

Conservations Of Islamic Architecture Pakistan and Turkey

by

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PREFACE

This study has been prepared in a short time with documents in hand and the means afforded by the library associated with ICCROM. Its main aim has been to inform the non-Muslims participants of the Architectural Conservation Course about the Islamic Architecture and to achieve their support in its conservation.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic Architecture shows variations of character due to the differences in climate, local cultural heritage etc. Here before we look at the different architectural characteristics found in such places as Arabia, Asia, North Africa and Spain, which may all be subjects of research on their own, we are going to look at the Islamic Architecture spread over a wide area in the 16th century under the influence of the strong **Ottoman Empire** and **Pakistan** and give examples from their architecture. We will specially highlight the basic principles of Islamic structure and typology and further discuss the subject of conservation.

WHAT IS ISLAM?

Islam supports the doctrine that God is one and Mohammed is his last Prophet. The majority of countries in Southeast Asia, north Africa and Southeast of Europe belong to Islamic faith and there are some Islamic countries in America and South Africa. Faith (*Iman*), worship (*Ibadaat*) entails ritual worshipping five times a day and benevolence (*Ihsan*) means helping others. Therefore, it is possible to see religious, educational and benevolent institution are connected with each other. The Ka'ba in Mecca, fixes the direction the worshippers must

Picture 1: From Goodwin
The expansion and contraction of the Ottoman Empire.
These maps do not take account of minor fluctuations.

face (*Qibla*) and thus the architecture is determined accordingly.

The institution of Islam is founded upon the basis the **Koran**, the tradition of the Prophet (*Sunnah*), and the written and oral teaching of Jurist (*Madh'hab*).

The **Koran**, the book of God, sent down upon the Prophet Muhammad and "recited" by him to the community of mankind, contains in its 114 chapters all the essential elements of Islamic belief (*Aqidah*) and law (*Shari'ah*). Its essential message is the proclamation of divine unity (*Tawhid*), the absolute transcendence of the principle in regard to all manifestation. This is attention of faith (*Shahadah*).

There are five pillars of Islam (*Arkan-a-Din*), namely:

1. **Qal-mah**, (*La-illallah Muhammad-ur-rasool-illah*)
2. **Salaat**, (Prayer)
3. **Siyam**, (fasting)
4. **Zakat**, (Alms)
5. **Hajj**, (Pilgrimage)

1. **Qal-mah**

Its means that: "There is no God other than the only God (Allah) and Mohammed is the messenger of God."

2. **Salaat (Prayer)**

The prayers are said five times daily: dawn, mid-dy, mid afternoon, sunset and after nightfall. The prayer start in an upright stand, the vertical position proper to man, stand erect, as a pontiff, and position like an axis towards which God stand down his favour and spread it upon the earth.

The orientation (*Qiblah*), facing towards Mecca, brings about a symbolic regrouping of all believers at the spot, where Ibrahim built a temple for God, which is the tangible trace on earth of the axis mundi.

3. **Siyam (Fasting)**

Fasting is during the month of Ramzan and must be observed from dawn till sunset, despite the very real trial of hunger and thirst during the afternoon. The sick, the traveller, the woman approaching child birth and very old people are exempted from fasting.

4. **Zakat (Alms giving)**

Zakat means that Muslims have to pay a tax in cash or in other forms to the poor. It is an essential working part of communal life. As the only tax demanded of believers by Qur'anic law, its amount is fixed accordingly to the nature of goods at one tenth or one fifth of one's yearly gain as soon as these reach a fix level (*Nisab*). It is handed over to the public treasury (*Bayt-al-maal*) which administers it and gives it out to those qualified to receive it, namely the poor and the needy Muslims.

5. **Hajj (Pilgrimage)**

This is the essential task, which each believer must perform at least once in his life of he has the means to do it. It consists of a procession, together with



Picture 2: Sultanahmet Mosque/Istanbul.

believers from all parts of the world, around the **Ka'abah**. It takes place once a year at certain prescribed days.

The **Ka'bah**, the cube-shaped temple erected by Ibrahim in Mecca, is God's house on earth, on which the emanation of heaven pour down and where a link operates between the finite and infinite.

WHAT ARE THE ISLAMIC BUILDINGS?

In Islamic Architecture, it is possible to identify the following main different types of buildings:

Mosque

The essential place of worship is the **mosque**. The endeavours to collect all the worshippers under one roof led to great efforts to build large mosques and create great masterpieces in terms of decoration and architecture.

Inside the mosque the chief features are the **Mihrab**, a niche in the centre

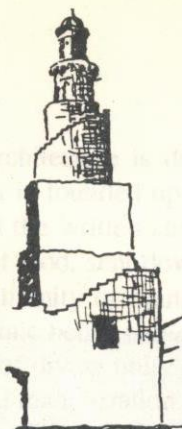
EARLY ISLAM



Samarra, Iraq (848)



Tunisia (836)



Cairo (876) Tulun,



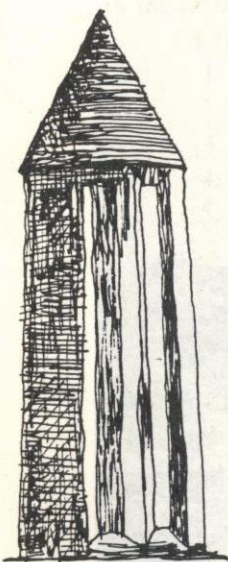
Cairo



Mosul (1170)



MOSQUE OF QĀ'ITBĀY
15TH CENT.



Gurgan (1006)



Delhi (1197)



Bokhara (1127)



Sikandra (1604)



Agra (1630)



DELHI

THE LATER ISLAM



TURKEY (1370)



TURKEY 1600

DELHI

Picture 3: Minarets.

of the *Qiblah* wall, to define the direction of Mecca and the *Minbar* or pulpit. The top step of the minbar is reserved for the Prophet, the Imam stands on the second step and uses the top one as a seat for the Friday Ceremony.

The most characteristic part of the mosque is the *Minaret* and shows great structural and decorative variations signifying the local cultures and characteristics.

In principle the *Minaret* is the high tower from which the *Muezzin* can call the followers to worship. Its highlight is the balcony; some minarets have as many as three such balconies. Two or more minarets facing each other make it possible to hang illuminated announcement between them, further more, many minarets have symbolic significance. For example, Sultan Ahmed Mosque in Istanbul has 16 balconies on its minarets because it was built during the reign of Sultan Ahmed, from three separate staircases by three different people without seeing each other. These helical staircases entwined together is proof that they are the product of fine static calculations and master workmanship.

Madrasah

Madrasah is more specifically a theological college for teaching the principles of Islam. In general they are Lyceums and high schools where theological education is given. There are special Madrasas for astronomical, scientific, medical, theological and law studies (in Edirne, the madrasah of Bayazit II's collection teaches medicine and in Gok Madrasah in Sivas, space research is conducted). In Pakistan today the madrasas teach religion to every believers. It is also possible to see semi-open madrasah, called *Eyvan* (*ivan*), in some hot climate countries where the main teaching rooms are surrounded by the private rooms of teachers and students.

Caravanserai, Han and Inn

Caravanserais, hans and inns were constructed for benevolent purposes. Normally situated outside cities at about 4 hours walk by camels, tradesmen and their animals could stay there free of charge. Inns were situated in cities and people had to pay to stay there. In more elaborate ones, the ground floor was reserved for animals and the upper floor for people. At present some Caravanserais are converted into hotels and restaurants.

Darussiffa (hospital)

Darussiffa was generally linked with a medical madrasah and specialised in some field of medicine, for example in Edirne, in Bayazit II's Medical Medrese and Darussiffa, research was being conducted in the treatment of the mentally retarded patients (1413).

Imarets, Khirat Khana (Kitchen houses)

Imarets were places for giving free food to the poor, to the destitute and to those with no money or place to stay. In every madrasah, it was certain to find a kitchen house next to darussiffa.

Khirat Khanas (kitchen houses) still function in Pakistan and Turkey.

Sabil (Fountain)

This is another type of structure which is not found in other communities. These were places normally on main roads or central places for distributing water and sweet squashes free of charge to the passengers by.

In Pakistan at some places on both sides of the road the *Sabils* (water tanks) are functioning for drinking water. An specially in the first Islamic month (*Muharram*) and third Islamic month (*Rabiulawal*) people can drink sweet milk and squashes instead of water.

Hamam (public bath)

Muslims have to go through ritual cleaning operation called *aptes* or *ablution* before praying. They subscribed to the doctrine that cleanliness comes from faith and thus feel obliged to wash with plenty of water. As a result magnificent public baths were built in every quarter. These baths became embodied in the social lives of people and were places for cleansing, resting and enjoyment. In Pakistan the *Hamam* system still function on commercial basis.

Turbe, Maqbera (tomb)

Tomb is the characteristic structure of the Islamic Architecture. It is erected on outliving death and on the power and glory of Muslim rulers for the public appreciation. Traditional Islam has developed rituals associate with death to a remarkable degree. Funeral rituals are elaborate and strict, and the architecture of tombs and mausoleums includes many masterpieces.

Palace

The palaces built by the Muslim kings were designed or altered and modified according to the religious practice.

Accordingly, halls for having ceremonies, private rooms and rest rooms for comfort, court halls for the public ostentation and *Harem* for the abode of the ladies were found. They were all designed in different geometrical patterns in accordance with their utility and decorated in the same styles.

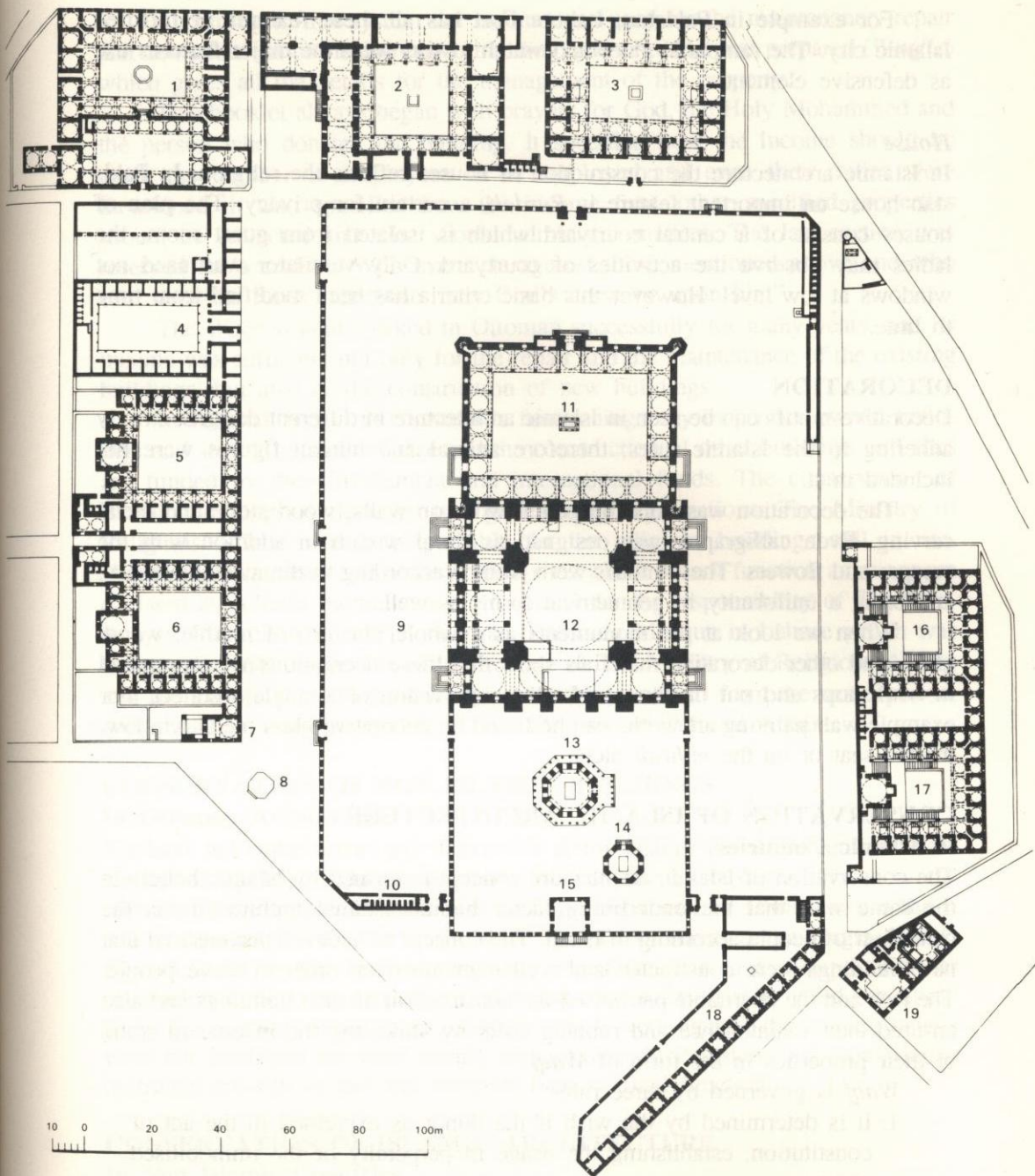
Garden

In the gardens, the Islamic style is clearly reflected. In fact the intention is to develop the feeling of symbolic portrayal of paradise.

The gardens generally have plants arranged in geometrical pattern, the waterfall and fountains next to flower beds and look very enchanting. The whole atmosphere mixed with sweet scented smell really gives wonderful experience. Shalimar garden, built in the 16th century in Pakistan, is a good example of all these functions.

Fort

Fortifications were built by Muslims to protects the cities. Within the fortifications palaces, mosques, gardens etc. could be identified.



208 Süleymaniye, Istanbul. Plan, scale 1:1,500. 1 darü's-sifa; 2 imaret; 3 tabhane; 4 Tıp Medrese; 5 Sani Medrese; 6 Evvel Medrese; 7 sihyan mekteb; 8 taksim; 9 mosque precinct; 10 latrines; 11 avlu; 12 cami; 13 Süleyman I Türbe; 14 Haseki Hürrem Türbe; 15 Türbedar Oda; 16 Salis Medrese; 17 Rabi Medrese; 18 darül-hadis; 19 hamam. There are coffee houses in the ground floor of the Evvel and Sani Medreses.

Picture 4: An Ottoman Complex.

For example in Pakistan, Lahore Fort has all these features of fortified Islamic city. The ramparts, gates and watch towers were the major features used as defensive elements.

House

In Islamic architecture the construction of houses reflects the religion. In Pakistan house an important feature is *Pardah*, a curtain for privacy. The plan of houses consist of a central courtyard which is isolated from guest room, the ladies may observe the activities of courtyard. Only ventilator was used not windows at low level. However this basic criteria has been modified from time to time.

DECORATION

Decorative motifs can be seen in Islamic architecture in different designs, strictly adhering to the Islamic rules; therefore animal and human figures were not included in it.

The decoration was done by pencil work on walls, wood stone and metal carving. Even calligraphy was designed as floral wreath in addition with the creeper and flowers. These motifs were painted according to the available space, and bring a uniformity in geometrical forms as well.

When we look at the monuments as a whole, the use of marble, wood, glass, and other decorative materials show that these decorations were prepared in workshops and put in place under the supervision of a single architect. For example wall painting art works can be found on decorative glass metal window, marble seat or on the *mihrab* niche.

CONSERVATION OF ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE

In Islamic Countries

The conservation of Islamic architecture concept is formed by Islamic beliefs in the same way that the underlining factor behind Islamic architecture is the behaviour of people according to Islam. The concept of benevolence ensured that new buildings were constructed and well maintained on order to serve people. The rich and the charitable patronised the construction of such buildings and also ensured their maintenance and running costs by allocating the income of some of their properties in the form of *Waqf*.

Waqf is governed by three rules:

1. It is determined by the wish if the donor as expressed in the act of constitution, establishing the usage in perpetuity of the immobilised property.
2. It is subject to formal declaration, providing that the donor is a responsible believer, that the donation is his property and that it is not tarnished by any illegality.
3. Once the income of a property is given in *Waqf*, it cannot be returned to the donor.

According to this system the income was used for the maintenance, repair and new additions of the designated building; and a booklet was prepared (*Waqfie*) which gives all the details for the management of the property.

This booklet always began with prayers for God, the Holy Mohammed and the person who donated the building. It specified how the income should be used, the number of employees to be employed and even their duties were mentioned. It also specified how the income from other specified properties should be collected and who should administer matters. The last section was reserved for a curse: "Who ever acts against those mentioned above and who ever uses the funds otherwise, may God's curse be upon him".

The *Waqf* system worked in Ottoman successfully for many years, and its income was sufficient not only for the repair and the maintenance of the existing buildings, but also for the construction of new buildings.

In Pakistan today, this system is functioning only in private owned buildings and sites. The maintenance and the construction of other buildings and sites are funded by the Government and international funds. The conservation of Islamic buildings is done by two government organisations: The Ministry of Religious Affairs who is responsible for the religious buildings still in use. Historical monuments and archeological sites which do not function anymore are declared as cultural monuments and come under the responsibility of The Ministry of Cultural Affairs. For example, Badshahi Mosque in Lahore which was built in the 16th century, is under the care of The Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Lahore Fort (in front of Badshahi Mosque) and from the same period, comes under the responsibility of The Ministry of Cultural Affairs.

CONSERVATION OF NON ISLAMIC BUILDINGS

In Ottoman Architecture

We have not come across any destructive action against the monuments in areas penetrated by Islam. On the contrary, we can cite examples which show the opposite; for example, Istanbul was an important centre of Christianity when it was conquered by the Turks in 1453. The Turks repaired the Hagia Sophia Church, built in the 16th century, and transformed it to a mosque. Further restoration works were carried out later and even today it is in good condition. Even the existing mosaic wall paintings which were against the Islamic beliefs were not destroyed but were simply painted over. In Pakistan some non Islamic buildings are still in use and continue their original function.

CONSERVATION OF ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE

In Non Islamic Countries

According to our studies at ICCROM library, the conservation work carried out in Islamic countries by the international organisations such as ICCROM, ICOMOS, ICOM and UNESCO is not sufficient. There is a need for more sensitivity towards the Islamic monuments. These organisations have not sufficiently taken part in the restoration of Islamic monuments in Islamic countries and very little is done for Islamic buildings in non Islamic countries.

CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

First of all there is an urgent need for international organisations to undertake conservation work on Islamic monuments in Muslim and non Muslim countries particularly in non Islamic countries. Those remnants which are becoming increasingly difficult to locate today will become impossible to spot tomorrow and will continue to perish away.

The second most important point is that the conservation procedures and techniques in most developing countries are not sufficient. Conservation work in these countries may be harmful to some extent even though this may happen unintentionally and unknowingly. Islamic monuments must be preserved as a heritage of history and the international organisations must give priority to these efforts in their programmes.

We propose that their help to these countries must not be limited to financial help but must include technical assistance as much as possible. This can be done by starting to train the skilled masters, the managers and the educators. Of course material assistance must be given together with this aid.

It is wrong to abandon the Islamic monuments to their own faith. The experienced international organisations with their experts must take part and not limit their interest just to give advice. The World Community can become a reality only if just and unbiased policies can be employed. We believe that the Islamic monuments represent an important part of the World's heritage. It is essential that it is preserved and kept alive for the future generations.

Also we recommend the preparation of an inventory of all Islamic monuments and sites. The international organisations such as ICCROM, UNESCO, ICOMOS, should draft a set of guidelines that could be followed by the national organisations in each country. This inventory should be updated annually in order to understand the state of these monuments and their needs.

The international organisations could intervene in many ways for safeguarding these monuments. They could use their influence in persuading the countries especially non Muslim countries in mitigation of destruction and vandalism. If necessary action was taken, for example in 1992 Babri Mosque, India could have been saved. Also in Bosnia a lot of destruction is being done, but the international organisations have no executing power and can only send a letter. They could possibly promote the educational programmes and the exchange of knowledge which has been developed in different parts of world.

The national organisations and governments also have a contributory role in the conservation of the monuments and the formation of a suitable authority which is provided with legal, financial and technical facilities. For example, in Pakistan two ministries are involved in conservation, as mentioned before, but if one organisation was formed and financed by both ministries, it could have been easier and more efficient to manage the conservation activities. The research institutes and universities should be encouraged to undertake research on Islamic monuments and their safeguard. The national organisations should look into the legislative aspects of the conservation work. With our experience in the

field of conservation, we understand that the present legislation is not strong enough.

The essential concept of Islam has provided a great reservoir of inspiration which guided and nourished the grand traditions for some thirteen centuries. Continuation of these traditions and the existence of their legacies are important for the survival of the Islamic heritage, therefore, conservation and management of Islamic architecture is essential.

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