



Bridging the Gap: Connecting Bengal Architecture with Global Architecture

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Abstract

Architecture History at undergraduate level is taught through courses on both local and global architecture history. It broadly covers pre-historic architecture to Medieval and Gothic to Post-modern architecture and history of the local architecture heritage as well. These different styles of architecture however, did not come one after another. Rather they very often share overlapping timeline. History of Bengal Architecture is taught in Bangladesh as a separate course. It covers architecture history from Mauryan to Pala period; Buddhist period to Hindu Period; Mughal period to Colonial period in the Bengal region and so on. The time period covered is approximately from 400 BC to 1947 CE. Some of it overlaps with History of Indian Architecture course. But most of the Architecture History courses cover Western Architecture which might be due to the colonial influence on our education system. Due to more dominance of Western Architecture History in the education system, students very often fail to recognize the importance of Bengal Architecture, its characteristics and relevance. They think of it as an insignificant development in context of global architecture history [of the West mainly] and fail to establish Bengal Architecture's co-relation with contemporary global architecture of that period. For example, students are merely aware of the facts that 'Mahasthangarh', Bogra was erected in late 4th Century CE even before Hagia Sofia, Istanbul (537 CE) or that 'Kantajew' Temple, Dinajpur and Palace of Versailles, France both were completed around 1720 CE – because of the existing segregation in teaching of architecture history courses in linear manner. This paper establishes the missing link that connects Architecture of Bengal with the Global Architecture scenario that persisted during that same time frame and also investigates the similarities and dissimilarities with each other. A corresponding timeline of significant architecture examples combining both Bengal Architecture and Global Architecture is presented for easy understanding and future studies.

Keywords: Architecture of Bengal, Architecture Timeline, Comparative Architectural History, Global Architecture, History of Architecture