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LINGUISTIC STUDIES

ARCHITECTURAL DIALOGUE: THE INTERSECTION OF TIMURID INFLUENCE AND INDIAN TRADITION IN MAHMUD GAWAN'S MADRASA. BIDAR. INDIA

الحوار المعماري: التداخل بين التأثير التيموري والتراث الهندي في مدرسة محمود غوان، بيدار، الهند

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Abstract

The concept of global influence is often associated with Timurid architecture, a style that transcended regional boundaries. the Madrasa of Mahmud Gawan in Bidar, Deccan, India, built in the middle of 15th century, represents a unique architectural case. This madrasa is not just influenced by Timurid elements, but is a fully Timurid structure in style. What makes this even more remarkable is that it was constructed during the same period when the Timurid architectural style was flourishing in Khorasan, Iran, and Central Asia, despite the Deccan never being under Timurid rule. This paper explores the reasons behind the construction of a purely Timurid-style madrasa in the Deccan, far from the Timurid empire. In addition to examining the architectural authenticity of the madrasa, this paper will also consider whether it can be seen as a replica of iconic Timurid madrasas, such as the Ulugh Beg Madrasa in Samarkand or the Khargard Madrasa, or if it incorporates local Indian influences in its design, structural systems, or architectural elements. By investigating these aspects, the paper aims to uncover the broader cultural and political significance of adopting such a style in the Deccan.

Key words (madrasah, bidar, architecture, India, Timur, Deccan, Iran, central Asia)

المستخلص:

يرتبط مفهوم التأثير العالمي عادةً بالعمارة التيمورية، التي امتدت بتأثيرها خارج حدودها الإقليمية، وتعد مدرسة محمود غوان في بيدار بإقليم الدكن، الهند، والتي شُيّدت في منتصف القرن التاسع الهجري / الخامس عشر الميلادي، مثالًا استثنائيًا على ذلك؛ فهي لا تحمل تأثيرات تيمورية فحسب، بل تجسد طرازًا تيموريًا كاملًا. وما يميزها هو تشييدها خلال فترة ازدهار العمارة التيمورية في خراسان وإيران وآسيا الوسطى، رغم أن منطقة الدكن لم تخضع قط للحكم التيموري.

يناقش البحث الدوافع المختلفة التي رافقت إقامة مدرسة بهذا الطراز التيموري الخالص في الدكن، بعيدًا عن الإمبراطورية التيمورية، ويبحث مدى أصالة طرازها المعماري. وعلاقتها بالمدارس التيموية الآخرى، مثل مدرسة ألوغ بيك في سمرقند أو مدرسة خارجرد، كما تستعرض الدراسة طبيعة وجود التأثيرات الهندية المحلية في تكوينها أو تفاصيلها المعمارية، التي مما لا شك فيه تعكس الكثير من الأبعاد الثقافية والسياسية وراء تبني هذا الطراز المعماري في الدكن

الكلمات المفتاحية (مدرسة، بيدار ، العمارة، الهند، سمرقند، الدكن، وسط آسيا).

Introduction: Mahmud Gawan, whose real name was Malik Shah Muhammad, originated from Gawan in Gilan, Iran (Haroon khan sherwani, 1942:21). He came from a distinguished family of ministers, as both his father and grandfather served in Gilan (Haroon khan sherwani, 1944:291). His journey to Bidar began as a trader, passing through several countries before reaching Bidar during the reign of Bahmani Sultan Allauddin Shah (1435-1458 CE). Impressed by his abilities, Allauddin Shah appointed him as the governor of Bidar. Later, under King Muhammad Shah Lashkari (1463-1483 CE), he was reappointed to this position. Mahmud Gawan gained prominence when the king of Bidar (Pushkar Sohoni, 2023:145), Mahmud Shah Bahmani (1473-1519 CE), appointed him as the Chief Minister (Wazir-e Aazam) and honored him with the title of Khwaja Jahan. At his suggestion, Bidar's name was changed to Mahmudabad Bidar, emphasizing his influence and stature (Richard Eaton, 2005:59).

Mahmud Gawan was a multifaceted figure—well-versed in Islamic theology, Persian language, and mathematics, and highly regarded as both a poet and prose writer. Known for his wisdom, he earned the respect and trust of not only local rulers, but also foreign kingdoms. A successful general, a capable administrator, and a patron of arts and culture (Haroon khan sherwani, 1944:291), Mahmud Gawan played a pivotal role in the administration of the Bahmani Sultanate. His intellectual prowess made him a key figure in the political and cultural exchanges of the time (Richard Eaton, 2005:60). Historical accounts, including those of the historian Tabatabai, refer to him as "Mawlana Mahmud Shirazi," emphasizing his Persian roots. Gawan was once offered the position of Prime Minister of Khorasan, but he declined (George Michell, 2008:2).

Literature review. Despite the recognized significance of Mahmoud Gawan's madrasa and the extensive body of research dedicated to it, most studies have remained confined to general overviews, lacking a thorough examination of its architectural and structural nuances. For example, Mate's analysis situates the madrasa within the broader context of Islamic architecture in the Deccan,

offering limited insight into its unique design elements (M.S. Mate, 1962: 13-25, 42). Similarly, while Helen Philon provides a standalone exploration of the madrasa, her study is largely descriptive, with only cursory references to the Timurid influences (HELEN PHILON, 2016: 75-85). These references fail to delve into the specific mechanisms of how these influences were transmitted or adapted. Furthermore, the integration of Timurid features with local Indian architectural traditions remains unexplored. This limitation is also evident in other scholarly works, including those by Irfan Habib and Manu Sobti (Irfan Habib, 1997:298-312; Manu P. Sobti, 1995: 27-61).

Methodology: This research utilizes a comprehensive methodology combining fieldwork, historical analysis, and comparative architectural study. A detailed field investigation was conducted at Mahmoud Gawan's madrasa in the Deccan, where precise measurements and photographic documentation were collected, alongside similar studies at Timurid madrasas in Samarkand and Bukhara. Data from each of these sites were compared to identify architectural correlations between the regions. Additionally, historical sources were analyzed to extract information on construction techniques and cultural influences. By comparing the measurements and architectural features of these madrasas, the study aims to understand how Timurid elements were transmitted and adapted within the local Indian context.

Descriptive and field study: (figures 1,2). Although the foundation inscription on the upper band of the madrasa's main façade records the construction date as 877 AH/1472 CE, historian Tabatabai mentions that the building was completed earlier, in 876 AH/1471 CE. Ferishta, however, suggested that the madrasa was constructed later, in 1480 CE (Ferishta, 1966:268). Architecturally, the madrasa adopts the four-iwan layout, which scholars often refer to as the "Golden Plan" for Islamic madrasas commonly seen in Egypt, Iran, the Levant, and Central Asia. Unfortunately, a significant portion of the madrasa has collapsed, including the main façade, entrance, southern wing, and the southeast tower. Restoration work was undertaken by the Archaeological Department in 1914, under the supervision of Yazdani

(G. Yazdani, 1947:91-100). During this restoration, Yazdani uncovered the foundations of the collapsed sections, allowing for a better understanding of the original architectural features. It was determined that the entrance originally consisted of a prominent structure with two arched recesses, measuring 7 meters in width, 3.4 meters in depth, and more than 15 meters in height.

The overall plan of the madrasa consists of a central open courtyard with a square configuration. At the center of each side of the courtyard, there is a rectangular iwan. In addition, the now-collapsed entrance was located on the eastern façade, flanked by a rectangular mosque on one side. On the opposite side of the façade, there was once a matching space, which has since been destroyed with no surviving trace. In the remaining space between the iwans, the entrance, and the mosque, various service areas occupy the four corners, distributed across three stories.

The western iwan, which is the largest and most significant within the madrasa, measures 15.87 meters in length and 8 meters in width. It is covered by a high stone vault with an arch reaching a peak of 13.97 meters. This iwan opens fully onto the western side of the courtyard and features a square recess at its center, crowned by a two-tiered dome. The lower dome, supported by squinches, reaches a height of 14 meters, while the upper dome rests on a drum that sits at the roof level of the madrasa. Among the remaining iwans, only the northern and southern have survived. Both measure 8 meters by 12 meters and feature five-sided recesses. Each side of these recesses is 3.3 meters wide and covered by a fan vault.

On either side of the four iwans are rectangular chambers that open onto the courtyard through pointed arches, each measuring 1.7 meters in width and 2.4 meters in height. These chambers extend 13 meters deep into the structure, each divided into two square units. Each of these units is covered by a shallow dome, supported by corner squinches. The corners of the madrasa are occupied by additional architectural features. In the western section, each corner of the courtyard—northwest and southwest—contains a doorway leading to a

vestibule, which in turn opens into a square space. These spaces are thought to have possibly served as smaller schools, as they mirror the overall design of the madrasa itself. The central area of these spaces measures 5 meters per side, and each one is covered by a low dome standing 5.28 meters high. Four adjoining rooms open into this central square with pointed arches, measuring 3.77 meters in width, 3.36 meters in depth, and 3.77 meters in height. Each of these rooms is covered by a pointed barrel vault, and the four corners of the structure feature small square rooms, which are covered by low, shallow domes. These rooms measure 3.79 meters in width and 3.57 meters in depth.

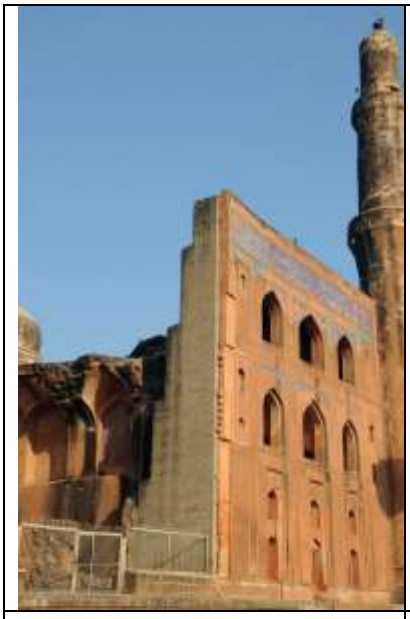


Figure 1

Figure 2

The eastern section of the madrasa, particularly on the ground floor, differs in both its layout and number of units. In the northeast and southeast corners of the madrasa, the units vary. The first of these units can be accessed through a door in the corner of the courtyard, which leads into a square room with sides measuring 8.16 meters. This room is covered by a pointed dome that reaches 12 meters high. A rectangular space, running transversely from north to south, lies in front of this room. This hall measures 15.18 meters in length and 7.73 meters in width, with a pointed vault that rises to a height of 11 meters. The vault

is supported by four structural ribs, with the apex of these ribs reaching 10.19 meters. The western wall of this hall includes a mihrab, which has a polygonal base and measures 2.9 meters in width. This entire section, which functions as the mosque annexed to the madrasa, is accessible from two directions. The first entrance is located at the end of the recess adjoining the eastern iwan, while the second entrance was originally located on the northern side of the now-collapsed entrance structure.

The madrasa`s architecture between Indian and Timurid style:

- **Making space of general plan:**

Before embarking on the architectural and decorative details—whether Timurid or local Indian—reflected in the Mahmud Gawan Madrasa, the most striking aspect is the overall impression, or what can be termed in architectural parlance as "structural cohesion" or holistic spatial treatments. This initial impression reveals a strong adherence to the Timurid architectural style, which distinctly separates itself from the local Indian approach, despite the latter's presence in finer details. Indeed, Timurid structures, palaces, mosques, madrasas, or even hammams, are all composed of fundamental architectural units. These edifices adhere to what is known as space-making, a method where the most critical functional architectural elements are first delineated, with the remainder of the structure organically arranged around them. Architects would then employ various spatial solutions to complete the form of the building (Seyed Hesamodin Tabibian, 2012:4107; Robert Hillenbrand, 2005:90; Pushkar Sohoni, 2023:17; Percy Brown, 1959: 83).

This approach is manifest in the madrasa under examination, as well as in the Khargird Madrasa in Herat and the Ulugh Beg Madrasa (figures 4, 5) (Bernard O'Kane, 1976: 78; Bernard O'Kane, 2021:244; Lisa Golombek and Donald Wilber, 1988: 78). In all cases, the central courtyard and primary iwans serve as the structural and functional axis around which the rest of the madrasa's components are organized. Surrounding these primary spaces, additional service units, such as

secondary schools, are inserted into the spaces between the iwans. Furthermore, certain elements, like the mosque, adopt a transverse layout in the Ulugh Beg Madrasa, occupying the western sector (Lisa Golombek and Donald Wilber, 1988: 78). Meanwhile, in the madrasa under study (figure 3), the mosque is similarly positioned transversely, but occupies a rectangular space on the eastern side of the main façade. This particular arrangement diverges from the configurations seen in other Indian madrasas constructed both before and after the establishment of the bidar madrasa (Sathyavathi N, 2018:2; HELEN PHILON, 2016: 77; M.S. Mate, 1962:18).

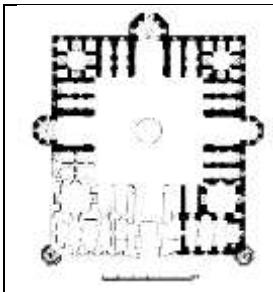


Figure 3

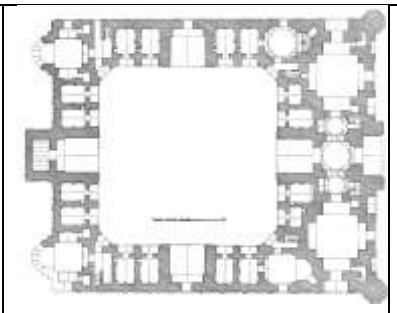


Figure 4

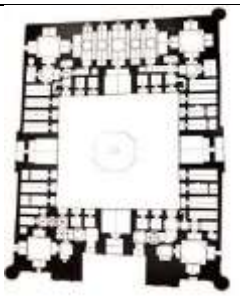


Figure 5

When it comes to the treatment of interior spaces in Indian madrasas before and after the madrasa under study, historical sources document the construction of numerous madrasas, though unfortunately, few have survived from the Sultanate period in the Indian subcontinent (Al-Harwi, 2005:167; Barni; 1862:99; Ibn Battutah, 1976:99). The first of these is the madrasa attached to the Qutb al-Din Mosque in Delhi (figure 8) (Percy Brown, 1959: 72), the second is the Tughlaq madrasa incorporated into the complex of Sultan Feroz Shah Tughlaq at Hauz Khas (figure 7) (Anthony Welch, 1996:176), and the third is the madrasa currently under analysis. Additionally, during the Mughal era, a madrasa known as the Sheikh Jilal Madrasa was constructed in Lahore (figure 6) (Ahsan jan Qaisar, 1988: 28; Ebba, 1991:32). However, historical records clearly indicate Sultan Feroz Shah Tughlaq's deep commitment to building madrasas, which were renowned for their meticulous design, robust construction, and sound

administration. These madrasas featured numerous rooms and colonnaded halls surrounded by lush gardens. They also served as centers for a wide range of scientific disciplines. Indeed, the famed traveler Ibn Battuta, upon visiting the southern Indian city of Hanur, noted the presence of no fewer than thirteen schools dedicated exclusively to the education of girls (Ibn Battutah, 1976:98; Anthony Welch, 1983:82).

From an architectural perspective, we can summarize those Indian madrasas typically followed what is structurally known as the *post-and-lintel system*, characterized by horizontal construction (about this Indian local system see: Banerji, 1993: 89; George, 2008: 35; Marshall, John, 1928:27). This approach, however, was not suitable for the Mahmud Gawan Madrasa. Therefore, the architect adopted the second system, which distinguishes Timurid architecture, structurally referred to as the *load-bearing system (Lisa* Golombek and Donald Wilber, 1988:101). As previously mentioned, this method focuses on the manipulation of space. A general analysis of the layout of the Mahmud Gawan Madrasa, along with other examples like the Ulugh Beg Madrasa and the Khargird Madrasa, reveals that the architect prioritized essential architectural units such as iwans, the entrance, and the courtyard.

The iwans, however, posed a structural weakness due to the immense downward force exerted by the vaulted ceilings, which could weigh hundreds of tons. To counteract this, the architect employed a series of architectural units designed to absorb and counter the pressure generated by the heavy vaults. These units, covered by large domes, were strategically placed in the voids between the iwans. While they served functional purposes by creating additional spaces for various activities, their primary structural role was to provide counterpressure against the vaults on either side, ensuring the stability and integrity of the entire structure.

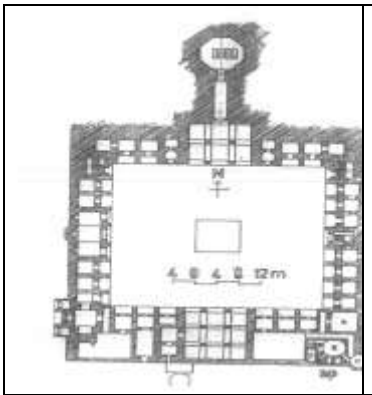


Figure 6

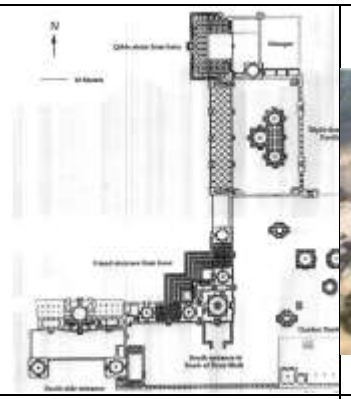


Figure 7

Figur
e 8

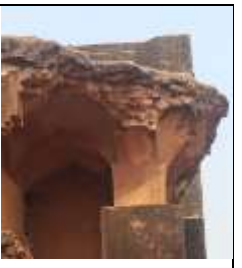
A comparative analysis of the general plan and structural treatments between surviving Indian madrasas and the Gawan Madrasa, reveals significant disparities, especially in the latter's adherence to Timurid spatial principles. One of the most notable differences lies in the fact that many Indian madrasas, like those found in Egypt and the Levant, were part of larger architectural complexes often centered around the founder's mausoleum (Doris, 2007, 128). For instance, the Alauddin Khalji Madrasa, located southwest of Delhi adjacent to the Qutb al-Islam Mosque, was constructed by Sultan Alauddin Khalji and is physically linked to his mausoleum (Percy Brown, 1959:72). Although this madrasa employs an iwan-based layout, the spatial treatments significantly diverge from those of the madrasa under study. Moreover, the tomb of Minister Mahmud Gawan is situated outside the city of Bidar, along the road leading to Hyderabad (Haroon khan sherwani, 1942:22). Here, the service units, including student quarters and classrooms, are situated in a separate block, located to the north and south of the madrasa. As for the Feroz Shah Madrasa at Hauz Khas, it was constructed in an L-shape, forming a continuous structure along the southern and eastern boundaries of the reservoir complex (McKibben, William Jeffrey, 1988:78). In conclusion we can notice from this description and plans, the deference method of making the space of the Gawan Madrasa and other madrasas in India and central Asia.

- **Structural methods and material:**

A defining characteristic of Timurid architecture, exemplified in the Mahmud Gawan Madrasa, is the seamless visual integration of the walls and the underlying structural framework. This aspect, as noted by Lisa in her study of Timurid construction techniques, highlights how architects combined the core wall structures, built using bricks, with brick or plaster cladding (Lisa Golombek, 1988:110). This approach not only facilitated quicker construction but also ensured greater cohesion across the wall's components. Despite the use of stone in the foundation, a similar technique is evident, where the core structural mass is concealed behind an exterior layer of mortar or brick (figure 9), whether for functional or decorative purposes. Even though heavy black basalt stone was used in the construction, without close inspection, one cannot easily distinguish these structures from other Timurid buildings, as they adhere to the same structural treatment involving cladding-covered walls.

In this regard, stone was rarely used in Timurid architecture, as O'Kane and Lisa point out:

"Stone was highly valued as both a building and decorative material due to the scarcity of quarries in the fifteenth century. Its use was limited to the most opulent structures, and even then, it primarily served as a decorative revetment (Lisa Golombek, 1988:79; Bernard okane, 1982:82). Timur's extensive use of stone in his Friday Mosque in Samarkand likely played a role in this development (Robert Hillenbrand, 2005:85). Babur recounts that he employed 200 stone masons from Fars, Azerbaijan, India, and other countries for his constructions. Remains of the original 480 stone columns, along with fragments of the grand arched stone entrance to the mosque, still exist (Annette susnnal, 1922:110). The finest stone used in Herat seems to have come from Uba, as evidenced by Isfiziri's account: 'At one end of the town is a mountain that contains a mine of white stone resembling marble. From this stone, dadoes (iziraha) are made, as well as columns, thrones, funerary tablets, and cenotaphs, 13

			
Figure 9	Figure 10	Figure 11	Figure 12

However, in the case of the Bidar madrasa, stone-cutting and shaping techniques mirrored those used for brickwork in Timurid architecture (figures 9-11), marking an innovation by the architect responsible for this structure. This technique was unprecedented in Islamic architecture in India. Upon detailed analysis, three distinct construction techniques can be identified in the Bidar Madrasa.

The first technique involved the use of small, precisely cut stone units, each measuring 25 cm. These stones were skillfully hewn with parallel edges and consistent dimensions across the entire building (figure 9). This method contrasts sharply with the local construction practices observed in most examples of Islamic architecture in India (B.L.Dhama, 1965:2; Marshall, John, 1928: 72; havel, 1913:82), the second style, referred to as the Tughlaq method or, more technically, "molded walls, (figure 12)" involves using irregularly sized stones. The gaps between these stones were filled with a liquid lime mortar, which was poured to reach all the voids between the stones. This technique is prominent in most buildings from the Tughlaq period (Anthony Welch and Howrd Crane, 1983:82). In contrast, the Mahmud Gawan Madrasa employed small, uniformly cut stone units using the same principles as

Timurid construction, ensuring the building's structural soundness. This method was adopted despite the availability of the clay necessary to produce bricks. The decision to use stone instead of brick likely stemmed from environmental and topographical factors in the region (M.S. Mate, 1962: 23).

The third technique is distinctly Timurid, involving the construction of core walls that are then clad with an outer layer of brick, serving both structural and decorative functions. This method is prominently featured in the minaret and certain sections of the eastern facade of the madrasa, further highlighting the intricate and layered approach to architectural design within this Timurid-inspired structure (Seyed Hesamodin Tabibian, .2012:4108; Zubaydullayev, 2020: 39; Lisa Golombek and Donald Wilber, 1962:42)

Figure 13

Figure 14

In addition to the previously mentioned construction techniques, a distinctive local structural method was incorporated into the architectural system of the Mahmud Gawan Madrasa the use of structural ties or bonding belts. In traditional Timurid architecture, timber and bamboo were utilized to bind architectural elements and structural masses together. This technique was supported by a specialized craft of woodworking, dedicated to assembling different components of a building. These methods are depicted in various Timurid illustrations that showcase construction processes and architectural craftsmanship (Ahsan jan Qaisar, 1988:20).

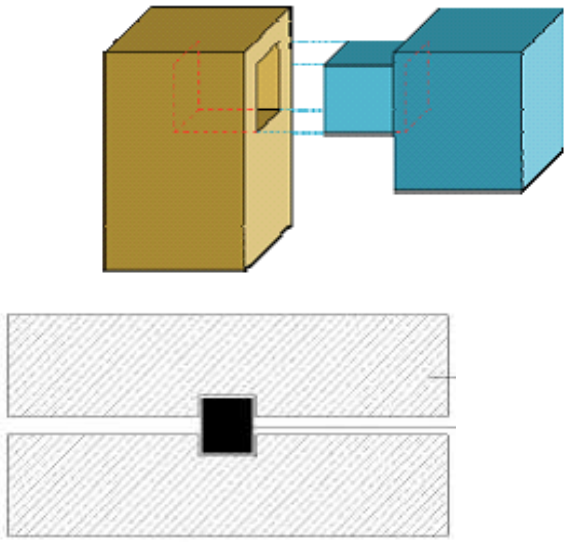


Figure (15) construction techniques. Shweta Vardia

However, in the Mahmud Gawan Madrasa, we observe a distinct application of local techniques to further enhance the building's structural integrity. This was achieved through the use of precisely crafted ties and joints, which significantly strengthened the structure. According to Indian building codes, two primary methods of assembly were employed: the horizontal assembly of materials and the vertical assembly (see Figure 15) (Shweta Vardia, 2009:72). Ibn Battuta also references this technique in his description of the Delhi Mosque: "Its walls, roof, and floors are made entirely of finely carved white stones, expertly bonded with lead to form an impeccably strong and seamless connection..." This method reflects the advanced craftsmanship and local ingenuity in reinforcing architectural structures, blending Timurid influences with indigenous techniques (Ibn Battutah, 1976:97) (figures 13-15)

These all techniques come with the topographic features of the Deccan cites, Mate mentioned the sultry atmosphere of Gulbarga compared with the fertility and salubarity of Bidar. The word Gulbarga or Kalbarga means "stony land" in the Kannada language, and this part of the Deccan is noted for its very scanty rainfall. On the other hand, Bidar is situated on a plateau 2330 feet above the sea level, and it is definitely one of the healthiest parts of the Deccan tableand. (Haroon Khan Sherwani, 1944: 182; M.S. Mate, 1962: 13).

c. Architectural components: In examining the architectural history of the Deccan and its connection to the Timurid style introduced from Iran, Khorasan, and Central Asia, it becomes clear that Timurid influence in the region extends well before the construction of the Mahmud Gawan Madrasa, despite the fact that this study centers on that particular structure as a quintessential example of Timurid architecture. As Eaton observes, Timurid architectural elements were already making their mark in the Deccan during the reign of Ahmad I (Richard Eaton, 2005:64).

Ahmad I's palaces in Bidar unmistakably showcase the influence of Timur, whose capital at Samarqand epitomized opulence and imperial grandeur. The Bidar citadel features prominent elements such as the Royal Chamber (Takht Mahal), Hall of Public Audience, Naubat Khana, Lal Bagh, and Tarkash Mahal, along with a range of supporting structures including mosques, pavilions, kitchens, courtyards, gardens, cisterns, and defensive ditches. In contrast to the low, squat arches of Gulbarga's earlier architecture, Bidar's architects, drawing inspiration from the sophisticated designs of Timurid cities like Samarqand and Herat, constructed impressive edifices that soar to heights exceeding 100 feet. The influence of Timurid architecture is particularly evident at the entrance of the Royal Chamber, where the 35-foot arches and intricately designed spandrels adorned with lion and sun motifs echo the grandeur of Timur's Aq Saray Palace at Shahr-i Sabz (1379–1396).".

However, Timurid influence in India can be traced back to the era of Timur's invasion. Historical sources indicate that Timur

appointed Khizr Khan as the ruler of Delhi and possibly Multan, setting the stage for his descendants, like Babur, to consolidate power under the Mughal Empire. Babur proudly traced his lineage to Timur, as evidenced in inscriptions and royal decrees. The Bahmani rulers, keen to follow Timurid cultural and political models, sought to emulate their achievements. This connection was strengthened by the Bahmanis' desire for independence from the central Islamic sultanates of India, particularly after the weakening of the Tughlaq dynasty, which allowed the Bahmanis to establish a distinct cultural identity in the Deccan (Irfan Habib, 1997: 298; Manu P. Sobti, 1995:27; Maryam Khazaee, 2013: 142).

Faced with a choice between aligning with local cultural influences or forging connections with the wider Islamic world, the Bahmanis opted for the latter. Sultan Firuz Shah Bahmani, for instance, sent a message to the esteemed Persian poet Hafez Shirazi, inviting him to the Deccan. Firuz and later Sultan Ahmad I were heavily influenced by Timur's legacy in Asia, striving to replicate the cultural patronage that Timur had cultivated by attracting scholars, artists, and architects to his court. Historical records reveal that many of the Bahmani court officials and soldiers hailed from regions like Khorasan, Herat, and Bukhara, further solidifying these connections (for more information about the Bahmani relations with the Timurid court. See: Özden Erdoğan, 2003: 93-107, 172-213; Maryam Khazaee, 2015:40-44; Pushkar Sohoni, 2023:146-159; Richard Eaton, 2005: 59-78).

One notable episode illustrating the Bahmani-Timurid relations occurred when Sultan Firuz Shah Bahmani, upon hearing of Timur's intention to invade India, preemptively sent emissaries to Samarkand, including Mir Fazlu Lah Inju and Maulana Fazlullah Sabzwari. The delegation stayed in Timur's capital for six months before delivering their message. Firuz expressed his willingness to support Timur's ambitions in Delhi, offering to pay homage to any ruler appointed by Timur. In return, Timur acknowledged Firuz as his "son," sending him royal gifts and confirming his authority over the Deccan. This diplomatic exchange highlighted the Bahmani rulers' strategic efforts to

align themselves with the powerful Timurid dynasty (Richard eaton, 2005: 59).

d. The court: The courtyard (ṣaḥn) has been a fundamental element in Islamic religious architecture, primarily serving for ventilation and lighting (havel, 1913:72; doris, 2007:91). In the Mahmud Gawan Madrasa, the Timurid architectural approach is evident. The courtyard functions as a central feature, providing access to surrounding spaces and creating a quiet, insulated environment for learning. The courtyard's design reflects Timurid principles, with its well-proportioned layout facilitating both functional and aesthetic purposes (Bernard okane, 1982:31), mirroring notable Timurid madrasas such as Ulugh Beg's in Samarkand and Khargird. This approach contrasts with Indian madrasas, where courtyards were often irregular and resulted from horizontal construction methods, shaped by local traditions and environmental factors.

Table 1 measures of the courtyard

S	Madrasah name	Plan	Measure of the court	Measure of the madrasa	Ratio
1	Mahmoud Gawan Madrasah	Square	34,4 * 34,4m	64*68	1:4
2	Ulug Bek Madrasah	Square	35*38m	60*81	1:4
3	Khargerd Madrasah	Square	28*28m	45*56	1:4
4	Hauz Khas Madrasah	Open irregular space	unknown	unknown	-
5	Shaikh Jalil Madrasah	Rectangular	20 *30m	50*40	2:4

When comparing Indian and Central Asian madrasas, a significant distinction is seen in the courtyard design. Timurid madrasas, like those in Samarkand and Bukhara, feature large, symmetrical courtyards as the heart of the complex, surrounded by iwans, lecture halls, and residential

quarters, emphasizing balance and axial organization. The Mahmud Gawan Madrasa follows this Central Asian model, with its three-story construction and precise courtyard proportions, highlighting the vertical Timurid style, The courtyard in the Mahmud Gawan Madrasa forms a square with side lengths of 34,4 m, and a total perimeter of 1183 m. Notably, this same proportional ratio can be found in Ulugh Beg's Madrasas in both Samarkand and Bukhara, as well as in the Khargird Madrasa in Herat (table 1). This architectural layout not only serves functional needs but also reflects the cultural and political prestige of the Timurid tradition, blending it with Indian local practices to create a unique architectural dialogue.

e. Vaulted iwan and domes:

The iwan, a vaulted rectangular space opening fully onto a courtyard (Gh. H. Memarian, 2014:3; Rana M. Alkadi, 2016:43), was not commonly employed as a principal architectural element in the religious monuments in India (Percy Brown, 1959:123; havel, 1913:92). Its presence in the Mahmud Gawan Madrasa, however, reflects a pronounced Timurid influence. This does not imply that Indian architecture lacked the use of rectangular vaulted spaces; rather, such forms did appear in notable examples, such as the side vaults in the Jama Masjid at Budaun, the central vault in the Adina Mosque, and the iwans in Alauddin Khilji's Madrasa in Delhi (Percy Brown, 1959:123; havel, 1913:92; Seema Khan, 2011:59; Pushkar Sohoni, 2020:16; Banerji, Naseem Ahmed, 1993:34). It is worth noting that the rarity of using traditional iwan, characterized by a vaulted rectangular space that opens entirely onto a courtyard, in Indian Islamic architecture may have been due to concerns about the structural vulnerability posed by the iwan's fourth wall facing the courtyard, which was perceived as a potential point of structural failure. Gustave Le Bon remarked about the Indian imagination about the spaces covered by domes and vaults, he mentioned "It is worth noting that Hindu architects did not construct vaults with a central focus in any of the monuments built in India prior to the Islamic era, and even afterward in many cases. This preserved the old monuments from collapse. vaults, like those made in the iran, with minimal materials that cover large spaces, inherently contain the seeds

of their own destruction, as the Hindus say, 'they never sleep.' (Le Bon, Gustave, 1974:92; havel, 1913:82)

This architectural unit in the madrasa of Mahmoud Gawan is a sophisticated composite structure, featuring a barrel or modified barrel vault that opens to the exterior, either onto a courtyard or as part of the building's facade. The vaulted space is framed by a rectangular masonry mass, commonly referred to as the "iwan screen." This screen consists of the vault's pylons, which rise to the spring line and then continue horizontally above the vault's crown. It extends well beyond the roofline of surrounding buildings, creating a prominent, though structurally weak, false front.

In the architectural design of the Mahmud Gawan Madrasa, architects implemented additional structural reinforcements to ensure stability. This is evident in the construction of the third-floor arcade overlooking the courtyard, even though there were no architectural units behind the facade, unlike the ground and first floors. A similar structural strategy can be observed in the mosque attached to the madrasa. To counter the outward thrust exerted by the vault, two primary architectural elements were introduced: a tall dome on the western side, which mitigated the vault's thrust, and the vault itself, supported by five transverse ribs that acted as structural bands to distribute the load. This construction technique, which provided lateral support to the vault, was widely employed in earlier Indian examples, such as the Adina Mosque in Malda, Bengal, and the Jama Masjid at Budaun, Uttar Pradesh—both of which predate the construction of the Mahmud Gawan Madrasa.

From the exterior, it is clear that the cylindrical drum has a narrower diameter than the octagonal one, while from the inside, it is evident that this drum was formed out of two receding cylinders, the topmost one supporting the upper, bulbous dome —a variation that might suggest a later date or greater difficulties in constructing this drum. The bulbous dome atop the cylindrical drum also lacks the plaster motifs that embellish the one resting on the octagonal drum —further evidence that this drum and dome were reworked a number of times,

contributing to the destruction of the decorative motifs that still embellish the dome above the northern *iwan*.

As for the dome structure, Lisa Golombek and Donald Wilber observe that the use of tall, polygonal drums with double domes in Central Asia dates back to around 1350, or possibly earlier, predating the cylindrical drums that later became a hallmark of Timurid architecture. This evolution in dome construction, characterized by a growing emphasis on height, is notably reflected in the triple dome structure first seen in the Mausoleum of Gawhar Shad in Herat (1437–1438). The inclusion of a third, internal dome was a particularly Timurid innovation, wherein timber elements and spurs were employed to support the outermost, tallest dome. This multilayered dome construction technique underscores the Timurid ambition to achieve greater verticality, visibility, and monumentality, as tall drums would be visible from a distance, symbolizing imperial grandeur (Lisa Golombek and Donald Wilber, 1988:187).

In the context of the Bidar madrasa, the architectural elements reveal a mix of Central Asian and Iranian influences. The octagonal drum at the madrasa appears to have preserved its original form, while the cylindrical drum seems to have undergone several modifications. This variation in design suggests that the masons working on the project were likely more familiar with octagonal drums, which had a long tradition in central and southern Iran, rather than with the cylindrical drums typical of Timurid architecture. This is consistent with historical records that mention the presence of craftsmen from Shiraz and Kirman working in Bidar. Their signatures on various local buildings further confirm that Iranian building practices had a strong influence on the architectural landscape of Bidar, likely reflecting the patrons' and masons' closer connection to Iranian methods than to newer innovations from Central Asia. (HELEN PHILON, 2016: 81).

f. The functional uses of corner educational units and the iwan:

The architectural units located at the four corners of the spaces between the iwans in the Mahmud Gawan Madrasa are distinctively modeled

after traditional *madrasa* complexes. Each of these units consists of a central area covered by a low dome, encircled by four halls that open fully into the central space. Although this spatial organization bears a strong resemblance to Timurid architectural planning—particularly seen in the Khargird Madrasa in Herat—it has received little scholarly attention regarding its specific function. Scholars like O'Kane, Lisa Golombek, and Abasova Yusupova have explored Timurid madrasas extensively but have not focused on the intricacies of these architectural units (Anderson, J.N.D, 1951:83; Abasova, 2022:181-122; Lisa Golombek and Donald Wilber, 1988: 73-111; Bernard okane, 1982: 31-37; Javad Rajabi Mandi, 2022: 1611). In conclusion, they mentioned an account of the staff and the weather conditions in Central Asia. While it is logical to create interior spaces for teaching during the winter, this reasoning doesn't apply to the Indian Mahmoud Gawan Madrasa, as the weather there wasn't a problem in this regard.

Historical records from India, however, provide valuable insights into their function. The use of the *iwan* as an adaptable space for educational and religious purposes was central to the widespread adoption of this layout. The iwans in these structures were multifunctional, used not only for teaching but also for religious gatherings. For instance, historical texts describe the iwans as spaces endowed for the use of Sufis and scholars. (For more information about the waqf during the Timurid period. See: Maria E. Subtelny, *Endowment Activity in Khorasan*, book chapter, in Timurids in transition, brill, vol: 19, boston, 2007, pp. 181 – 220) Additionally, each iwan in the madrasa was assigned to specific groups of students, with the larger iwan at the Mahmud Gawan Madrasa reserved for students of the Hanafi school. The side units, though often overlooked, functioned as "subsidiary madrasas," a feature that aligns with the Mamluk architecture of Egypt and the Levant. Notably, the Sultan Hassan Mosque in Cairo (Doris, 2007:71), contemporaneous with the Timurid and Mahmud Gawan madrasas, features a similar courtyard arrangement. Inscriptions above the entrances to these units indicate their educational role, with each space designated for a different school of Islamic jurisprudence, reflecting the same pedagogical divisions

found in the Mahmud Gawan Madrasa (Anessa iqbal sabir, 2008:91; Anthony Welch, 1996: 165-190; Barni, 1862:99)

5. Conclusion. In conclusion, the Mahmud Gawan Madrasa stands as a remarkable example of Timurid architectural influence in the Deccan, showcasing the synthesis of Timurid spatial principles and local Indian techniques. The madrasa's four-iwan layout, strategic use of materials like stone, and innovative structural methods reveal the architect's mastery of balancing aesthetic appeal with structural integrity. Despite the challenges posed by the regional topography and local architectural traditions, the madrasa successfully integrates Timurid design elements, emphasizing the Bahmani rulers' desire to connect with the broader Islamic world. The madrasa's significance lies not only in its architectural grandeur but also in its role as a symbol of the Bahmani dynasty's cultural and political alignment with the Timurid Empire, reflecting a broader historical trend of cross-cultural exchanges between Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent.

Through innovative construction methods like the use of stone-cutting techniques mirroring Timurid brickwork; the adaptation of traditional iwans and domes; and the integration of indigenous craftsmanship in structural ties, the madrasa reflects both the Timurid legacy and the unique environmental and cultural conditions of the Deccan. The fusion of these styles, coupled with the madrasa's functional layout, illustrates a deep architectural dialogue between Central Asia and India, positioning the Mahmud Gawan Madrasa as a pivotal monument in the history of Islamic architecture in South Asia.

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السعي لتحقيق الريادة في النشر العلمي المتميز في المحتوى والمضمون والتأثير والمرجعية في مجالات منطقة الشرق الأوسط وأقطاره .

الرسالـــة

نشر البحوث العلمية الأصيلة والرصينة والمبتكرة في مجالات الشرق الأوسط وأقطاره في مجالات اختصاص المجلة وفق المعايير والقواعد المهنية العالمية المعمول بها في المجلات المُحَكَّمَة دوليًّا.

الأهـــداف

- نشر البحوث العلمية الأصيلة والرصينة والمبتكرة .
- إتاحة المجال أمام العلماء والباحثين في مجالات اختصاص المجلة في التاريخ والجغرافيا والسياسة والاقتصاد والاجتماع والقانون وعلم النفس واللغة العربية وآدابها واللغة الانجليزية وآدابها ، على المستوى المحلى والإقليمي والعالمي لنشر بحوثهم وإنتاجهم العلمي .
- نشر أبحاث كبار الأساتذة وأبحاث الترقية للسادة الأساتذة المساعدين والسادة المدرسين بمختلف الجامعات المصرية والعربية والأجنبية ٠
- تشجيع ونشر مختلف البحوث المتعلقة بالدراسات المستقبلية والشرق الأوسط وأقطاره ٠
- الإسهام في تنمية مجتمع المعرفة في مجالات اختصاص المجلة من خلال نشر البحوث العلمية الرصينة والمتميزة .

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- يشار إلى أن **الهوامش والمراجع في نهاية البحث وليست أسفل الصفحة ؛**
- يكتب الباحث **ملخص باللغة العربية واللغة الإنجليزية** للبحث **صفحة واحدة فقط** لكل ملخص ؛
- بالنسبة للبحث باللغة العربية يكتب على برنامج "**word**" ونمط الخط باللغة العربية **"Simplified Arabic"** وحجم الخط **14** ولا يزيد عدد الأسطر في الصفحة الواحدة عن **25** سطر والهوامش والمراجع خط **Simplified Arabic** حجم الخط 12 ؛
- بالنسبة للبحث باللغة الإنجليزية يكتب على برنامج **word** ونمط الخط **Times New Roman** وحجم الخط **13** ولا يزيد عدد الأسطر عن 25 سطر في الصفحة الواحدة والهوامش والمراجع خط **Times New Roman** حجم الخط 11 ؛
- (**Paper**) مقاس الورق (**B5**) 17.6 × 25 سم، (Margins) الهوامش **2.3 سم** يمينًا ويسارًا، **2 سم** أعلى وأسفل الصفحة، ليصبح مقاس البحث فعلي **(الكلام)** 13×21 سم. (Layout) والنسق: (Header) الرأس 1.25 سم، (Footer) تذييل 2.5 سم ؛
- **مواصفات الفقرة للبحث :** بداية الفقرة First Line = 1.27سم، قبل النص= 0.00، بعد النص = 0.00)، تباعد قبل الفقرة = (6pt) تباعد بعد الفقرة = (0pt)، تباعد الفقرات (مفرد single) ؛
- **مواصفات الفقرة للهوامش والمراجع :** يوضع الرقم بين قوسين هلالي مثل : (1)، بداية الفقرة Hanging = 0.6 سم، قبل النص=0.00، بعد النص = 0.00)، تباعد قبل الفقرة = 0.00 تباعد بعد الفقرة = 0.00، تباعد الفقرات (مفرد single) ؛
- **الجداول والأشكال:** يتم وضع الجداول والأشكال إما في صفحات منفصلة أو وسط النص وفقًا لرؤية الباحث، على أن يكون عرض الجدول أو الشكل لا يزيد عن 13.5 سم بأي حال من الأحوال ؛
- يتم التحقق من صحة الإملاء **على مسئولية الباحث** لتفادي الأخطاء في المصطلحات الفنية ؛
- مدة التحكيم 15 يوم على الأكثر، مدة تعديل البحث بعد التحكيم 15 يوم على الأكثر ؛
- يخضع تسلسل نشر البحوث في أعداد المجلة حسب ما تراه هيئة التحرير من ضرورات علمية وفنية ؛
- المجلة غير ملزمة بإعادة البحوث إلى أصحابها سواء نشرت أم لم تنشر ؛
- تعبر البحوث عن آراء أصحابها وليس عن رأي رئيس التحرير وهيئة التحرير ؛
- **رسوم التحكيم للمصريين 650 جنيه، ولغير المصريين 155 دولار ؛**
- **رسوم النشر للصفحة الواحدة للمصريين 25 جنيه، وغير المصريين 12 دولار ؛**
- الباحث المصري يسدد الرسوم بالجنيه المصري (بالفيزا) بمقر المركز (المقيم بالقاهرة)، أو على حساب حكومي رقم : **(9/450/80772/8) بنك مصر** (المقيم خارج القاهرة) ؛
- الباحث غير المصري يسدد الرسوم بالدولار على حساب حكومي رقم : **(EG710001000100000004082175917) (البنك العربي الأفريقي)** ؛
- **استلام إفادة قبول نشر البحث في خلال 15 يوم من تاريخ سداد رسوم النشر مع ضرورة رفع إيصالات السداد على موقع المجلة ؛**
- **المراسلات :** توجه المراسلات الخاصة بالمجلة إلى: merc.director@asu.edu.eg

السيد الدكتور/ مدير مركز بحوث الشرق الأوسط والدراسات المستقبلية، ورئيس تحرير المجلة
جامعة عين شمس– العباسية– القاهرة – ج. م.ع (ص. ب 11566)
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(وحدة النشر merc.pub@asu.edu.eg) (وحدة الدعم الفني technical.supp.mercj2022@gmail.com)

- ترسل الأبحاث من خلال موقع المجلة على بنك المعرفة المصري: **www.mercj.journals.ekb.eg**

ولن يلتفت إلى الأبحاث المرسلة عن طريق آخر.

محتويات العدد 107

عنوان البحث الصفحة

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يسر مركز بحوث الشرق الأوسط والدراسات المستقبلية صدور العدد **(107 – يناير 2025)** من مجلة المركز «**مجلة بحوث الشرق الأوسط**». هذه المجلة العريقة التي مر على صدورها حوالي 51 عامًا في خدمة البحث العلمي، ويصدر هذا العدد وهو يحمل بين دافتيه عدة دراسات متخصصة: (دراسات قانونية ،دراسات سياسية ،دراسات تاريخية، دراسات جغرافية، دراسات المكتبات والمعلومات، دراسات فنية، دراسات علم نفس، دراسات اجتماعية، دراسات اللغة العربية، دراسات لغوية) ويعد البحث العلمي Scientific **Research** حجر الزاوية والركيزة الأساسية في الارتقاء بالمجتمعات لكي تكون في مصاف الدول المتقدمة.

ولذا تَعتَبر الجامعات أن البحث العلمي من أهم أولوياتها لكي تقود مسيرة التطوير والتحديث عن طريق البحث العلمي في المجالات كافة.

ولذا تهدف مجلة بحوث الشرق الأوسط إلى نشر البحوث العلمية الرصينة والمبتكرة في مختلف مجالات الآداب والعلوم الإنسانية واللغات التي تخدم المعرفة الإنسانية.

والمجلة تطبق معايير النشر العلمي المعتمدة من بنك المعرفة المصري وأكاديمية البحث العلمي، مما جعل الباحثين يتسابقون من كافة الجامعات المصرية ومن الجامعات العربية للنشر في المجلة.

وتحرص المجلة على انتقاء الأبحاث العلمية الجادة والرصينة والمبتكرة للنشر في المجلة كإضافة للمكتبة العلمية وتكون دائمًا في مقدمة المجلات العلمية المماثلة. ولذا نعد بالاستمرارية من أجل مزيد من الإبداع والتميز العلمي.

والله من وراء القصد

رئيس التحرير

د. حاتم العبد