthen tiles were not imported from outside, rather brought perhaps from Gaur where they are said to have been manufactured¹.

Date. It is difficult to give the exact date of construction of the building, for one of the inscriptions on the tomb stone merely records the demise of Khān Jahan on 27th Zil Hijjah, 863 A. H. (25th October, 1459 A. D.)². It seems that he had probably constructed the building for himself before his death and accordingly after death his body was interred within it under a stone sarcophagus. A popular belief in the locality also furnishes that the tomb was built in the life time of Khān Jahan at his own expenses³.

Restoration and repair. The traces of plastering on the walls led Bysack⁴ to think that 'the builder (Khān Jahan) was perfectly familiar with the art by which the masons of Delhi at that time gave a marble like smoothness and polish to chunam work'. But none of the buildings of the time of Khān Jahan, even of the Sultānī period has preserved this feature. It may rather be reasonably suggested that the tomb was repaired during

¹See chapter III, P. 102.

²See Appendix B.

³B. G. Bysack, Op.cit., P. 130.

⁴Ibid., P. 131.

the Mughal period and then plaster was applied to its surface by them, for this is a distinguishing feature of the Mughal monuments in Bengal.

In 1917-18 the tomb is known to have been repaired at a considerable cost¹. Some other minor repairs were also done to the tomb in '1947 - 48 and 1950 - 51 at a cost of Rs.215 and Rs.894 respectively'². The latest restoration work to the tomb is known to have been made in 1968-69, when Rs.1,741 were spent for the purpose³. This year the entire decayed pucca area around the tomb (within the inner enclosure wall) was restored with flat brick-soling covered by cement concrete and lime terracing with a view to preventing the penetration of rain water into the foundation walls of the building⁴.

General observation. Architecturally the mausoleum is very much important in the history of Islamic architecture in Bengal. In many of its features such as the square plan⁵, the Firozian combination of arch and lintel, the curvature of the cornices, the flanking corner towers divided by moulded bands and the squinches for the support of the dome, the building is a reproduction of the Eklākhī mausoleum at Hazrat Pānduā.

¹ ASIAR, 1917 - 18, P. 9.

² Unpublished Manuscript, File No. 14-A, Yrs. 1963-64 & 1964-65, Op.cit.

³ Unpublished Manuscript, File No.14-A, Yrs. 1968-69 & 1969-70, Op.cit.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ The earliest example of the square plan of a single-domed building in India is the tomb of Iltutmish (C. 1235) at Delhi, while in Bengal the Eklākhī mausoleum, and this idea is very likely derived from the square tomb of Ismā'il the Sāmānid at Bukhārā, which in turn may have been influenced by the Sāsānian Fire temples of pre-Islamic date. See chapter III, Pp. 88-89.

Nevertheless the tomb marks an important development over the preceding monument. Unlike the octagonal interior of the Skīlākhi, the present tomb for the first time in Bengal is kept square both internally and externally. This practice, from now onward, is found to appear repeatedly in almost all the single-domed buildings in Bengal. But what is more important of this building is the shape of its corner towers. Unlike the usual octagonal shape of the corner towers of Bengal monuments, the towers of the tomb together with all the buildings of Khān Jahān are circular. The circular shape of the corner tower, the bare surfaces of the walls and the combination of arch and lintel construction of the tomb are associated with the Tughlaq architecture of Delhī. Relying merely on these Tughlaq elements in Khān Jahān's buildings some tried to trace his origin back to Delhī¹. But it is very likely that these Tughlaq elements were introduced in Bengal architecture by the immigrant artists, who perhaps came and settled here during Fīroz Shāh Tughlaq's Bengal expeditions and the sack of Delhī by Tīmūr in 1399².

¹See chapter II, P. 36.

²See chapter III, P. 83.

The Tomb of Zindā Pīr, Bāgerhāt

About 200 yards west of the tomb of Khān Jahan is situated the dargāh of Zindā Pīr¹, whose real name, it is said, was Ahmad 'Alī². The dargāh, enclosed by a renovated wall of 109 ft. square with a triple-entrance gateway in the north, consists of a single-domed mosque already described³, a single-domed tomb of the saint himself, and several other brick-built graves, which are also said to have been of the members of the same Zindā Pīr family. To the north of the complex, according to the people of the locality, was the residence of the saint, now disappeared. The place is now occupied by the residence of Mr. Golzar Ahmad⁴, who now looks after the dargāh.

The Tomb Proper

Plan and construction. The tomb proper, which is a square of 35 ft. 10 ins. a side externally, is now ruinous. The exterior angles of the building were emphasised by octagonal towers, bases of which are still in situ. The superstructure has completely crumbled down. Except the north wall, which

¹ The name Zindā Pīr, which literally means a living saint, is explained by a story that 'when his body was being put in the tomb, he rose and called out to the mourners to bring his Qur'ān'. See O. Malley, Op.cit., P.167.

² Ibid.

³ Supra, Pp. 196-97.

⁴ Mr. Golzar Ahmad claims himself a descendant of Zindā Pīr, but he gives no argument in favour of his opinion.

is now preserved at a height of about 8 ft., the three other walls had disappeared but they have been recently repaired at a height of about 2 ft. from the floor by Mr. Golzar Ahmad. The walls are not so massive like those of Khān Jahān's buildings and are of only 5 ft. 5 ins. thick.

Unlike the tomb of Khān Jahān, the present building shows three entrances on each of the west, south and east sides. On each side the central opening is slightly bigger than the side ones. The north-wall is pierced by only one two-centred pointed arch opening, and this suggests that all the doorways of the tomb must have originally been symmetrically arched, which were also of two-centred pointed form. The northern archway is internally flanked on either side by a large deep arched-niche, which may only be compared with the similar large niches of the congregational Sāt-gāchhiā mosque at Bārābāzār.¹

The interior of the building must have been originally covered by a single dome on brick pilasters, two of which are still seen inside the north wall.

In the centre of the floor now cemented, is the brick-cenotaph under which lies buried the Zindā Pīr. The cenotaph consists of a triple terraced podium and a keel-type top like those of Khān Jahān and Muhammad Tāhir. The first terrace from the bottom is 11 ft. 9 ins. from east to west by 16 ft. 3 ins. from north to south; the second is 9 ft. by 13 ft. 5 ins.; the third is 5 ft. 10 ins. by 10 ft. 2 ins.; and the last or the top one is 2 ft. 10 ins. by 7 ft.

¹Supra, pp. 148-49.

Decoration. Since the building is ruinous only traces of ornamentalations are now preserved here and there of which the traces on the north wall are a little prominent. The exterior surface of the north wall is ornamented with two horizontal moulded bands at intervals, each band being crowned by a row of blind crests. This sort of surface ornamentation is noticed only in the Six-domed mosque of the locality and the Goḍār masjid at Bārābāzār among the Khalīfatābād monuments.

General observation. Mr. Golzar Ahmad, mentioned above, says that the Zindā Pīr came to this area earlier than Khān Jahān¹. But the surviving architectural style of his tomb suggests that this Zindā Pīr was neither a predecessor nor a contemporary of Khān Jahān. The octagonal shape of the corner-towers, the light construction and the exterior surface decoration of the tomb (which are lacking in the buildings attributed to the time of Khān Jahān) bear clear proof to this. The octagonal corner towers started appearing in Khalīfatābād from the Masjidbārī mosque of Bārbak Shāh.² The light constructional tradition together with the octagonal shape of the corner towers appear repeatedly in the Husain Shāhī buildings of this province of medieval Bengal, viz., the Goḍār masjid and the Sādikpūr mosque at Bārābāzār, the Aroshnagar mosque in Dumuriā thānā (Khulnā) etc. The present tomb building may therefore be suitably placed in the Husain Shāhī period.

¹ A. Jalil, Op.cit., Pp. 316 - 17.

² Supra, Pp. 214 & 217.

ii) Lone Sarcophagus

The Tomb of Muhammad Tāhir, Bāgerhāt

Just on the west of the mausoleum of Khān Jahān and within the inner enclosure wall is the tomb - a cenotaph of Pīr 'Alī Muḥammad Tāhir¹. The cenotaph is formed of three stepped terraces of black basalt². The terraces measure as follows : the first step from the bottom is 1 ft. 7½ ins. high, 14 ft. from north to south and 9 ft. 3 ins. from east to west; the second is 1 ft. 10 ins. high, 11 ft. 4 ins. from north to south and 6 ft. 7 ins. from east to west; the last or the top one is 3 ft. high, 6 ft. 5 ins. from north to south and 2 ft. 2 ins. from east to west. It is , however, worth mentioning here that the two lower terraces are formed of irregular blocks of stone by placing one upon the other, while the top one, being entirely covered with Arabic inscriptions³, is a single block of stone.

One of the inscriptions of the tomb discloses the demise of Muḥammad Tāhir in the month of Zil Hijjah, 863 A. H. (1459 A.D.)⁴. This

¹ Supra, P. 221.

² It is said in the locality that the cenotaph can be entered into by a door leading beneath the tomb-stone (the top-stone terrace), which is of barrel pointed form like that of Khān Jahān.

³ See Appendix B.

⁴ Ibid.

suggests that the present tomb was perhaps constructed simultaneously to that of Khān Jahān.

Local legends relate that this Muhammad Tāhir was a Hindu convert, whose religious fervour forced the conversion of many a Hindu to the Muslim faith¹. It is also said that after the acceptance of Islām he became a favourite of Khān Jahān and rose to the office of the Dewān or Finance Minister². We do not know the truth of this statement. But it is probably true that he was a high official and also a friend of Khān Jahān. The subject-matter of the inscription and existence of his tomb beside that of Khān Jahān bear testimony to this.

Tombs of Bahrām Shāh and Gharīb Shāh, Jessore

In the present Jessore town there are the shrines of two Muslim saints - Bahrām Shāh and Gharīb Shāh, who were said to have been the followers of Khān Jahān³.

The tomb of Bahrām Shāh is situated on the western bank of a large tank, said to have been dug by the same saint. The place is now well known by the name of Kārbālā or the Public Cemetery at the western

¹ B. G. Bysack, Op.cit., P. 131.

² J. Westland, Op.cit., P. 13.

³ Ibid., P. 19; List of Monuments, Op.cit., P. 129.

end of the town. One Khadem Montaz Uddin¹, who is now in-charge of this majār, told that the tomb was originally a sarcophagus of brick. The sarcophagus was, however, dismantled and a new domed building was constructed on the spot at the end of the first half of the present century at a cost of Rs. 30,000. This new building consists of a square high platform, in the centre of which is another circular podium of 3 ft. high, covered by a bulbous dome with lotus finial. The dome rests on eight square brick pillars. The centre of this circular podium is now occupied by the stepped sarcophagus of the saint, which is approached by a stepped staircase on the east.

Not unlike that of Bahrām Shāh, the tomb of Gharīb Shāh was originally a simple sarcophagus. But the spot is now marked by a modern domed building with a vārāṇḍā on the west and east, and the brick-cenotaph, now renovated, is within this building. One Khadem Lutfur Rahman, who looks after the majār, told that the present domed-building was constructed a little earlier than that of the renovated tomb of Bahrām Shāh. The tomb stands on the western bank of the old Bhairab, now silted up, and is about 200 yards to the north-east of the present Fauzdārī court of Jessore district.

¹The author visited twice the shrines of Bahrām Shāh and Gharīb Shāh in June, 1978 and in April, 1979, and had in his second visit a talk with Mr. Montaz Uddin. This time Mr. Montaz Uddin spoke to the author that while he settled here in the early 40's of the present century the sarcophagus itself was in good order, but the area in and around was covered with dense jungle. He cleared the jungle and managed to have made his residence to the north of the shrine.

A tradition about Bahrām Shāh and Gharīb Shāh, recorded by J. Westland¹, is that while Khān Jahān was proceeding through this way as a conqueror, he sent these two men ahead 'to prepare food for him at Jessore; when he came up it was not ready; and therefore he left them behind when he went on. They remaining erected shrines, and as they were, like Khān Jahān, men of great piety and divine power, people resorted to them and even now resort to their shrines to pay their vows and make known their wishes'. We do not, however, know the truth of the story pertaining to the preparation of food. But it is not unlikely that Bahrām Shāh and Gharīb Shāh were perhaps directed by Khān Jahān to stay at Jessore to run its administration, while he himself marched south-eastwards as conqueror and finally settled at Bāgerhāt (Havelī Khalīfatābād), the capital of the newly conquered province of Khalīfatābād. They may thus be described as two administrative officers of the north-western region of Khalīfatābād like Burā Khān and Fath Khān of the south-western Khalīfatābād during the time of Khān Jahān. They were also perhaps men of religious piety, for their majārs are still being used as centres of pilgrimage for devout Muslims.

¹Op.cit., P. 19.

Part B : Secular Buildings

Save the religious ones, the province of Khalīfatābād also produced some buildings of secular character, most of which appear to have served the military purpose of the builders. It is interestingly to note that these fortified structures are all dated from the Mughal period, which, not unlike their counterparts in Dacca and other parts of Bengal, take mainly the form of palace-fortresses and river-forts. Mention should again be made that unfortunately we have got no detailed architectural descriptions of these buildings. They are now ruinous. However, in the following pages an attempt has been made to make a reconstructional study of these ruinous secular buildings.

Sultānī Period

The So-called Kitchen, Bāgerhāt

It is a brick-built structure in the dargāh of Khān Jahān, being placed outside and to the east of the inner enclosure wall but within the outer walled compound. The building is badly damaged. But enough still has survived to reconstruct some idea of its original form. The southern and western walls and the roof have fallen down, but the northern and the eastern walls¹ are still standing to their original height.

¹The eastern wall of the building is basically the eastern wall of the outer enclosure of the dargāh.

Plan and construction. The building forms an oblong rectangle with projected circular towers¹ on the exterior angles. It measures 40 ft. from north to south by 30 ft. from east to west externally and 28 ft. 2½ ins. by 17 ft. 2½ ins. internally. The northern wall is pierced by an excessively short two-centred pointed archway of 4 ft. 2 ins. wide. The same was also with the case of the fallen southern wall. There are three arched openings (the northern opening of these is still preserved in its original design) in the western wall and of these the central one is 4 ft. 5 ins. wide, while the flanking ones are of 3 ft. 7 ins. across.

The archway of the north wall is internally flanked on either side by an engrailed arched niche, exactly as in the timb beside and other buildings of *Khān Jahān* in the locality. The western niche still depicts in the spandrels of its arch small rosettes and on the face a lozenge motif, which may be compared with those of the *Shāṭ-Gumbad*, the Nine-domed and the *Masjidkūr* mosques of *Khān Jahān*. The eastern wall inside depicts in the middle a large deep arched niche.

Some mention may now be made of its roof which is now lost. As it is an oblong structure it is very difficult to cover it with a semi-circular dome, which is possible only in the case of a square room. There is the evidence near at hand that each of the seven oblong bays of the central nave of the *Shāṭ-Gumbad* mosque is roofed over with a *chau-chālā* vault. It is very likely that the same sort of covering also furnished the roof of the present oblong building. It may, therefore, be treated as the model for the single *chau-chālā* vaulted mosque at *Shābekdāngā* in the same locality, attributed to the *Mūsain Shāhī* period.

¹ Only the bases of the circular towers are now preserved to a height of 2 ft.

General observation. The circular shape of the corner towers and the chau-chālā hut type roof suggest that the building might have been constructed in the time of Khān Jahān. The location of the building itself near the tomb of Khān Jahān may also support this contention.

The local tradition relates that in the late years of his life Khān Jahān dwelt in the building¹, where now he lies buried, and used the building under discussion as his kitchen². About a century back the building is known to have been used for the same purpose by two Fakirs, who then kept up the service at the mosque and the tomb beside³.

Mughal Period

The Ruinous Palace-Fortress at Mīrzānagar, Jessore

Mīrzānagar is an ancient place containing still the remains of some ancient relics of utmost historical interest. It is now a village on the eastern side of the Kobādāk under P. S. Keshabpūr in Jessore. The revenue Collector in 1815 wrote of Mīrzānagar as one of the largest towns in

¹J. Westland, Op.cit., P.14; W. W. Hunter, Op.cit., P. 230.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

the district of Jessore¹. It also finds mention as an important city-town of the same district in the map of Hindūstān drawn by J. Rennel² in 1781. After the defeat of Rājā Pratāpāditya Jessore-Khulnā region was permanently brought under the Mughal control. Since then the territory was appropriated by the Mughal Fauzdārs with their seat of government at Mīrzānagar³. Two such Fauzdārs were Mīrzā Shafshikan (d. 1664) and Nurullah Khān (who resided here in 1696) after whom perhaps Mīrzānagar and Nurullahnagar (south of Mīrzānagar) are named respectively. The ruins noticed in the locality may thus be attributed to the Mughal Fauzdārs, who were stationed there to run the administration of this south-western deltaic land of Bengal.

The Palace

About half a mile from Trimohini along the road to Keshabpūr is the historical remains, which in the vicinity is known by the name of the Nawābbārī or the Nawāb's Palace. Consisting of several brick-built structures the palace was originally, it is said, enclosed by an outer wall. Except a dilapidated building and several tombs-cenotaphs, all the structures of the complex are now levelled to the ground. This ruinous palace, now

¹ W. W. Hunter, Op.cit., P. 208.

² Memoir of a Map of Hindustan or of the Mughal Empire, London, 1788, map facing P. 285.

³ See chapter II, Pp. 62-64.

overgrown with jungles, covers an area of about 434 ft. by 350 ft. About the palace, however, we do not know much more than what J. Westland has described a century back. He¹ says, 'It is a structure composed of two square courtyards separated by a high wall, and on the north of the northern one and on the south of the southern one there are similar high walls. On the eastern side of both the squares is a double row of little arched dwellings, which seem rather to be built in the inside of a massive wall than to be constructed with reference to convenience of dwelling. These are apparently the retainers' houses and the only entrance to the courtyard is through them.

On the north of the northern square is a three-domed structure², which was the residence proper. The masonry is dilapidated but the three-domed roof still remains. In front of this, and within the courtyard is a large masonry reservoir which is said to have been a bath. The water was brought in by being pumped over the top of what has been termed the retainers' houses, and could be discharged by a subterranean channel. The source of the water was the river Bhadrā, which, though now closed, was, at the time when these buildings were occupied, a flowing river and flowed close beside them. The southern courtyard shows only a few Musalman tombs and there are some tombs outside the building also'.

¹Op.cit., Pp. 38 - 39.

²This is the only structure in the Palace-complex, which is still standing without roof. The building is apparently a mosque and has been discussed in Part A, Pp. 171 - 72.

The Killābārī or Fort

Less than a mile south of the Palace is what is now known as the Killābārī or Fort. 'It is a large area raised some eight or ten feet by earth excavated in all probability from a long and wide trench called the Motijhil, which bounds it on the south. This raised area was at one time, it is said, surrounded by a wall of which no traces now remain. Its length is east and west, and the principal entrance to it was upon the east. The entrance appears to have been fortified, for there used to be three cannons lying here, one of which is still lying in a field closeby'¹. One of these cannons is now being displayed in the Jessore Pourashavā Park. Nothing of the fort mentioned now remains.

The Bath

(Pl.XXIV).

Close to the fortified entrance in the Killābārī, cited above, is still seen a brick-built structure, which, though now overgrown with plants and trees, is now in a fairly good state of preservation. J. Westland², who noticed this building for the first time, and later on W. W. Hunter³ and others⁴ call it a 'Prison House'. But the character of the building itself suggests that it was intended for a 'Bath House'.

¹ List of Monuments, Op.cit., P. 140.

² Op.cit., P. 39.

³ Op.cit., P. 208.

⁴ List of Monuments, Op.cit., P. 140; A. H. Dani, Op.cit., P. 247.

The building consists of four domed-chambers, four unroofed apartments and a large masonry well. The only entrance to the building is on the western side. This arched entrance, which is of four-centred type, leads to a square chamber (A) of 17 ft. 3 ins. a side internally, which was probably the dressing room. The chamber is roofed over by a well preserved dome on squinches on the upper angles, and lighted, except the doorway, through an 'oeil-de-beuf' in the top of the dome and windows on the north and south walls. Each of the four walls internally shows at each end a four-centred type arched niche. From the dressing room one can enter through an archway into another square chamber (B) of the same architectural feature, but this chamber contains on the north-east corner a small walled-up space which was probably a water tank.

To the east of this chamber (B) are two unequal oblong domed-rooms (CD), which were probably the bath-rooms proper. The northern bath-room (C), which is 10 ft. 6 ins. by 11 ft. 3 ins. internally, is separated by a 4 ft. high wall from the southern one (D), which measures 10 ft. 6 ins. by 7 ft. in the inside. Each of these rooms (CD) is approached only from the west by a separate narrow passage on the wall at a height of 4 ft. from the floor. This passage is, however, reached from either side by an ascending and descending flight of steps. Both these rooms do not contain any window and the light was admitted only through an 'oeil-de-beuf' like the two western chambers (AB).

Beyond these on the east are four rectangular unroofed rooms (EFGH), probably used as cisterns. Water was reserved in these rooms after having been lifted from the large masonry well (I) on the extreme south-

east corner, and then supplied to the bath rooms (CD) through earthen pipes, still seen fixed in the walls. The used water was discharged by the same sort of earthen pipes through the chamber (B).

The above description clearly reveals that the building was really a bath house, an important adjunct to the residential buildings in the Mughal period. This building compares well with a similar Hammām Khāna (17th century), wrongly called Hāshikhāna¹, at Iswaripūr in Sāthkhirā Sub-division.

The Shujābād Fort, Barisāl

Shujābād is now a small village in the Nalchhiṭi Police Station on the northern bank of the river of the same name and is about 5 miles south-west of the present Barisāl town. The village owes its appellation to Prince Shujā, the son of Emperor Shāhjahān and the ill-fated brother of Aurangzeb. In order to defend the neighbourhood from the frequent attacks of the Portuguese and the Burmese Magh (Firīngī) pirates Prince Shujā, as the viceroy of Bengal was known to have erected a mud-fort in this village on the bank of the Nalchhiṭi². The remains of the fort are still traceable in the village. The fort is said to have taken the form

¹ A. H. Dani, Op.cit., P. 250.

² In the Collectorate Record Room of Bākerganj district a document shows that the whole village (Shujābād) of about 77 acres of area was given rent free by Shāh Shujā to the families of some Pāthāns who had fallen in battle against the Maghs. See J. C. Jack, Op.cit., P. 161.

of a rectangle and was 'surrounded by an earthen wall with a mound at each corner. Inside were four small tanks and in the centre of the inner space, where the four roads met, was the Prince's dwelling house. The greater part of the wall has fallen into the river, the tanks were nearly dried up and the greater portions of the mounds are covered with jungle'.¹ H. Beveridge² mentions the remains of two other mud-forts in the Jhālakāṭi thānā - one at Rupasīā near Jhālakāṭi, and the other at Indra-pāshā near Rājāpūr outpost. Nothing appears to be known of their history.

Like the Palace-fortress at Mīrzānagar, these mud-forts were not intended for constant and permanent use. They are basically the river-forts and were occupied, not unlike those of the Rājīganj and the Sonā-konda in the Dacca district³, by the royal forces during the rainy season when the pirates were expected. Mud-forts of this class are also known to have been constructed by the Mughals in the south-eastern part of the district (now in the Paṭuākhālī district) - one at 'Sonākoṭ' and the other at Kellāghātā⁴ that find mention in the "Map of Rennel, May, 1764-72"⁵. But they are outside the boundary of Khalīfatābād.

¹ J. C. Jack, Op.cit., P. 161; H. Beveridge, Op.cit., Pp. 36 - 37

² Ibid.

³ A. H. Dani, Op.cit., Pp. 225 ff.

⁴ 'Sonākoṭ and Kellāghātā' are now, according to A. Jalil, in the Bauphal Police Station, Paṭuākhālī district, Op.cit., P. 467.

⁵ H. Beveridge, Op.cit., P. 37; S. M. Hasan, Op.cit., P. 54.

The Shārikal Fort, Barisal

It is said that the followers of Nawāb Sirāj ud-Dawlah came to Shārikal¹ after the defeat at the battle of Plassey and erected here a fort to offer armed resistance to the British². The fort was, however, occupied by the British in 1779 A. D. The ruins are said to be still extant³.

The Dewānbārī at Dhūlgrām, Jessore

Dhūlgrām⁴ still bears the traces of a 'Dewānbārī with a tall impressive gateway built of two flanking towers joined by a multi-foil arch and capped by a do-chālā hut of brick'⁵. S. M. Hasan⁶ suggests that the building can not be dated earlier than the 18th century, but he did not cite the ground of this dating. It seems that his dating is probably based on the fact that the do-chālā hut-type top of the gateway of the Dewānbārī bears similarity with the do-chālā annexe of the Kārtalab Khān's mosque at Dacca, which is dated C. 1700 A. D. If the above point is

¹ Shārikal is a small village under Gaurnadī thānā in Barisal district.

² District Census Report (Bakerganj), Karachi, 1961, Chapter III; S. M. Hasan, Op.cit., P. 54; A. Jalil, Op.cit., P. 467.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Dhūlgrām is now a village on the eastern bank of the old Bhairab under Abhoynagar thānā in Jessore district.

⁵ S. M. Hasan, Op.cit., P. 126.

⁶ Ibid.

taken as the only criterion of dating the building in question, it might be that the building was constructed sometime even before the 18th century, because the style (of do-chālā hut) had long ago made its appearance in Bengal, i.e., in the Fath Khān's tomb at Gaur (C. 1657 - 60) and in the gateway to the courtyard of Shāh Muḥammad's mosque (C. 1680) at Egāro-sindhur in Mysensingh¹. Another important feature of the building is the multiple cusping of the gateway arch. The earliest surviving Mughal building in Bengal to show this feature is probably the 'Idgāh (1640) near the Sāt-masjid road in the city of Dacca². Subsequently this feature appeared repeatedly in such Bengal monuments as the Bara Katra (1644), the Lālbāgh mosque (C. 1678), the Shāhbāz Khān's mosque (1679) etc. On ground of style the Dewānbārī at Dhulgrām may therefore be dated in the later half of the 17th century, when the Jessore-Khulnā region was under firm control of the Mughals.

The Ruins at Agrā and its Neighbourhood, Khulnā

A few miles south of the famous Palace-fortress at Mīrzānagar and only a mile to the north-east of the Kupilmoni is an important place

¹ A. H. Dani, Op.cit., Pp. 181 - 85, Pl. LVII, No. 83, 181 and 251 - 52, Pl. XCIV, No. 129.

² R. E. M. Wheeler, Op.cit., P. 122.

called Agrā, which still exhibits some ancient relics - the three brick-mounds. One of these mounds had been excavated and was found to contain some brick-houses, the walls and windows of which were seen by descending into the excavation¹. From this it is inferred that the other two mounds contain the same sort of ruins². J. Westland³ remarks that the 'house I saw was only about the size of a husband-man's dwelling; but for all I know these may be some larger. There are some hollows, the apparent remains of tanks that once existed near the houses, but there is no mark of wall or ditch round the mounds that I examined. Of the inhabitants of the dwellings that once existed here there is at present not even a tradition. They were not unlikely some ancient settlers in the place, who had disappeared with all their works before the present race⁴ came into this part of the land'. It is also noted that these mounds exists not only here, but at intervals all the way between Tālā on the north and the Chandkhālī on the south⁵. It is, however, impossible to say exactly how old these mounds are and when the houses they cover were inhabited.

¹J. Westland, Op.cit., P. 42.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Writing in the late 19th century J. Westland meant the English by the term 'present race', for then the territory was under control of the British. His account therefore attributes these ruins to the Mughals, who disappeared from Bengal with the coming of the British.

⁵W. W. Hunter, Op.cit., P. 224; S. C. Mitra, Op.cit., P. 209.

The Ruins at Sheker-Tak, Khulnā

Having been surrounded by a right hand branch of the Pushar on the east, the Shibshā on the west and a left hand channel of the Shibshā on the north, the coastal area of 'Sheker-tak' contains the remains of several ancient buildings¹. S. C. Mitra² supposes these remains to be the Shibshā fort of Rājā Protāpāditya of Jessore. But we know that Dhumghāt³ in the present Sāthkhirā Sub-division was the fortified capital city of Protāpāditya. It is thus very likely that the ruins at Sheker-tak belonged to the Mughals, who constructed it, not unlike those in the district of Bakerganj and other parts of Bengal, with a view to keeping in check the Magh and the Portuguese pirates, the constant source of troubles to the inhabitants of the lands adjacent to the Sea.

Part C : Non-extant Buildings

This sub-chapter is intended to give some idea of the number and type of structures, which were erected in different parts of Khalīfatabād, but now have perished with the passage of time. They

¹ S. C. Mitra, Op.cit., P. 80; A. Jalil, Op.cit., P. 53.

² Ibid.

³ HE, II, P. 266.

included buildings not only of the time of Khān Jahān, but also those which were erected after him. Buildings of this group consisted mostly of mosques, while others are known to have been of miscellaneous order. It is, however, important to note that neither inscriptions nor any other contemporary sources record the erection of these monuments. These are all known from the accounts of several recent authors, who recorded these on the basis of their personal knowledges, observations and local traditions.

The following erections are known:

1. Tradition relates that Khān Jahān had founded four cities - one at Bārabāzār, one at Muralī Qasbā (presently Jessore town), one at Paigrām Qasbā and the other at Bāgerhāt (Havelī Khālīfatabād)¹. Of the former two cities no trace, save the sarcophaguses of Gharīb Shāh and Bahrām Shāh in Jessore town², pertaining to Khān Jahān now survives. The extant buildings of the last named city have already been discussed and the remaining ones, which have disappeared, will be counted in the following pages. The third or the city of Paigrām Qasbā, now a village on the south-eastern bank of the old Bhairab, is under P.S. Phultālā in Khulnā Sadar Sub-division. A part of the village, however, is still known as Khān-Jahānpūr. In this Khān-Jahānpūr, it is said, were his 'mosque and a residence-cum darbār hall'³. Nothing of these now remain except a brick-mound of about 9 ft. high covering a considerable area. The top of the mound is now being used by the villagers as an 'īdgāh. During the British

¹ S. C. Mitra, Op.cit., P. 327; A. Jalil, Op.cit., P. 288.

² Supra, Pp. 233-35.

³ S. C. Mitra, Op.cit., Pp. 329 - 30; A. Jalil, Op.cit., Pp. 289 - 90.

period one Iswar Chandra Basu of village Srīdharpūr¹ is known to have dismantled these buildings for the purpose of constructing an 'Indigo Factory' in the village of Madhyapūr².

2. In the village of Sulaimānpūr under P. S. Pāikgāchā were a tank and a mosque of Borhān Uddīn, who is said to have been a follower of Khān Jahān³.

3. W. W. Hunter⁴ mentions the erection of a tomb over the grave of a Muhammādan saint, named Zafar 'Alī, at Kupilmoni on the eastern side of the Kobādāk.

4. To the south of Masjidkūr and on the eastern side of the Kobādāk, the village of Amādi contained some relics associated with the name of Khān Jahān. Close on the river bank on an artificial mound were two tombs - cenotaphs - placed length-wise, north and south. They are said to have been the tombs of Burā Khān and Path Khān, father and son, the Lieutenants of Khān Jahān⁵, who were responsible for the Islamization of the south-western Khalīfatābād (presently entire Khulnā Sadar Sub-division, a small part of Sāthkhirā and Jessore Sadar Sub-division which are only on the eastern side of the Kobādāk). 'The tombs were once cemented but nearly all the cement has worn off and they have now the appearance of

¹⁻² Madhyapūr and Srīdharpūr are two villages on the opposite bank of the river Bhairab under P. S. Abhoynagar in Jessore Sadar Sub-division.

³ A. Jalil, Op.cit., P. 284.

⁴ Op.cit., P. 223.

⁵ J. Westland, Op.cit., P. 20; S. C. Mitra, Op.cit., P. 324.

ordinary brick-tombs only'.¹ The oblong tomb of Fath Khān is said to have been of 16 ft. long and 9 ft. wide with a height of 4 ft. 6 ins.² Both these tombs have recently been washed away by the river Kobādāk.

5. A little further south of these tombs of Burā Khān and Fath Khān is a raised piece of land with a brick foundation in it, which is stated to mark their Cutchery³. It was apparently the 'Residence-cum-Administration Building' of these two lieutenants of Khān Jahan, from where they ruled the south-western Khalīfatābād. It is very likely that the building was originally a fortified structure, for the Kobādāk on the west and south and two or three small tanks and a long artificial trench on the north and east surround this elevation.⁴

6. From the Shāt-Gumbad mosque a brick-laid road, which is supposed to have been built by Khān Jahan⁵, runs to the north along the old Bhairab (now known as Mogrā canal), while another strikes to the east, which is now the Shāt-Gumbad - Bāgerhāt town road. The first road, turning east and then south-wards, meets the second road at a point of about half a mile from the Shāt-Gumbad mosque, and forms a tri-angular area of considerable size. Within this area, where now the Pālpārā⁶

¹ List of Monuments, Op.cit., P. 147.

² S. M. Hasan, Op.cit., P. 132.

³ J. Westland, Op.cit., P. 18.

⁴ Ibid.; S. C. Mitra, Op.cit., P. 325; A. Jalil, Op.cit., P. 284.

⁵ J. Westland, Op.cit., Pp. 11 - 12.

⁶ Pālpārā is less than a quarter mile to the north of the Shāt-Gumbad mosque.

stands, is known to have been erected the 'Residence of Khān Jahan'. On the spot now remain some heaps of bricks, several stone pillars and the trace of a long surrounding wall of considerable thickness.

7. On the south and east of Khān Jahan's residence but within the above mentioned encircling roads are known to have existed several mosques, the traces of which the author himself found while visiting the spot. One of these, as the villagers say, was named Sona masjid, while another was of Didār Khān¹. 'The latter mosque measured 40 ft. square internally, and was covered with nine domes on four stone pillars. Each of its north, south and east sides had been pierced with three entrances, while the west wall provided inside three mihābs'². All these interestingly lead one to infer that the mosque of Didār Khān must have belonged to the square multi-domed type mosques of Khalīfatābād, all being erected during the time of Khān Jahan.

8. On the western side of Khān Jahan's residence, it is said, there were two important buildings - the Kotwālī building and the Armoury (store house of arms and ammunitions)³. The name Kotwālī suggests that the chief of police (Kotwāl) was probably stationed here to watch off the city of Havelī Khalīfatābād. A little south-west of these two buildings there were two or three mosques, attributed also to the time of Khān Jahan⁴.

¹ S. C. Mitra, Op.cit., P. 356.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., P. 353.

⁴ Ibid., P. 355.

9. Less than two miles west of the Shāt-Gumbad mosque the village of Shāyerā once contained a mosque. In this village on the southern side of the Bhūtiyāmāri hāt was an 'Ibādatkhāna'¹, where Gharīb Shāh, who lies buried in Jessore town², is said to have offered his occasional prayer.
10. In the village of Sundarghonā was a mosque of Gaṅgā Khān, a follower of Khān Jahān³. Several other mosques were also built in the same village at Kānthāltalā and Bādāntalā⁴.
11. A mosque was built during the time of Khān Jahān in the village of Bāgmārā (north of Bāgerhāt - Shāt-Gumbad road), known as the mosque of Anār Khān⁵.
12. A mosque⁶ is known to have been built on the western bank of Santosh Khān's dīghi, south of the Thākurdighi.
13. Ekhtiyār Khān, one of the followers of Khān Jahān, is said to have constructed a mosque⁷ in the village of Krishnanagar, situated about a mile and a half to the west of the present Bāgerhāt town.

¹ S. C. Mitra, Op.cit., P. 351. The idea of the 'Ibādatkhāna' built by Sulaimān Karrānī (1565 - 72) of Bengal was perhaps borrowed from the present example. In its turn the 'Ibādatkhāna' of Sulaimān Karrānī is known to have exerted influence in the construction of Akbar's 'Ibādatkhāna' (1575 - 76) at Fathpur-Sikrī. See Muntakhabut Tawārīkh, II (Eng. Tr.), Pp. 203 - 05; A. B. M. Husain, Fathpur-Sikrī and its Architecture, Dacca, 1970, Pp. 140 - 42.

² Supra, Pp. 234-35.

³ S. C. Mitra, Op.cit., P. 356.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., P. 357.

⁷ Ibid., P. 356.

14. There were two other mosques of Ahmad Khān and Daria Khān¹ in the village of Ranbijoypur, except that at Fakirbarī.
15. A mosque² was built during the time of Khān Jahān in the village of Mogrā, north-east of the Shāt-Gumbad mosque.
16. In the village of Kānthāl close to the west of Bāgerhāt town was the Kātāni masjid (locally so called)³. Two other mosques⁴ were also at Bashubātī.
17. Less than a quarter mile to the north-west of the tomb of Khān Jahān and a few yards to the north-east of the dargāh of Zindā Pīr was built a small 'single-domed mosque measuring 22 ft. a side'⁵.
18. Khān Jahān is said to have built a Sarāikhāna (benevolent institution)⁶, after which the village of Sarāi under Bāgerhāt Pour-shavāh is probably named. The local people report that it was located beside the Nurul Amin High School of the Bāgerhāt town.
19. An observatory⁷ is also known to have been built by Khān Jahān near his Sarāikhāna.

¹ S. C. Mitra, *Op.cit.*, Pp. 356 - 57.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ A. Jalil, *Op.cit.*, P. 315.

⁶ *Ibid.*, P. 313.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Pp. 313 - 14.

20. Blochmann¹ says that 'Alā'Uddīn Husain Shāh built a town at Chāndpūr, near Alāipūr, east of the present Khulnā town. The village of Chāndpūr on the north bank of the Bhairab still contains several brick-mounds, which, according to a popular belief in the locality, contain the ruins of Husain Shāh's 'mosque and residence'.²

21. A Nabahīkhāna (prison house)³ is said to have been built by a Husain Shāhī king in the village of Krishnanagar, where the ten-domed mosque is still standing.

22. It is said that Sultān Nasrat Shāh dug a large tank, known as Mithāpukur,⁴ to the south-west of the present Fauzdārī Court of Bāgerhāt. On the eastern bank of this tank was the historical Khalīfatābād mint⁵, founded by the same Sultān in opposition to the opinion of his father 'Alā'Uddīn Husain Shāh. Several of the coins struck from this mint have been discovered.⁶

23. Tradition also relates that Nasrat Shāh erected for himself a 'house and a masonry ghāt',⁷ on the southern bank of the Mithāpukur. While

¹ 'Contribution to the Geography and History of Bengal', JASB, Pt. I, 1873, P. 228.

² S. C. Mitra, Op.cit., Pp. 375 - 76.

³ A. Jalil, Op.cit., P. 315.

⁴ Ibid., P. 386.

⁵ H. Blochmann, Op.cit., P. 231.

⁶ See Appendix C.

⁷ A. Jalil, Op.cit., P. 386.

in the later half of the 19th century this tank was being re-excavated, the diggers discovered this ghāt formed of flight of steps two feet below the surface¹. 'The steps were worn away; but the floor, which was of ornamental brick, was still in good preservation'².

24. Near the Miṭhāpukur of Naṣrat Shāh was 'a Nāt-Khāna or dancing room tank and an old office or kachāri known as Bāsābārī or lodging house'³. This was the 'office, treasury and court' of a Muḥammadan lady called Bahu Begum, who in the 18th century held a military grant (Jāgīr) that included $\frac{3}{8}$ annās share of the Khalīfatabād fiscal division⁴. This Bahu Begum died in 1794 A. D.⁵

¹ W. W. Hunter, Op.cit., P. 227.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

CHAPTER - V

CONCLUSION

In the process of Muslim conquest of Bengal, which was started under Bakhtyār Khalzī in the beginning of the 13th century and reached the maximum height under 'Alā' Uddīn Husain Shāh (1493 - 1519), the province of Khalīfatābād was first brought under Muslim control by the Saint-General Khān al-Azām Ulugh Khān Jahān in the middle of the 15th century. The name Khalīfatābād appears to have been given by the conqueror himself in honour of his master-king Nāṣir Uddīn Mahmūd Shāh I (1437 - 59), the 'Khalīfa of God by proof and testimony'. The name is also known from the coins, from the maps of Bengal drawn by foreigners during the 16th and 17th centuries and from the rent-roll of Akbar made by Rājā Todar Mall¹.

Since its conquest and foundation by Khān Jahān till the beginning of the last quarter of the 16th century, with the exception of a period of little more than two decades (1538 - 64) under the Shūr Afghāns of Delhi, Khalīfatābād was ruled by the governors loyal to the Gaur Sultāns. But with the Mughal penetration in Bengal in 1575 the region in question went under control of the two powerful Hindu Zamīndārs - Rājā Protāpāditya of Jessore and his son-in-law Rājā Rām Chandra of Baklā. They were, however, crushed in 1612 by the Mughal general Mīrzā Nathan and thus Khalīfatābād once again came under Muslim possession.

¹ See chapter II, pp. 43-44 & 47-48.

When founded Khalīfatābād appears to have included within its political domination the portions of present Jessore lying south of the Chitrā, major part of Khulnā to the east of the Kobādāk and a small portion of north-west Bākerganj. Khān Jahan, the first governor of the province, is likely to have ruled it from his capital Havelī-Khalīfatābād (present Bāgerhāt), where are still standing his mausoleum and other important buildings. After him and during the time of Sultān Barbak Shāh (1459 - 74) the south-west part of Bākerganj was conquered and added with this province as evidenced by the Masjidbarī mosque (1465) in the present district of Patuakhālī. The river Burīswar - Barisāl and Arīāl Khān was now, therefore, made the eastern limit of Khalīfatābād, and this boundary line of the province having its capital at Bāgerhāt perhaps remained in force althrough the pre-Mughal period. Under the Mughals the region of Khalīfatābād became smaller in area than before. During the period the river Bhairab instead of the Chitrā and the Bishkhālī-Jhālakātī and Hundā instead of the Burīswar-Barisāl and the Arīāl Khān became respectively the northern and the eastern limit of Khalīfatābād, which with the seat of government at Mīrzā-nagar in Jessore Sadar Sub-division was being ruled by the Fauzdārs such as Mīrzā Shafāhikān (d. 1663), Nūrullah Khān (dismissed by Aurangzeb in the 1690's) etc.¹ Some further changes in the sphere of the territorial extent of the province occurred in 1722, when Murshīd Qulī Khān divided Bengal into 13 Chāklaḥs. This time the major part of the

¹ See chapter II, Pp. 62-63.

Sarkar Khalīfatabād of the Alin came to be known as Chaklāh Jessore and the Bakerganj portion of the Sarkar beyond the river Baleswar - Harin-ghāṭa appears to have been transferred to form the Chaklāh Jahāngīrnagar¹. The name Khalīfatabād, however, still survived by the name of Havelī-Khalīfatabād (Bāgerhāṭ), which appeared as a fiscal division of Jessore district in the assessment report of 1870 - 71².

The Islamic architecture in Bengal is characterised by mainly two different styles - the pre-Mughal or Sultānī and the Mughal style. The distinctive style of Bengal architecture, which is associated mainly with the Sultānī period, was started with the rule of the dependent governors' rule and reached its height under the Ilyās Shāhīs and was further elaborated under the Husain Shāhīs. The sources of the building art of the period were drawn from the land, from Delhī and Persia. With the coming of the Mughals this Sultānī architecture had been gradually superseded by a new form of art, which was directly inspired by the already developed building traditions of Upper India - Delhī, Agra and Fathpūr-Sikrī.

It is in the context of this Islamic architecture in Bengal that the building art of Khalīfatabād has been studied. But any general statement about the architecture of the province would be incorrect and useless, because the buildings here were erected at different times and it is natural that they would bear different architectural trends current in Bengal in different periods. Of the monuments of the region in

¹ See chapter II, Pp. 61-62.

² Ibid..

question, however, a large majority are of the Sultānī period, and they not only show the continuation of the building traditions already set rolling in Gaur, Pānduā and other places of Bengal, but also mark a notable development of the Sultānī architecture as a whole. This development can be seen both in the constructional and decorative aspects, which were inspired by the practices of the land and of outside Bengal such as Persia. Some of these devices, which appear to have been of local derivation, are the chau-chālā vaults over the central nave and the tri-angular pediment over the central archway in the eastern facade of the Shāt-Gumbad mosque¹, the independent chau-chālā building such as the Shābekdāngā mosque etc.² The others, which seem to have originated from the Persian sources, are the mat-patterns in terracotta ornamentation of the Bibī-Begnī mosque³, the circular rows of bricks set corner-wise around the exterior surface of the domes of the Banbijoypur and Singrā mosques, the square plan of all the single-domed mosques both inside and outside⁴. However, the monuments of the Mughal period in Khalīfatābād are very few. They take mainly the form of fortress - palace fortress and river forts, and some mosques of either single-domed or of three-domed variety. They largely follow the Mughal style of Dacca. But yet the pre-Mughal traditions are not altogether wanting in some of these structures.

¹ See chapter IV, Pp. 134-35.

² Ibid., Pp. 218-21.

³ Ibid., Pp. 185-86.

⁴ Ibid., Pp. 177 ff.

An important aspect of the architecture of Khalīfatabād is that much of its buildings are associated with the name of Khān Jahān. They are built of a common and uniform style, known after the name of the builder the 'Khān Jahānī style'. The sources of the style are partly derived from the Ilyās Shāhī art traditions of Bengal and partly from the Tughlaqian character of Delhī. While the former is best illustrated through the massive and virile construction, the latter is well understood by the appearance of the circular shape of the corner towers, the bareness of the exterior surface of the walls etc. The presence of the Tughlaqian features in Khān Jahān's buildings, sometimes noted even in other buildings of Bengal, may perhaps be explained by the employment of the immigrant Delhī artists after the invasion of Tīmūr in 1399 A.D.¹ However, the buildings like the Shāt-Gumbad, the Nine-domed, the Ranbijoy-pūr and the Bībī-Begnī mosques, the mausoleum, all at Bāgerhāt, the Masjidkūr mosque at Amādi (Khulnā) and the Qasbā mosque at Gournadī (Barisāl) are some of the examples to show the Khān Jahānī style at its best.

The material used at Khalīfatabād is chiefly brick made of readily available alluvial clay of the land. Lime was used as mortar, and also as plaster especially on the roof and dome of the pre-Mughal monuments only. But in the Mughal monuments it was universally used on the surface of the walls. This latter practice is one of the distinguishing elements of the Mughal monuments of Khalīfatabād, in fact even of the whole of Bengal. Stone - mainly black-basalt and grey-stone,

¹See chapter III, p. 83.

perhaps from the quarry of the Rājmahal hills, was used but sparingly, and mainly for emphasis. A rare example of stone-carving in low relief is noticed in the central mihrāb of the Shat-Gumbad mosque and on the inner face of the lintels of the tomb of Khān Jahan¹. Stone is not found to have been used in the Mughal buildings of Khalīfatabād. Terracotta, and brick-setting in the Bengali pendentives, which consists of horizontal rows of bricks set corners-wise and edge-wise giving thus an appearance of a delicate carved pattern in high relief, are the two common modes of architectural ornamentation of the pre-Mughal Khalīfatabād. Encaustic tiles are also used, but only in the tomb of Khān Jahan.

Khalīfatabād is now dead. But much of its architectural specimens, after restorations and repairs, still remain, and they are found in the greatest abundance at Haveli-Khalīfatabād (Bāgerhat). A good number of buildings are also known to have disappeared, while some are still standing in a miserable condition and are ultimately on the verge of their final ruin. It is, however, upon these monuments that the history of Khalīfatabād largely depends.

¹ See chapter IV, Pp. 124-25 & 225.

APPENDIX - A

SOME UNVISITED MONUMENTS

A few monuments of historical interest, not covered by chapter IV, are known to exist in the region of Khalīfatabād. Informations about them are scanty and though the author had an ardent desire to make an on-the-spot-enquiry of all of them, the inaccessibility of the respective places by normal communication media and time and fund did not permit him to carry out his plans. A list of these monuments is, however, furnished below¹:

1. There is an old mosque at Lālchandrapūr, traditionally attributed to Khān Jahān. The mosque is now being used as a Friday prayer house².
2. Another mosque, ascribed to Khān Jahān, has been discovered at Suvadiā under Fakirhāt thānā in Bāgerhāt Sub-division³.
3. An old mosque is standing in a dilapidated condition at Gopālpūr⁴, near Trimohini. It is said to have been built by one of the followers of Khān Jahān⁵.

¹ The monuments are known mainly from modern literary works where little or no description has been left.

² A. Jalil, Sundar Baner Itihāsa, I & II, Khulnā, 1967, P. 315. Lālchandrapūr is a village of Bāhirdiā Mansha Union under Fakirhāt thānā, Bāgerhāt.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Gopālpūr is a village of Khānpūr Union under Manirāmpūr thānā, Jessore.

⁵ A. Jalil, Op.cit., P. 283; S. C. Mitra, Jessore-Khulnār Itihāsa, I, Calcutta, 1963, P. 326.

4. A small tomb-building of one Pīr Meher Uddīn is known to have existed at Meherpūr, south of Gopālpūr. It is a square structure of 16 ft. 3 ins. a side externally with projecting towers on four angles¹.
5. In the village of Māgurghonā under Dumuriā thānā in Khulnā Sadar Sub-division is noticed the remains of an ancient mosque².
6. There is a mosque in the village of Sutanari under Jhālakāṭi thānā in Bākerganj. An inscription, which is now preserved in the Dacca Museum, records the erection of this mosque by one Golām Muḥammad in 1738 A. D.³
7. At Bānglābād (Rāmsiddhi) under Gaurnadī thānā in Bākerganj district is standing an ancient mosque⁴.
8. In the village of Bībī-Chini⁵, near the Niāmātī outpost, is an old mosque on an artificial mound of considerable height and size⁶. The

¹ S. C. Mitra, Op.cit., P. 326.

² Ibid., P. 322.

³ A. Jabbar, 'Relics and Historical Places in the Districts of Bākerganj and Patuākhāli', Bānglādesh History Conference, Barisal Session, October, 1979, P. 5.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Bībī-Chini, under Niāmātī Union in Bākerganj thānā, is now on the river Bishkhāli. See J. C. Jack, Bengal District Gazetteers (Bākerganj), Calcutta, 1918, P. 132.

⁶ H. Beveridge, The District of Bākerganj, its History and Statistics, London, 1876, P. 36.

mosque is said to have been built by a lady named Bībī-Chini, sister of Nīamat Ullāh, who founded Mīāmatī¹. It is supposed to be a 'relic of the time when the Muḥammadans first settled in the district. It remained hidden in the jungles for centuries and was discovered at the time when the Sundarbans were cultivated'².

9. At Seālghuni³ is an old mosque, said to have been built by one Naṣrat Ghazī⁴. 'It appears to have been at one time richly ornamented and still has some carved flowers and arabesques. The villagers say that there was an inscription which fell down and disappeared'⁵. It is also supposed that there was a 'Peel Khāna or Elephants' stables' nearby⁶.

¹H. Beveridge, Op.cit., P. 36.

²List of Ancient Monuments in Bengal, Calcutta, 1896, P. 224.

³Seālghuni is a village under Kābāi Union in Bākerganj thānā.

⁴H. Beveridge, Op.cit., P. 36; J. C. Jack, Op.cit., P. 161; A. Jalil, Op.cit., P. 466; A. Jabbar, Op.cit., P. 5; S. M. Hasan, A Guide to Ancient Monuments of East Pakistan, Dacca, 1970, P. 53.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

APPENDIX - B

BUILDING INSCRIPTIONS OF KHALIFATĀBĀDThe Tomb of Khān Jahān, BāgerhātTop Terrace of the Sarcophagus

1. South Side.

Arabic (within a triangle)

Translation¹. "This is the blessed tomb (Rawza), out of the gardens of the Paradise, of Khān al-ʿAzam (Great Khān) Khān Jahān (peace and blessings be on him). Written on the 26th of Zil Hijjah, 863 A. H. (24th Oct., 1459 A. D.)".

2. West Side.

Arabic.

Translation². There are 104 squares, the first five from the left contain inscriptions 'the God, the only God, who is', while the remaining 99 squares have the epithets of God such as 'the Merciful,

¹ B. G. Bysack, 'Antiquities of Bagerhat', JASB, XXXVI, Pt. I, 1867, P. 135; O. Malley, Bengal District Gazetteers (Khulna), Calcutta, 1908, P. 165; S. Ahmed, Inscriptions of Bengal, IV, Rajshahi, 1960, P. 66; A. H. Dani, Muslim Architecture in Bengal, Dacca, 1961, P. 141.

² O. Malley, Op.cit., P. 165.

the Eternal, the Equitable, the Clement, the Compassionate, the All Powerful, the Creator, the Almighty, the Just etc."

Arabic.

Translation. 'Victory of Allāh and His assistance is very near. And give (Oh Prophet) good tiding to the believers'.

3. North Side.

Qur'ān, Kalimah Tayyib and Shahādat.

4. East Side.

Arabic.

Translation. 'I seek asylum with Allāh from the accursed Satan'.

Arabic.

Translation. 'Oh God, the Manifestation, the Creator of the heaven and the earth, save us from the hell-fire'.

Fourth Terrace from the bottom

1. South Side.

Arabic (within a circle enclosed by a square border).

Translation¹. "The Great Ulugh Khan Jahan (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him), a helpless slave, who is needy of the mercy and the

¹B. G. Bysack, Op.cit., P. 135; O. Malley, Op.cit., Pp. 165 - 66; S. Ahmed, Op.cit., P. 66; A. H. Dani, Op.cit., P. 141.

blessings of the Nourisher of both the worlds (God), who is a lover of the descendants of the leader of the Prophets (Muhammad), who is sincere towards the pious scholars ('Ulemās), who is an enemy of the non-believers and infidels, and who is a helper of Islām and Muslims, left this worldly abode for the eternal one in the night of Wednesday, the 26th of Zil Hijjah and was buried on Thursday, the 27th of the same month in the year 863 A. H. (25th Oct., 1459 A. D.)".

Arabic and Persian.

Translation¹. "Remember, O friends, death is certain, death is sure.

It is a thorn in the garden.

Death is certain, death is sure.

Death is the greatest enemy of all living things.

And is different from other enemies.

Death is certain, death is sure.

The accursed Satan is your enemy.

He tries to change your faith.

Be careful, be watchful.

Death is certain, death is sure.

In all community the great forgive faults of the weak".

Arabic.

Translation². "The world is a place where a human being begins by crying, then he undergoes several hardships and trials, and atlast he dies".

¹ O. Malley, Op.cit., P. 166; S. Ahmed, Op.cit., Pp. 67-68; S. C. Mitra, Op.cit., Pp. 367 - 68; A. Jalil, Op.cit., Pp. 348 - 49.

² J. Westland, A Report on the District of Jessore (Revised edition), Calcutta, 1874, P. 22; O. Malley, Op.cit., P. 166; A. Jalil, Op.cit., Pp. 347 - 49.

2. West Side.

Qur'an, Sūra CII (Takathur), verses 1 - 8.

Sūra CIX (Kafirun), verses 1 - 6.

3. North Side.

Arabic.

Translation. 'Hadrat Jibrīl (peace be on him), Hadrat Mikā'il (peace be on him), Hadrat Israfil (peace be on him) and Hadrat 'Azra'il (peace be on him)'.

Third or the Lowest Stone Terrace

1. South Side.

Arabic.

Translation¹. "A man who dies in a strange place is entitled to be considered martyr".

Arabic.

Translation. 'Oh my Lord, for the honour of Hadrat Abū Bakr (may Allāh be pleased with him)'.

2. West Side.

Arabic.

Translation. 'Oh my Lord, for the honour of Hadrat 'Umar (may Allāh be pleased with him)'.

¹ J. Westland, Op.cit., P.22; A. Jalil, Op.cit., P. 346.

Qur'ān, Sūra II (Bakara), verses 235 - 36.

Sūra CXIII (Falāq), verses 1 - 5.

Sūra CXIV (Nās), verses 1 - 6.

3. North Side.

Arabic.

Translation. 'Oh my Lord, for the honour of Ḥadrat 'Uthmān (may Allāh be pleased with him)'.

Qur'ān, Sūra CXII (Ikhlas), verses 1 - 4.

4. East Side.

Arabic.

Translation. 'Oh my Lord, for the honour of Ḥadrat 'Alī (may Allāh be pleased with him)'.

The Tomb of Muhammad Tāhir, Rāgerhāt

Top Terrace

1. South Side.

Arabic.

Translation¹, "This tomb is a part of the garden of heaven and of

¹O. Malley, Op.cit., P. 166; A. Jalil, Op.cit., Pp. 354 - 55.

a great friend, by name Muhammad Tāhir, Zil Hijjah 863 A. H. (1459 A. D.)".

2. West Side.

Qur'an, Sūra CII (Takathur), verses 1 - 8.

3. North Side.

Qur'an, Kalimah Tayyib and Shahadat.

4. East Side.

Arabic.

Attributes of God as in the tomb of Khan Jahan¹.

¹Supra, Pp. 266 - 67.

APPENDIX - C

KHALĪFATĀBĀD COINS

Twelve silver coins, bearing the mint name of Khalīfatābād and the name of two Husain Shāhī kings - Sultān Naṣrat Shāh and his brother Ghiyāth Uddīn Maḥmūd Shāh, have been discovered. They are now preserved in different Museums, and have been studied and published by different scholars in different journals and books. Another Khalīfatābād coin of Sultān Naṣrat Shāh, dated 928 A. H., has recently been published by Mr. Firoz Maḥmūd¹, the assistant keeper, Dacca Museum. The legends and peculiarities of the silver coins are mentioned below.

COINS OF NAṢRAT SHĀHCoins in the Calcutta Museum, Calcutta

A. One coin dated 922 A. H.²

Obverse legends in double circle:

'Al-Sultān bin al-Sultān Naṣir al-dunyā

Wa'l-dīn Abū'l-Muzaffar

reverse legends in single circle:

'Naṣrat Shāh al-Sultān bin Husayn Shāh

¹ BIPP, Baisāk-Chaitra, 1382 B.S., Pp. 136 & 143.

² H. N. Wright, Catalogue of the Coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, II (Indian Reprint), 1972, P. 177, No. 211; A. Karim, Corpus of the Muslim Coins of Bengal, Dacca, 1960, Pp. 118 & 120.

al-Sultān al-Husaynī Khallada Mulkahu
Khalīfatabad 922'.

B. One coin dated 925 A. H.¹ It is almost a replica of coin A, but a slight variation is noticed in the legends such as 'Khallada Allāh Mulkahu' in place of 'Khallada Mulkahu'² of the coin A.

C. This coin is dated 922 A. H. The legends are the same as in coin A. But they are in double circle both on the obverse and reverse³.

Coins in the Cabinet of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta

A. One coin dated 922 A. H. In every respect it copies the coin A in the Calcutta Museum⁴.

B. One coin dated 924 A. H. The legends are the same as in coin A and C in the Calcutta Museum but here they are in plain area on both the obverse and reverse⁵.

¹ A. Karim, Op.cit., P. 120.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., Pp. 118 & 120 - 21; H. N. Wright, Op.cit., P. 178, Coin No.212.

⁴ JASE, 1873, P. 297; A. Karim, Op.cit., Pp. 119 & 118.

⁵ JASE, 1874, P. 309; A. Karim, Op.cit., Pp. 120 & 118.

Coins in the Cabinet of Dacca Museum, Dacca

Two coins dated 922 A. H. They are typical of the coin C in the Calcutta Museum¹.

Coin in the Raipara Hoard

Only one coin dated 922 A. H. In every details it is also a replica of the coin C in the Calcutta Museum².

COINS OF GHIYATH UDDIN MAHMUD SHAH

Coins in the Calcutta Museum, Calcutta

A. One coin, dated 941 A. H., has been found in the district of Birbhum³.

Obverse legends in a circular area:

'Al-Sultān bin al-Sultān Ghiyāth al-dunya

¹N. K. Bhattasali, Catalogue of the Coins (collected by A. S. M. Taifoor of Kawser House, Dacca and presented to the Dacca Museum), Dacca, 1936, P. 31; A. Karim, Op.cit., Pp. 123 and 118.

²H. E. Stapleton, 'Numismatic Supplement No. XLII, article No. 283', JASB, 1929; A. Karim, Op.cit., Pp. 123 - 24 and 118.

³S. Ahmed, A Supplement to Volume II of the Catalogue of Coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, Delhi, 1939, P. 71; A. Karim, Op.cit., Pp. 131 and 130.

Wa'l-dīn Abū'l Muzaffar Mahmud Shāh
al-Sultān and a small circle in the centre
contains 'Shāhī-Badar'

Reverse legends in a circular area:

'bin Husayn Shāh al-Sultān Khallada Allāh
Mulkahu wa Sultānahu Badarpūr-Khalīfatābād
941 and a small circle in the centre contains
'Shāhī-Badar'.

B. One coin dated 942(?) A. H.¹

Obverse legends in a circular area:

'Al-Sultān bin al-Sultān Ghiyāth al-dunyā
Wa'l-dīn Abū'l Muzaffar Mahmūd 942(?) and
in the centre within small circle Shāhī Badar'

Reverse legends in a circular area:

'Shāh al-Sultān bin Husayn Shāh al-Sultān
Khallada Allāh Mulkahu wa Sultānahu
Khalīfatābād and in the centre within a
small circle 'Shāhī-Badar'.

¹ H. N. Wright, Op.cit., P. 180, No.225; A. Karim, Op.cit., Pp. 130-31.

Coins in the Cabinet of Dacca Museum, Dacca

Dacca Museum now possesses only two deciphered coins of this Sultan. One is dated 939 A. H., while in another the date is mutilated. Both these coins have been studied and published for the first time by A. Karim¹. In details they merely copy the coin dated 942(?) of the Indian Museum, Calcutta².

It is worthwhile to mention here that the mint 'Badarpūr-Khalīfatabād' appears to be the same as Khalīfatabād established by Sultan Nasrat Shah³. Another important feature of the coins of Ghiyath Uddin Mahmud Shah is the title 'Badar-Shahī'. This title appears not only in the coins from Khalīfatabād mint, but also in the coins minted from the Husaynabad, the Nasratabād, the Fathabad, the Dar al-darb, the Khazanah etc.⁴. These two terms 'Badar-Shahī' and 'Badarpūr' have been added in the coins of this Sultan after his own name 'Al-'abd Ghiyath al-din Mahmud Shah al-badar Shahī', which finds mention in a copper coin dated 943 A. H.⁵

¹ A. Karim, Op.cit., Pp. 133 & 130.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., P. 165.

⁴ Ibid., Pp. 130 - 33.

⁵ Ibid., P. 131; JASB, 1873, P. 298.

ABBREVIATIONS

ABORI	Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.
'Afīf	<u>Tārīkh-i-Fīrūz Shāhī</u> by <u>Shams-i-Sirāj 'Afīf</u> .
Ā'in	<u>Ā'in-i-Akbarī</u> by <u>Shāikh Abū'l Fazl</u> .
AJBSA	Annual Journal of the <u>Bāṅglādes̄h Shilpakalā Academy</u> .
ASIAR	Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report.
ASIR	Archaeological Survey of India Reports.
Baharistan	<u>Baharistan-i-Ghayibī</u> by <u>Shitāb Khān</u> (Mīrzā Nathan).
Barani	<u>Tārīkh-i-Fīrūz Shāhī</u> by <u>Zia' Uddīn Baranī</u> .
BIPP	<u>Bāṅglādes̄h Itihāsa Parishat Patrikā</u> .
BPP	Bengal Past and Present.
EIM	Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica.
Elliot and Dowson	History of India as told by its own Historians.
EMA	Early Muslim Architecture by E. A. C. Creswell.
Firishta	<u>Tārīkh-i-Firishta</u> by <u>Muhammad Qāsim Firishta</u> .
HB	History of Bengal: vol. I/(ed.) by R. C. Majumdar; II/(ed.) by J. N. Sarkar.
INQ	Indian Historical Quarterly.
JASB	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
JASP	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan.
JBORS	Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society.
JISOA	Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art.
JNSI	Journal of the Numismatic Society of India.
JPASB	Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
JPHS	Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society.
JRASB	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal.
JVRM	Journal of the Varendra Research Museum.
RSPP	<u>Raṅgpur Sāhitya Parishat Patrikā</u> .
SPP	<u>Sāhitya Parishat Patrikā</u> .

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Ā'in-i-Akbarī, by Shaikh Abūl Fazl (d. 1602). English Translation in the Bibliotheca Indica series, 3 vols. : I/by H. Blochmann, Calcutta, 1873; II/by H. S. Jarret, Calcutta, 1891; III/by H. S. Jarret, Calcutta, 1894. Revised and further annotated by J. N. Sarkar, 2 vols. : II/Calcutta, 1949; III/Calcutta, 1948.

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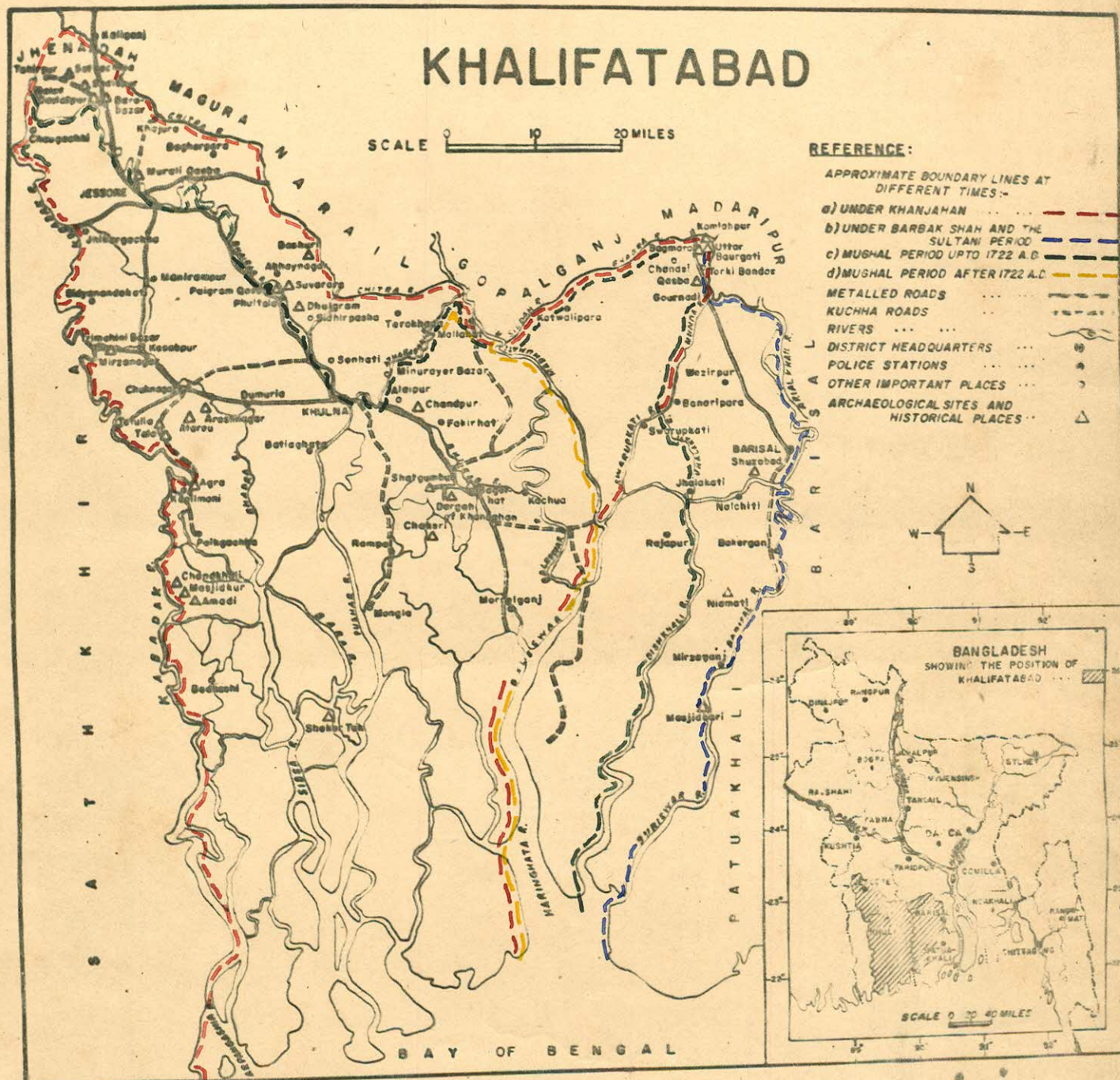




Fig. 1. THE SHĀṬ-GUMBAD MOSQUE, BĀGERHĀṬ : GENERAL VIEW FROM THE EAST.

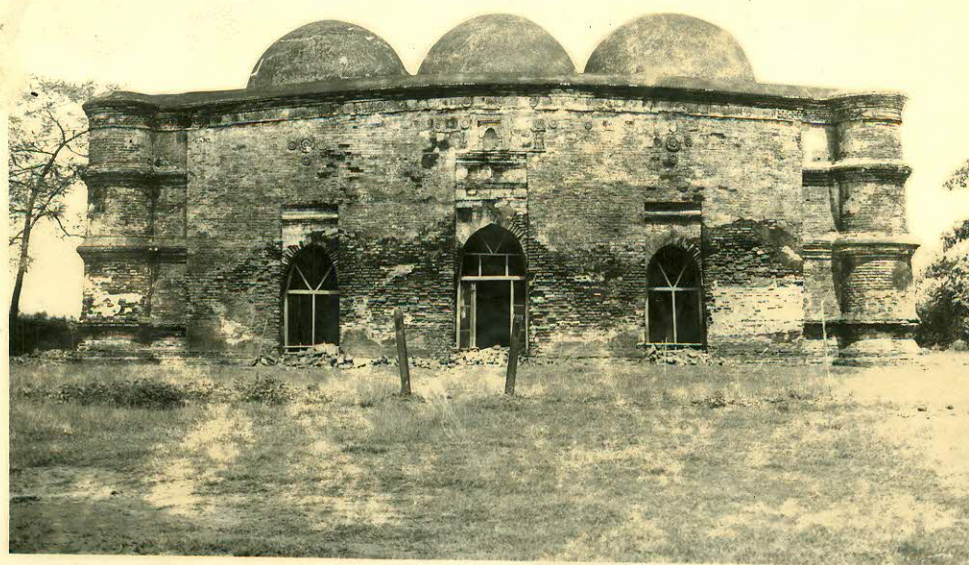


Fig. 2. THE MASJIDKŪR MOSQUE, KHULNĀ : GENERAL VIEW FROM THE EAST.

THE SHĀT- GUMBAD MOSQUE, BĀGERHĀT : PLAN

SCALE :-



FT. 12 6 0 12 24 FT.

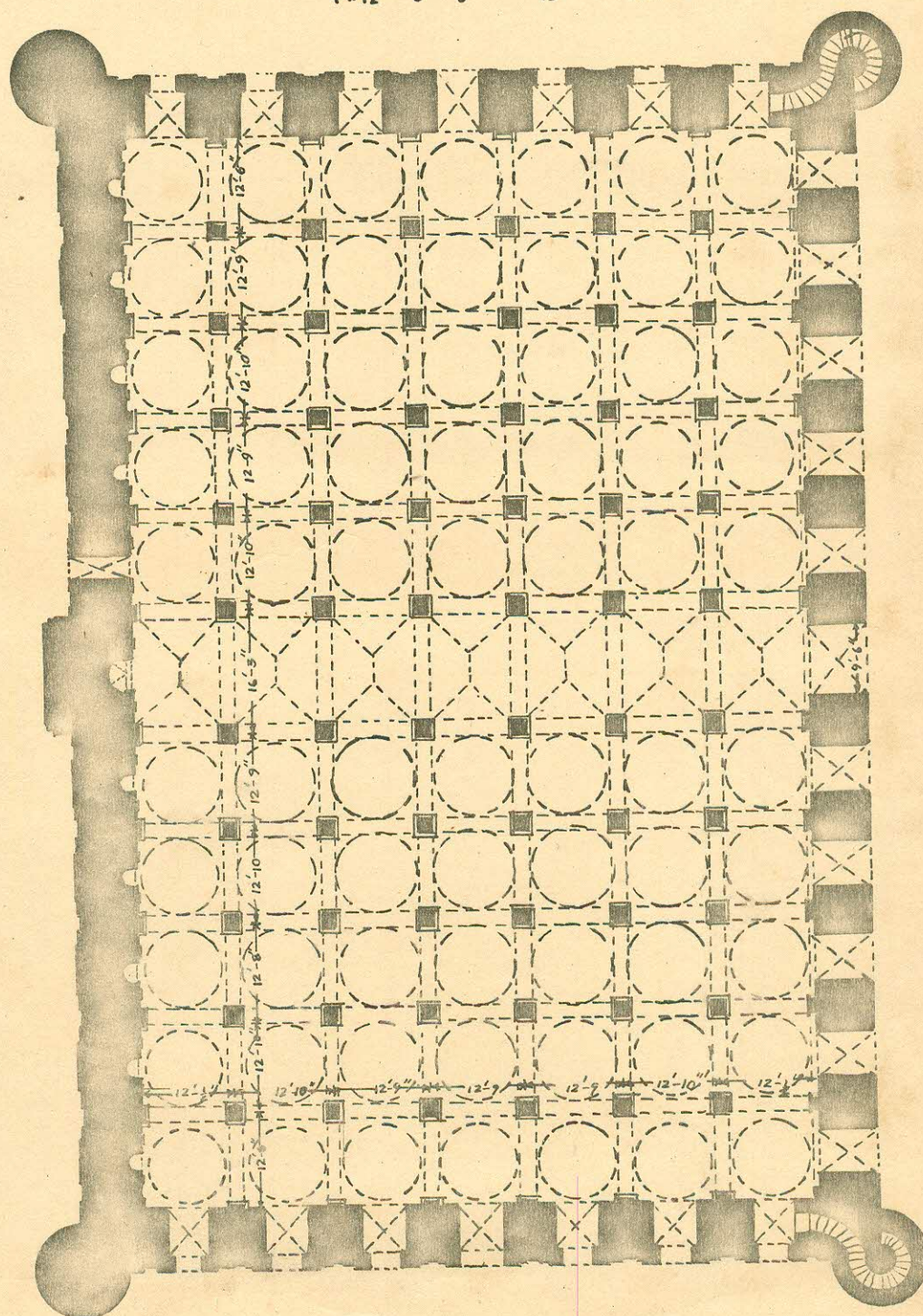




Fig. 1. THE SHĀT-GUMBAD MOSQUE, BĀGERHĀT : THE CENTRAL ARCHWAY AND THE TRIANGULAR PEDIMENT IN THE EASTERN FACADE.

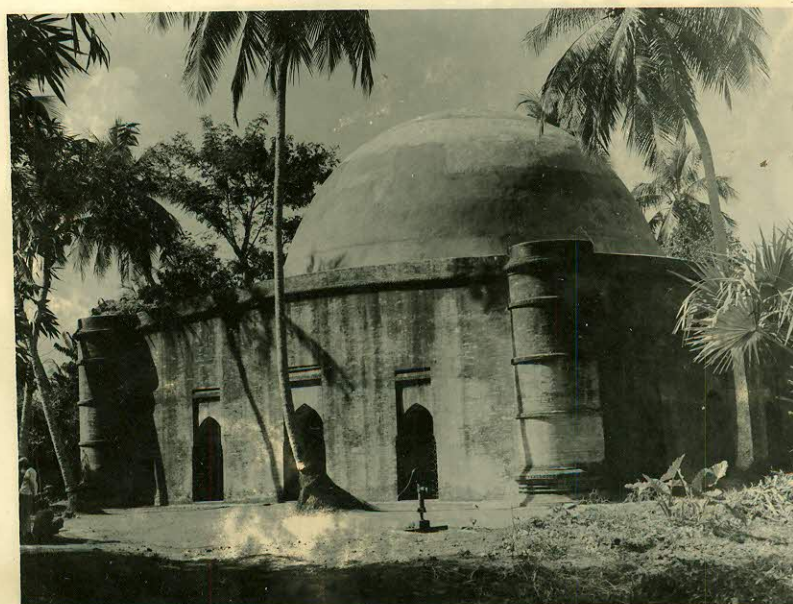


Fig. 2. THE RANBIJOYPŪR MOSQUE, BĀGERHĀT : GENERAL VIEW FROM THE NORTH-EAST (AFTER RESTORATION).



Fig. 1. THE SHĀṬ-GUMBAD MOSQUE, BĀGERHĀṬ : GENERAL VIEW OF THE GATEWAY FROM THE WEST (AFTER RESTORATION).



Fig. 2. THE SĪNGRĀ MOSQUE, BĀGERHĀṬ : GENERAL VIEW FROM THE SOUTH-EAST (BEFORE RESTORATION).

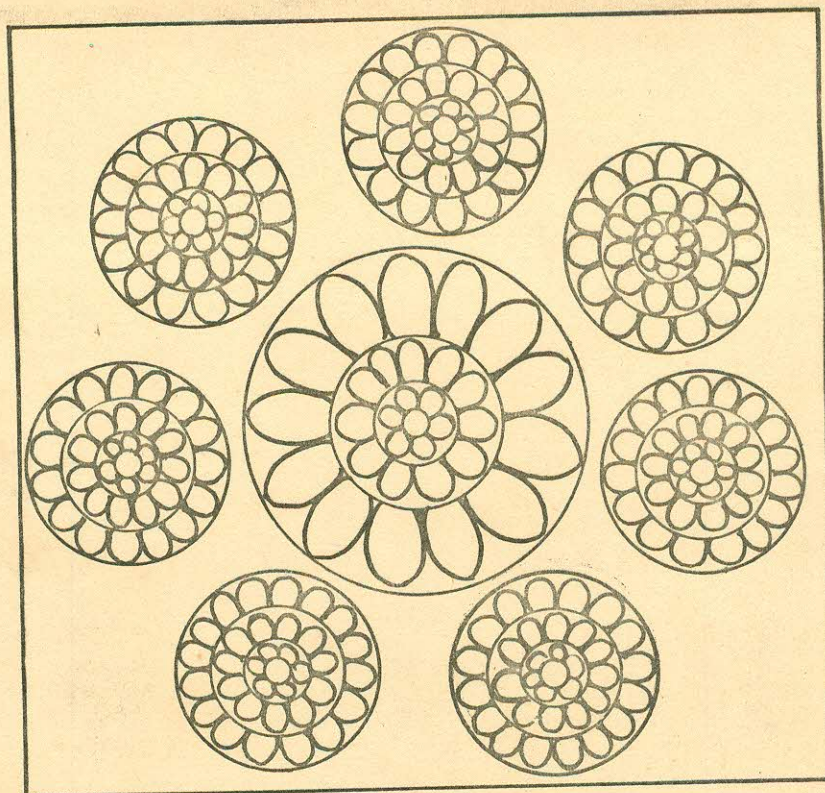


Fig. 1. THE SHĀṬ-GUMBAD MOSQUE, BĀGERHĀṬ : ROSETTE-DESIGN
ON STONE OVER THE CENTRAL MIHRĀB.

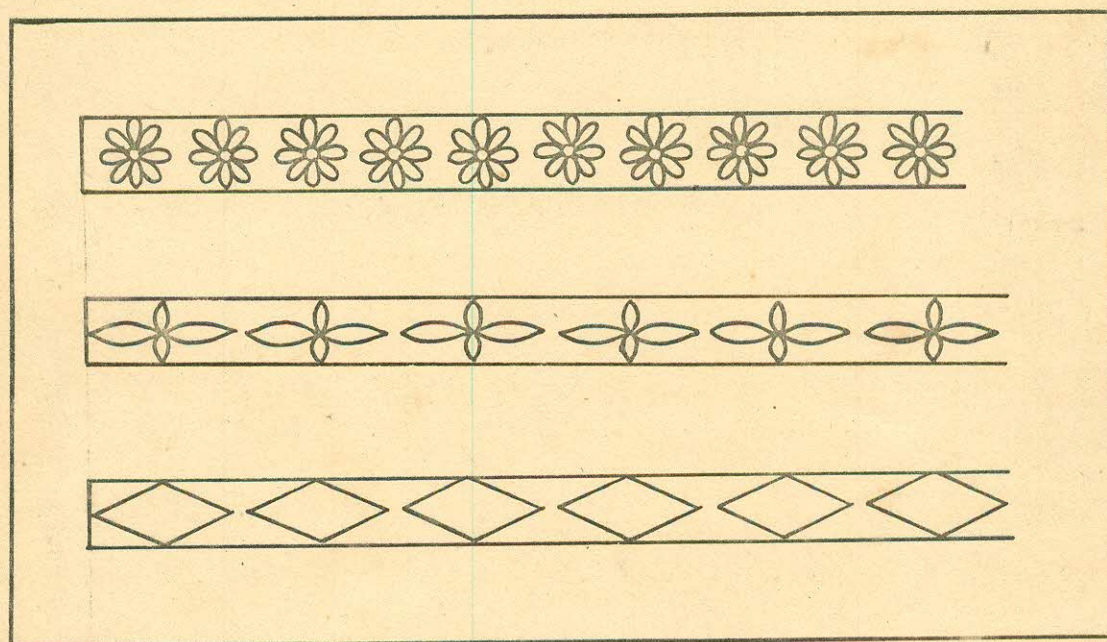


Fig. 2. THE SHĀṬ-GUMBAD MOSQUE, BĀGERHĀṬ :
BAND DESIGNS OF BRICK-PILASTERS.

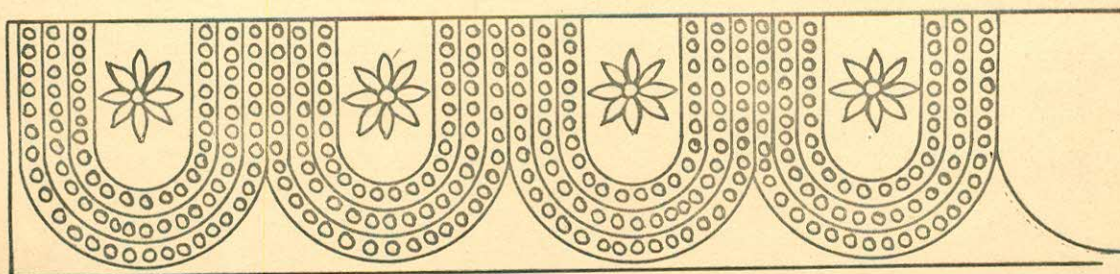


Fig. 1. THE SHĀṬ-GUMBAD MOSQUE , BĀGERHĀṬ :
TERRA-COTTA ORNAMENTATION OVER ARCHWAY.

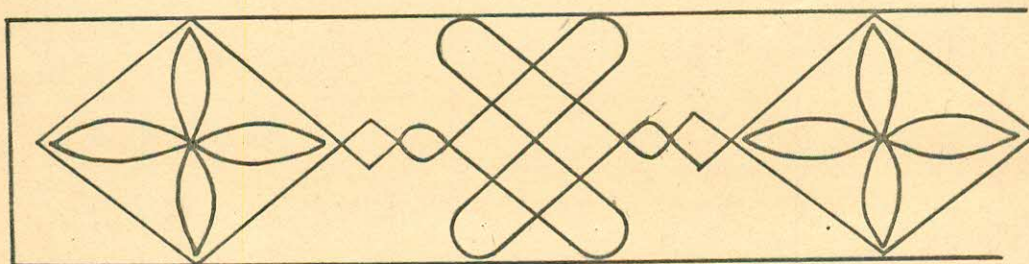


Fig. 2. THE SHĀṬ-GUMBAD MOSQUE , BĀGERHĀṬ :
INTER-LOCKING DESIGN OVER ARCHWAY.

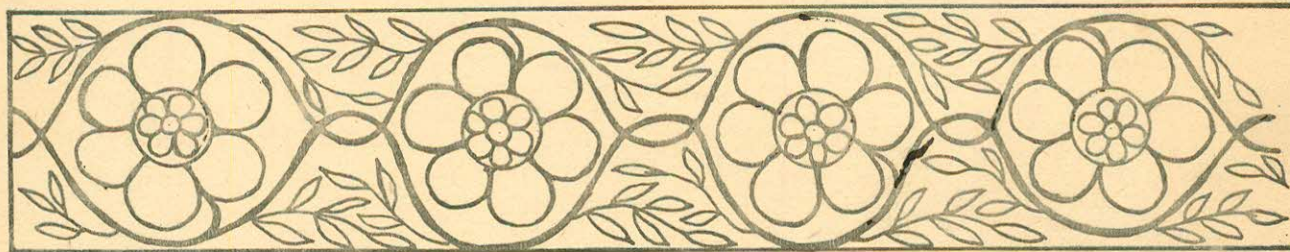


Fig. 3. THE SHĀṬ-GUMBAD MOSQUE , BĀGERHĀṬ :
FLORAL SCROLLS OVER ARCHWAY.

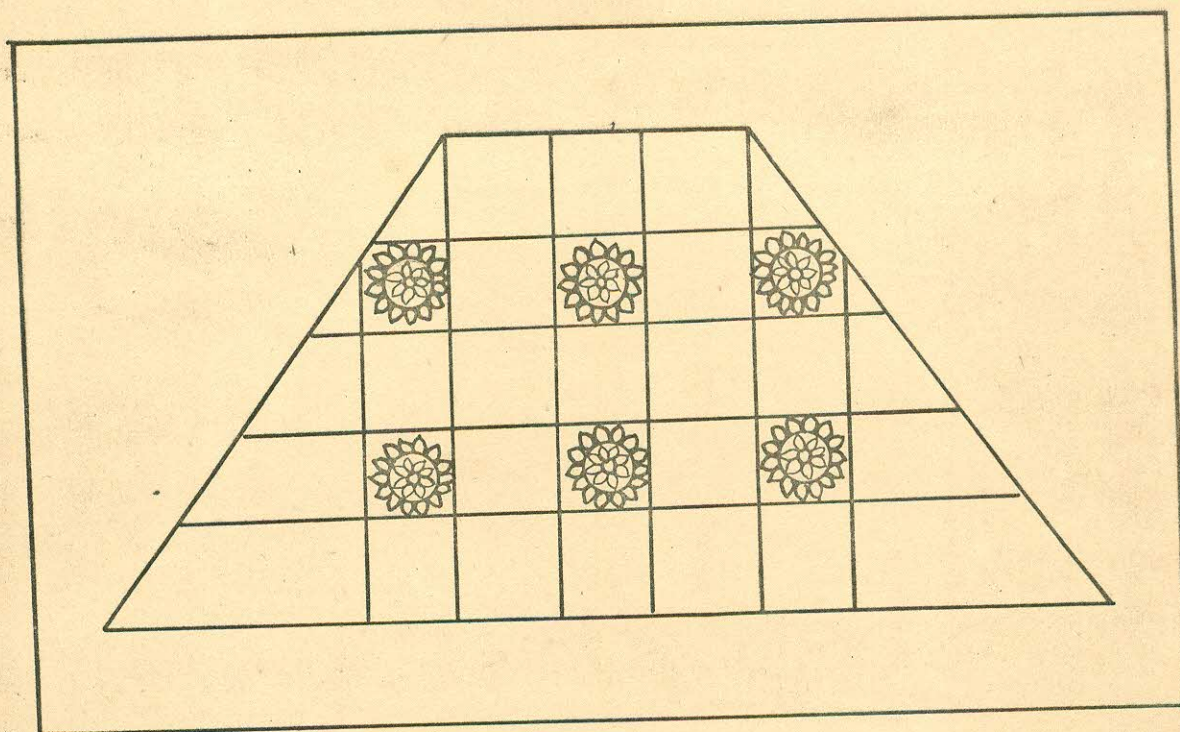


Fig. 1. THE SHĀṬ GUMBAD MOSQUE, BĀGERHĀṬ :
INTERIOR OF A CHAU-CHĀLĀ VAULT.

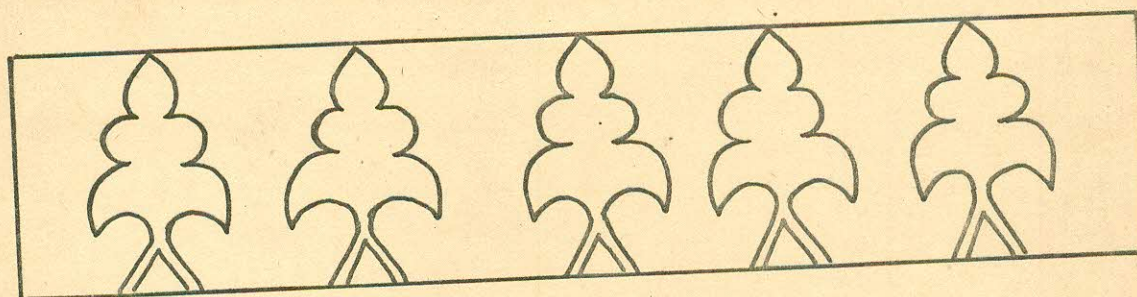


Fig. 2. THE SIX-DOMED MOSQUE, BĀGERHĀṬ : ROW OF BLIND CRESTS ABOVE THE
PROJECTED BAND IN THE EXTERIOR SURFACE OF THE NORTH-WALL.

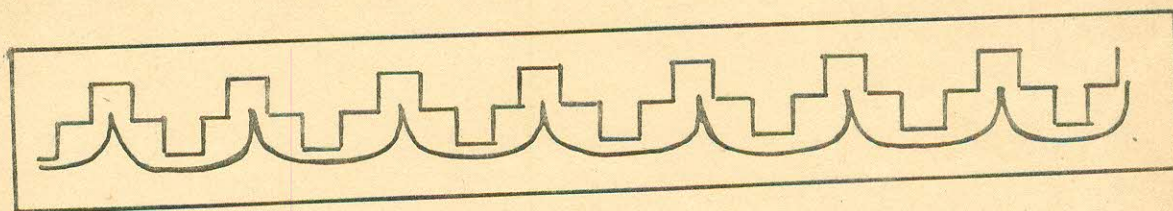


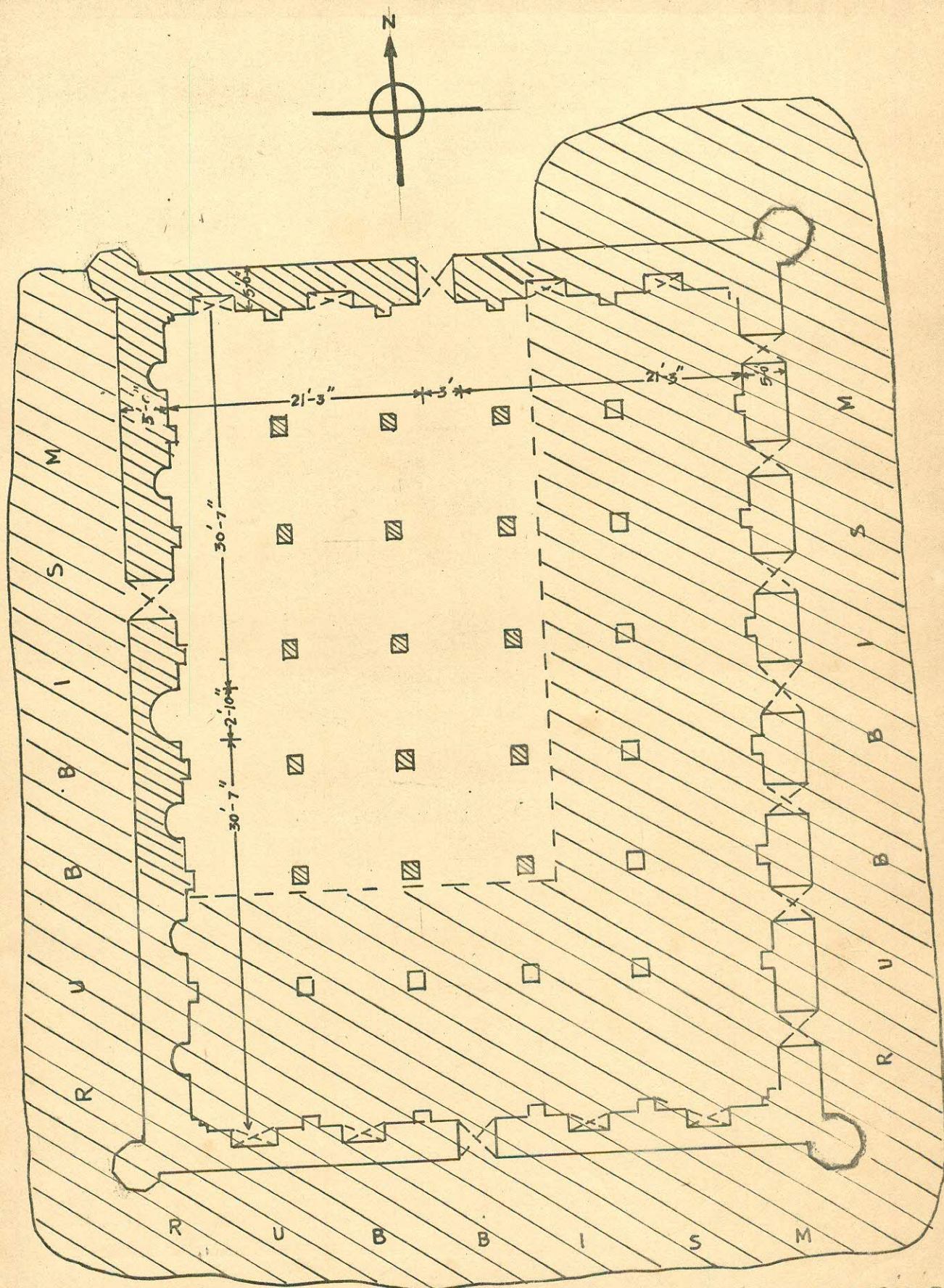
Fig. 3. THE NINE-DOMED MOSQUE, BĀGERHĀṬ : BRICK-DESIGN
UNDER THE LOWER CORNICE BAND.



Fig. 1. THE SĀTGĀCHHIĀ MOSQUE, BĀRABĀZĀR : ROWS OF BRICK-PILLARS
IN THE INTERIOR.



Fig. 2. THE MOSQUE OF ZINDĀ PĪR, BĀGERHĀT : GENERAL VIEW FROM THE
SOUTH.



THE SĀTGĀCHHIĀ MOSQUE, BĀRABĀZĀR, JESSORE: CONJECTURAL PLAN
SCALE: - 1" = 12'



Fig. 1. THE NINE-DOMED MOSQUE, BĀGERHĀT : GENERAL VIEW FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.

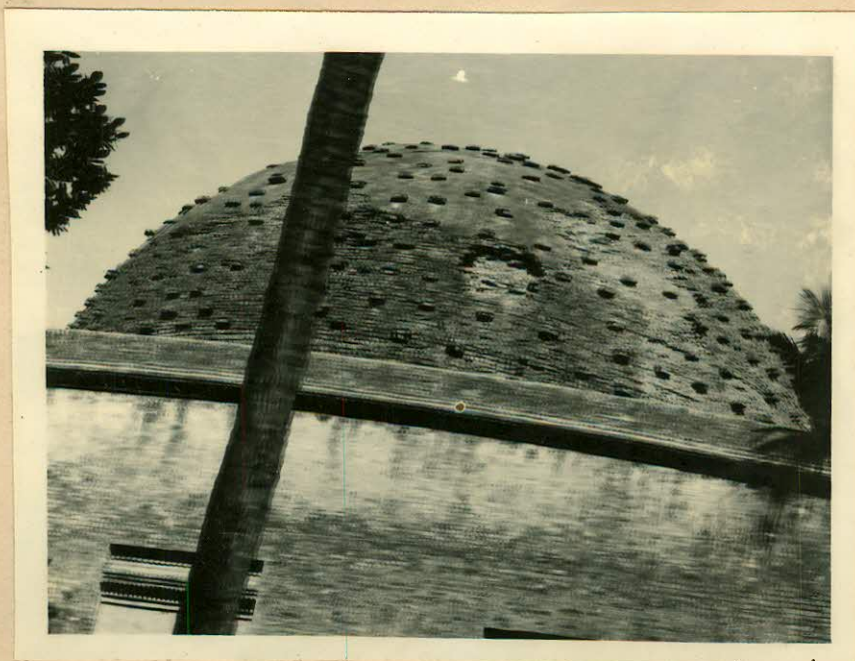
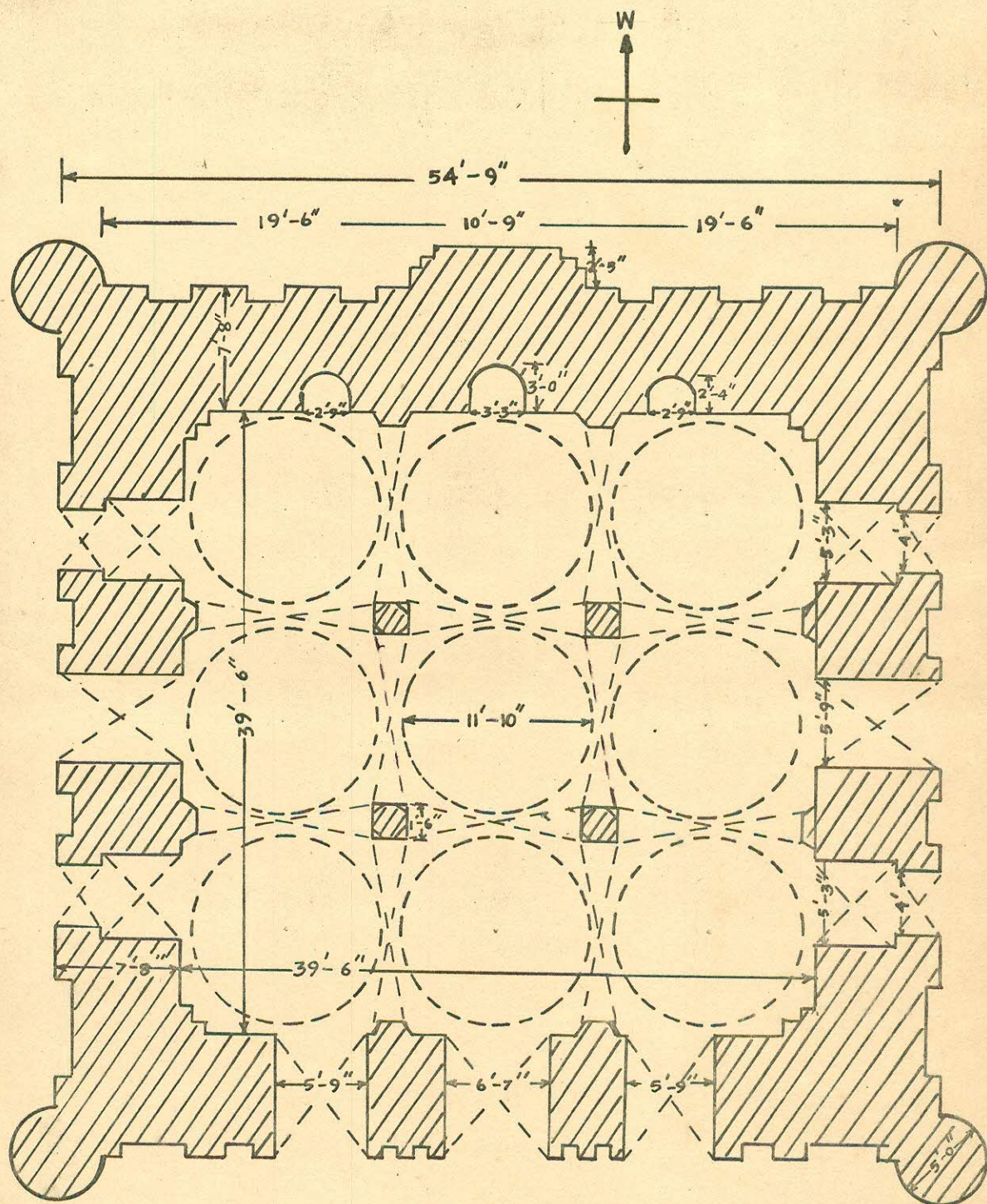


Fig. 2. THE RANBIJOYPUR MOSQUE, BĀGERHĀT : CIRCULAR ROWS OF BRICKS AROUND THE DOME (BEFORE RESTORATION).



THE NINE-DOMED MOSQUE, BĀGERHĀT : PLAN

SCALE : - 1" = 10'



Fig. 1. THE NINE-DOMED MOSQUE, BĀGERHĀT : CENTRAL MIHRĀB.

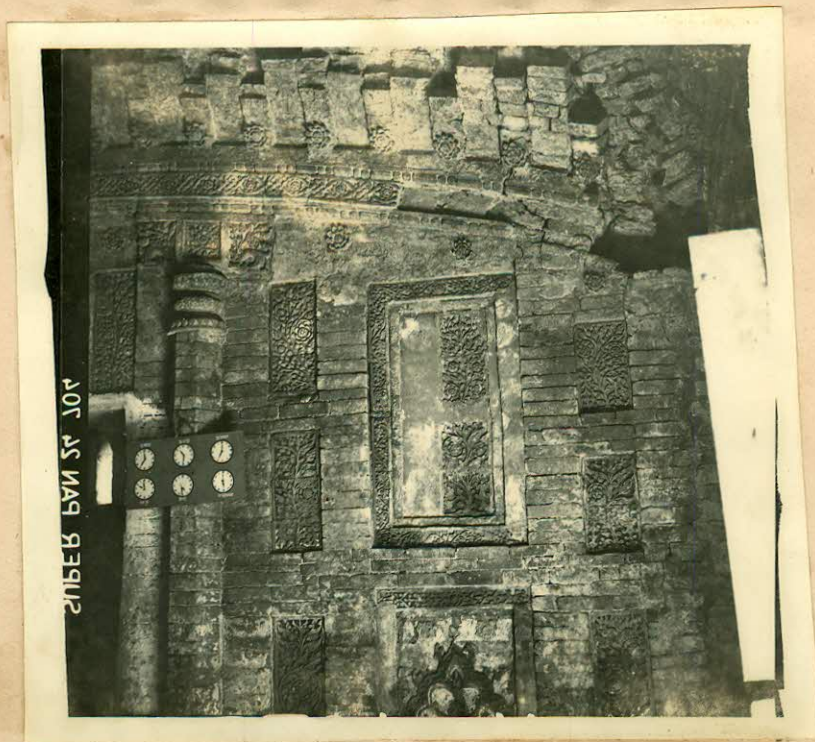


Fig. 2. THE SHĀBEKDĀNGĀ MOSQUE, BĀGERHĀT : PANEL DECORATION OF THE WEST WALL IN THE INTERIOR.



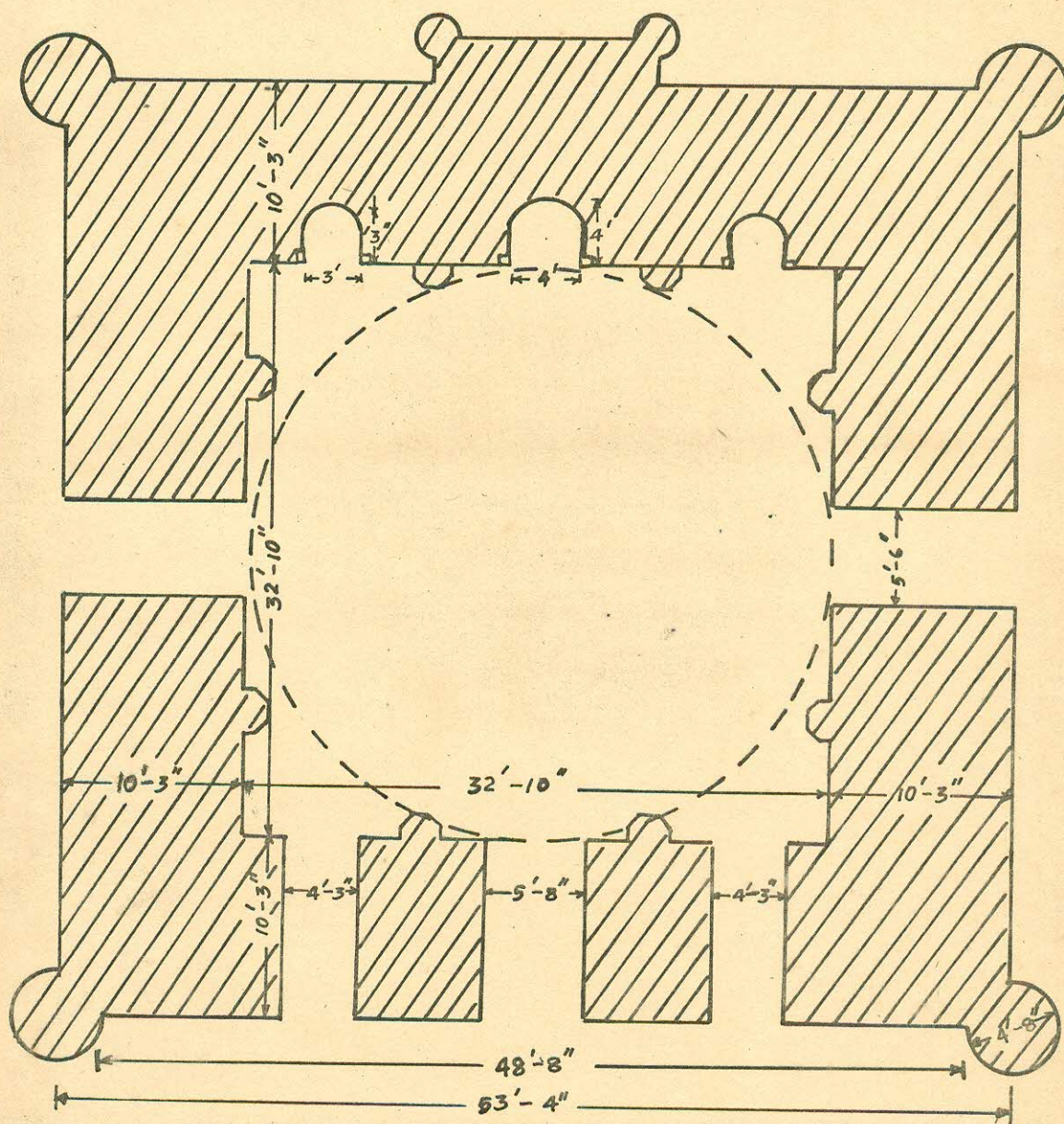
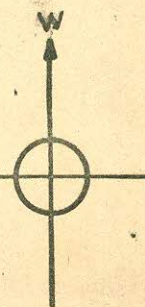
Fig. 1. THE BĪBĪ-BEGNĪ MOSQUE, BĀGERHĀT : CENTRAL MIHRĀB.



Fig. 2. THE SUVARĀRĀ MOSQUE, JESSORE : GENERAL VIEW FROM THE EAST.

PLAN OF THE BĪBĪ-BEGNĪ MOSQUE, BĀGERHĀṬ: PLAN

SCALE :- 1" = 10'



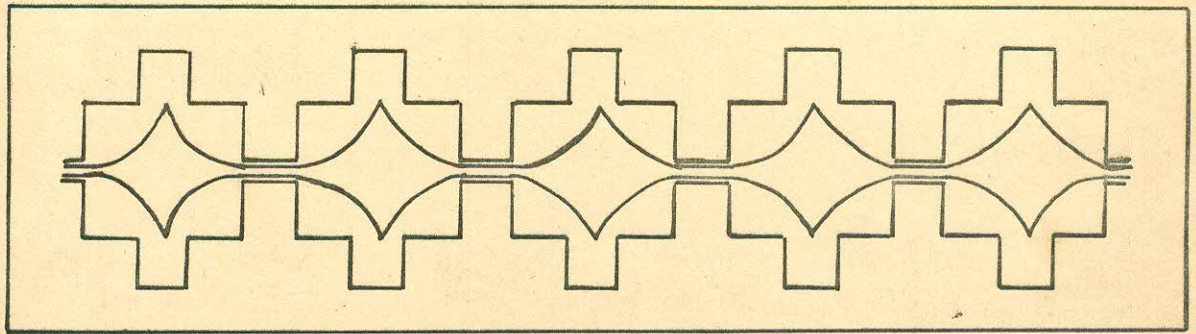


Fig. 1. THE BĪBĪ-BEGNĪ MOSQUE , BĀGERHĀṬ : BRICK-DESIGN
ABOVE AND BELOW THE LOWEST BAND OF THE CORNER TOWERS.

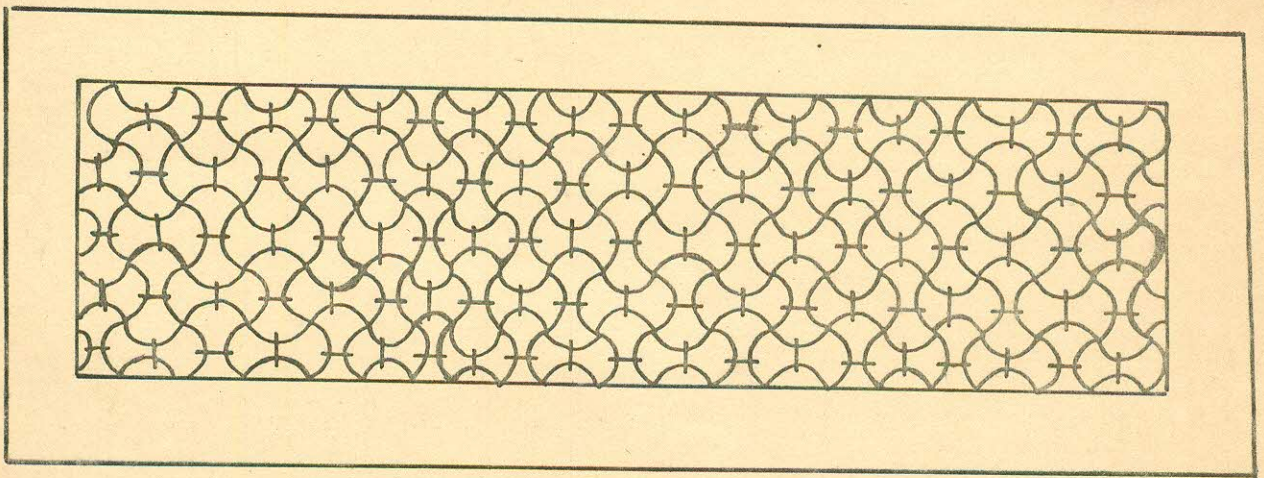


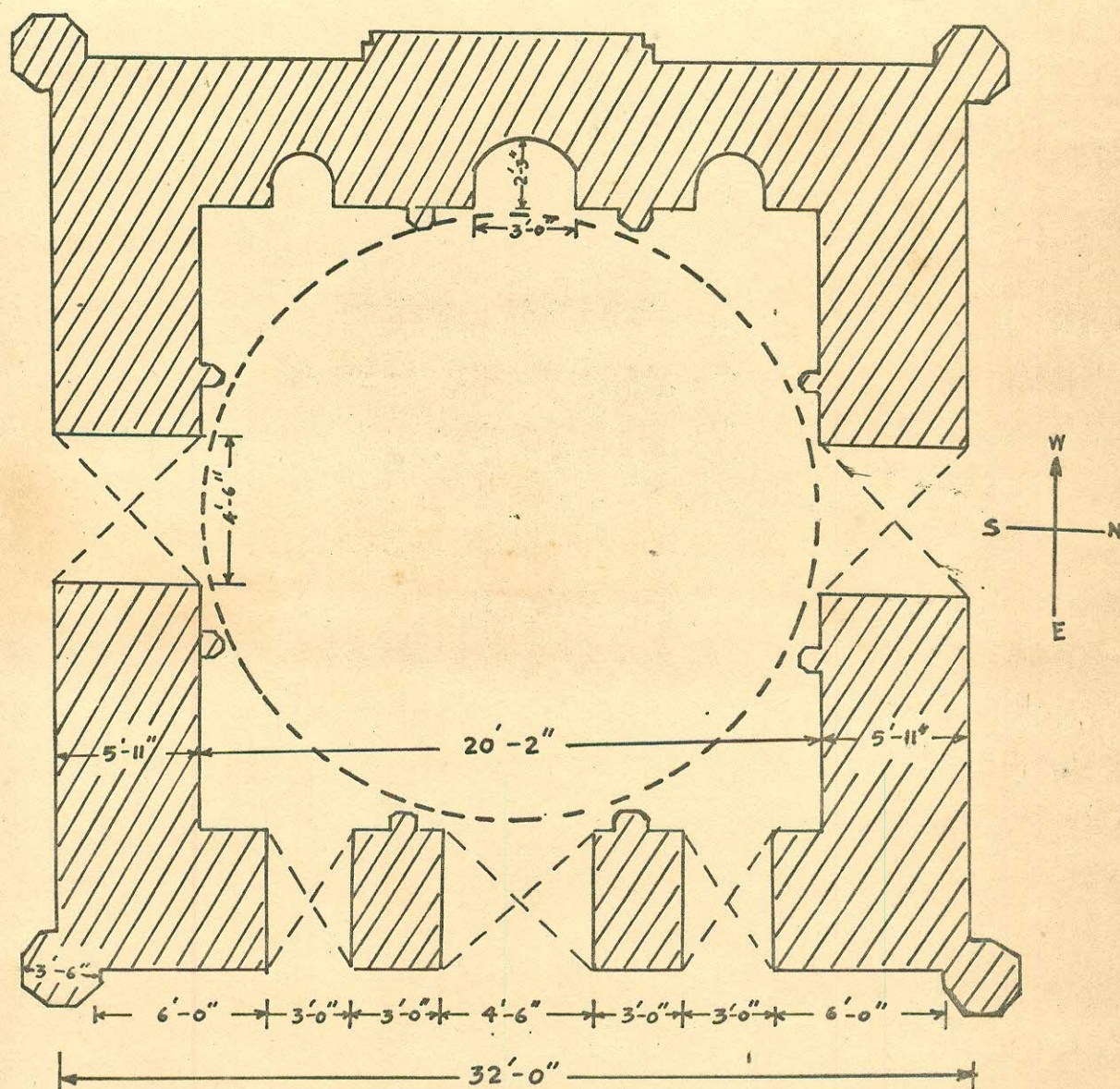
Fig. 2. THE CHUNĀ-KHOLĀ MOSQUE , BĀGERHĀṬ : INTER-LOCKING PATTERN
UNDER THE LOWEST CORNICE BAND.



Fig. 1. THE GODĀR MOSQUE, BĀRABĀZĀR : BENGALI PENDENTIVES AND THE TERRACOTTA DECORATION INSIDE THE MIHRĀB WALL.



Fig. 2. THE GODĀR MOSQUE, BĀRABĀZĀR : TERRACOTTA ORNAMENTATION IN THE EXTERIOR SURFACE OF THE SOUTH WALL.



THE GODĀR MOSQUE, BĀRABĀZĀR, JESSORE : PLAN

SCALE:- 1" = 4 FT.

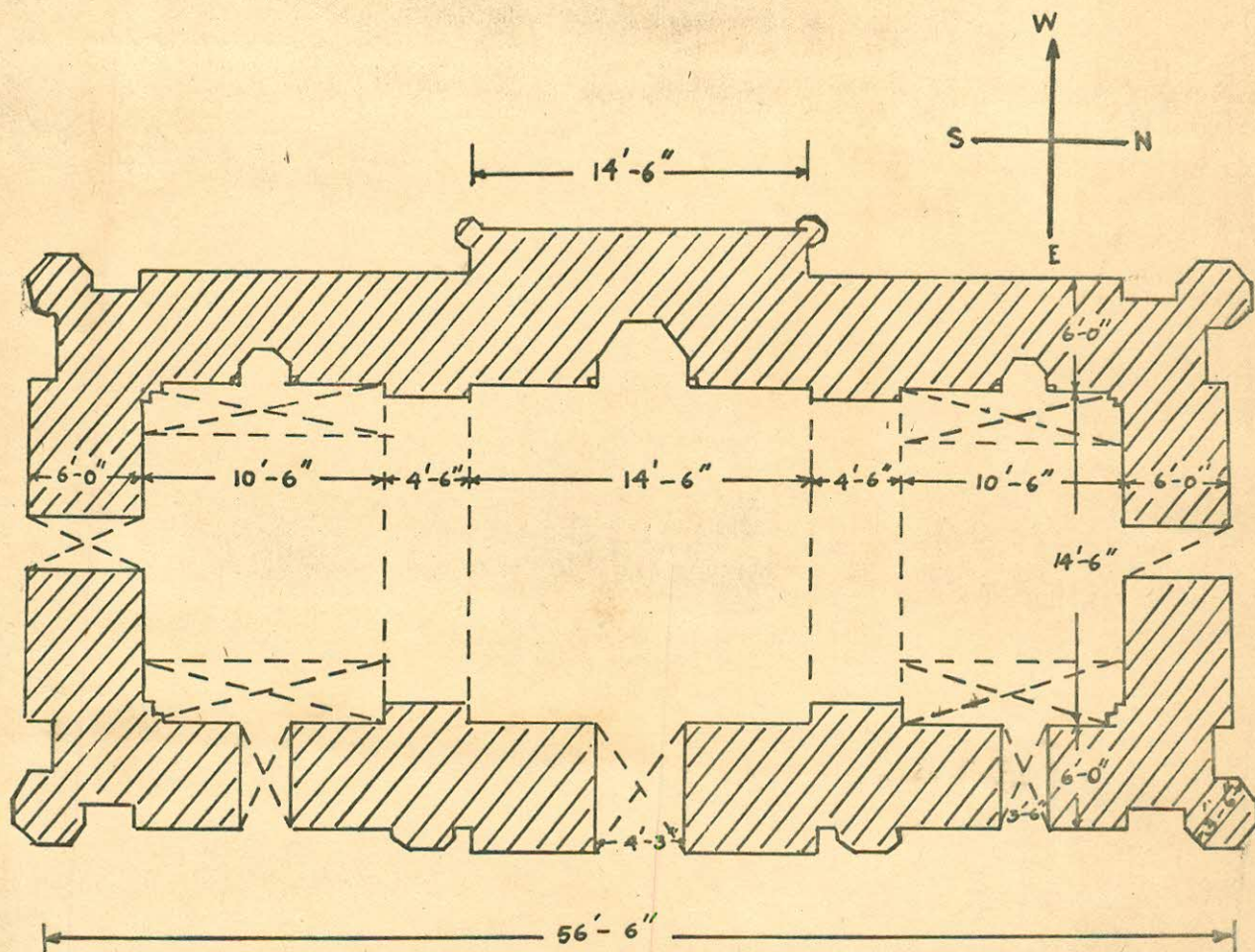
BĀRABĀZĀR, JESSORE



Fig. 1. THE KOMLĀHPŪR MOSQUE, BARISĀL : GENERAL VIEW FROM THE EAST.



Fig. 2. THE KOMLĀHPŪR MOSQUE, BARISĀL : TERRACOTTA DECORATION OF THE CENTRAL ARCHWAY.



PLAN THE KOMLĀHPŪR MOSQUE, BARISĀL : PLAN

SCALE :- 1" = 9'



Fig. 1. THE ATĀROU MOSQUE, SĀTHKHIRĀ : GENERAL VIEW FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

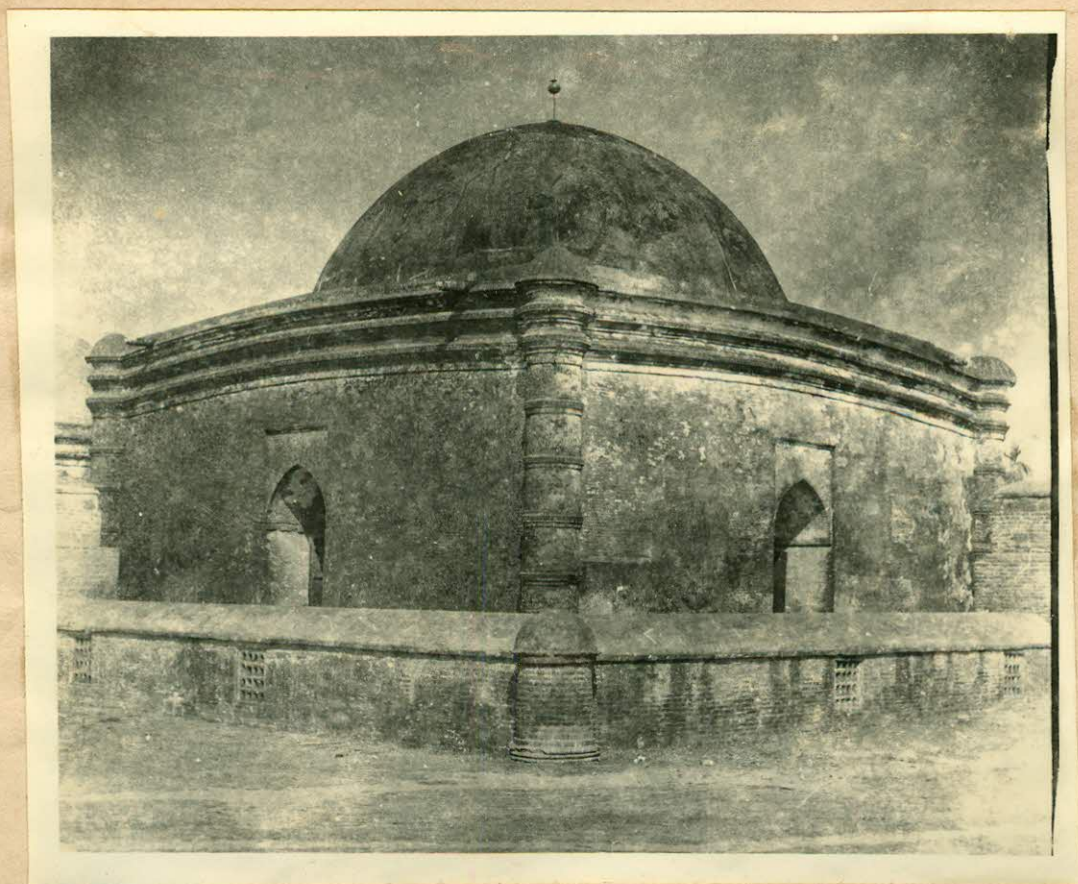
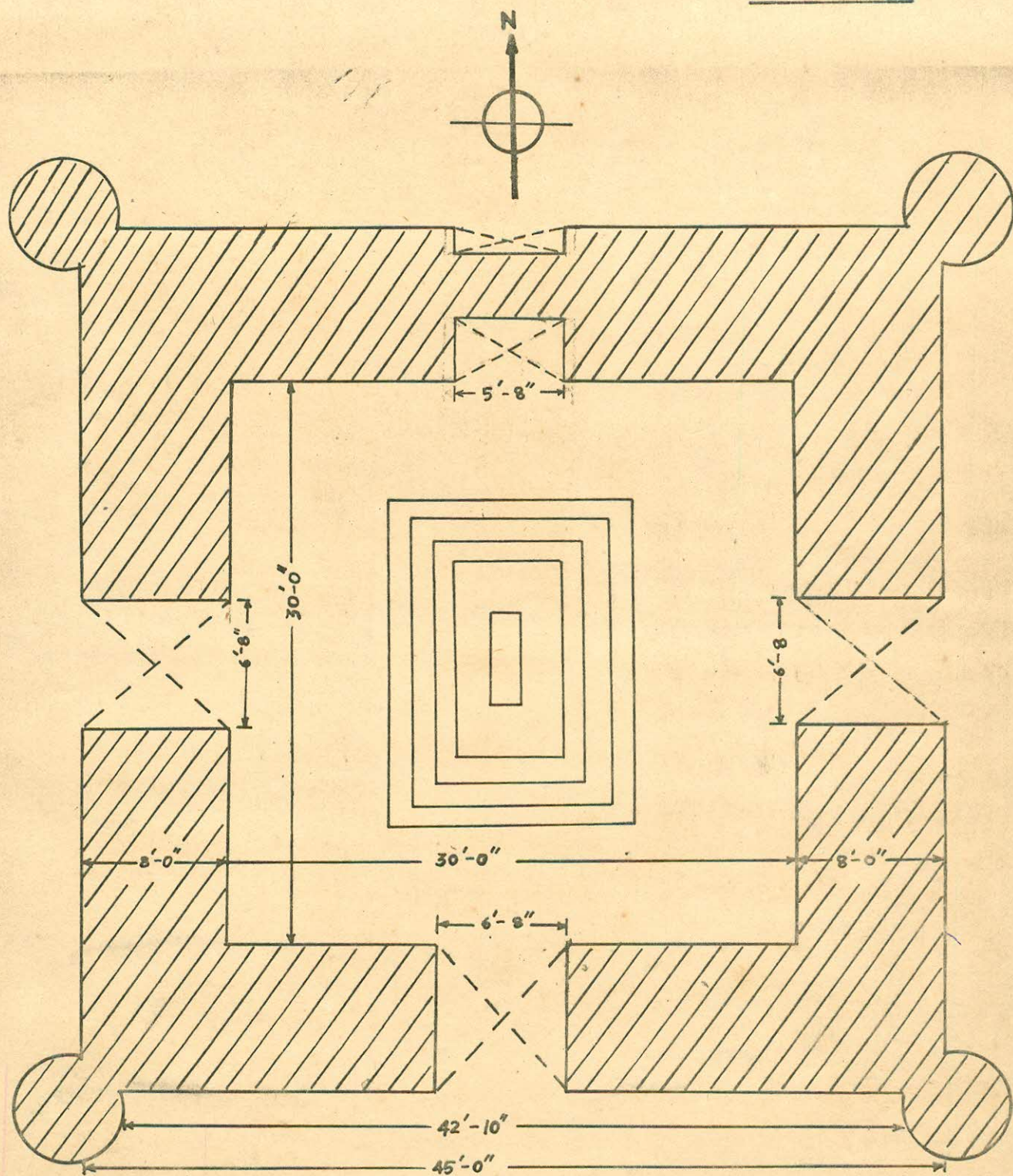
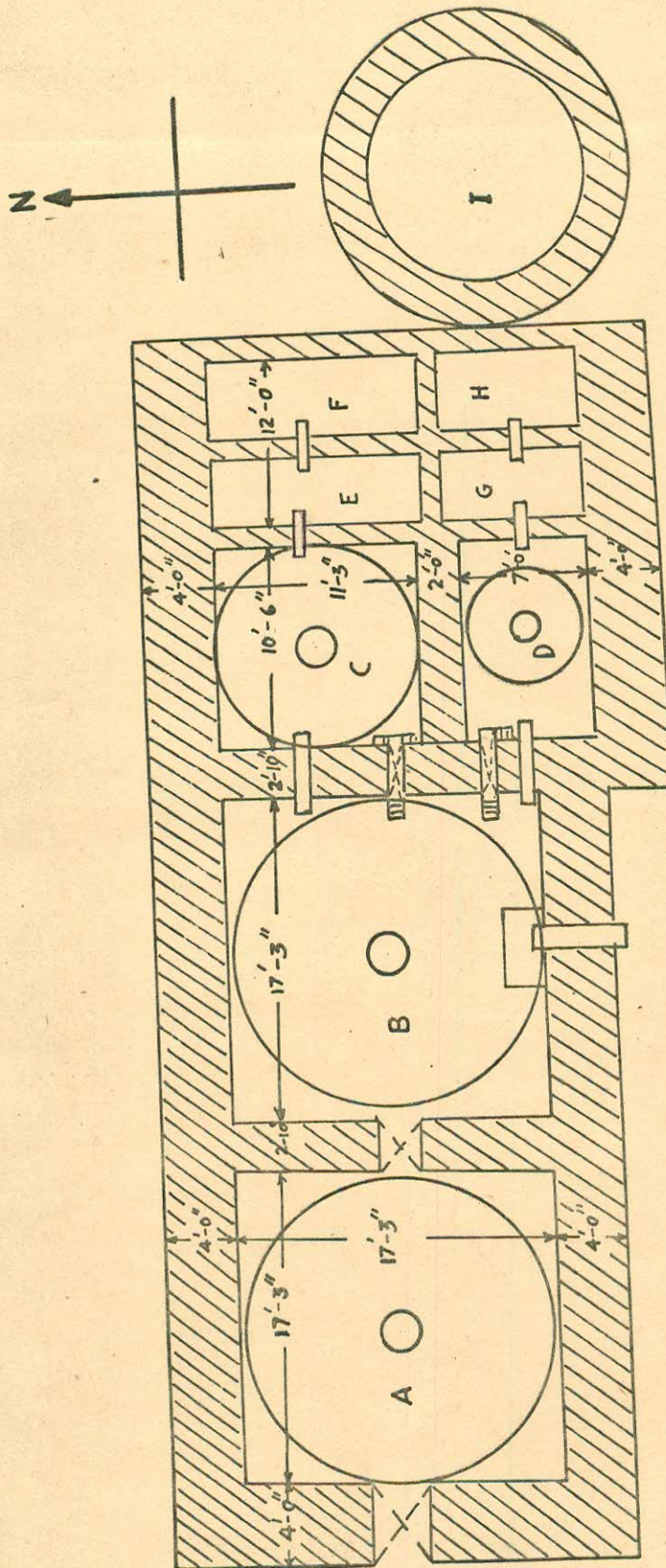


Fig. 2. THE TOMB OF KHĀN JAHĀN, BĀGERHĀT : GENERAL VIEW FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.



THE TOMB OF KHĀN JAHĀN, BĀGERHĀT : PLAN

SCALE :- 1" = 8'



THE BATH AT MĪRZĀNAGAR, JESSORE: PLAN

SCALE: 1" = 10'

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