Invited paper 01

Shamsul Wares
Professor, Dept. of Architecture
University of Asia Pacific, Dhaka, Bangladesh

ARCHITECTURE OF MUZHARUL ISLAM
An Architecture in Response to the Spirit of the Land and the Time

Muzharul Islam was the pioneer modernist architect of Bangladesh whose works realized during 1950’s, 60’s, and 70’s established the foundation of contemporary architecture in this country.

Time and place, the two important ontological dimensions are relevant to all subjects and more so to architecture. The spirit of the land as well as the spirit of the time constitutes the basis for the understanding, realization and conceptualization of architecture. The Spirit of time is global and provides the concerns for appropriateness, technology, sustainability and progress. The spirit of the land is essentially local and provides the socio-cultural and political aspirations of the people, geological character, physical conditions and the seasonal variations. An appropriate architecture can only be developed on the basis of these concerns.

This paper attempts to show how these concerns were central to the thoughts and activities of Muzharul Islam and that his response to architecture was more rational than emotional, more thoughtful than enthusiastic but always positive.