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Formation of Regional Features of Libyan Mosques under the Influence of External and Internal Factors

Wykształcenie się cech regionalnych meczetów libijskich pod wpływem czynników zewnętrznych i wewnętrznych

Keywords: Libya, Islamic architecture, historical periods, mosques, Arabs, Ottomans, conservation activities

Słowa kluczowe: Libia, architektura islamska, okresy historyczne, meczety, Arabowie, Osmanowie, działania konserwatorskie

Introduction

Today, the Islamic world encompasses more than fifty Muslim countries. Despite the fact that Islamic heritage sites around the world are extremely numerous, its achievements and significance, such as those of the Islamic architecture of Libya, remain insufficiently covered. It should be emphasized that, in addition to the great architectural schools of the Islamic world—Arabic, Persian, Ottoman, Maghreb, Indian—there is a large number of local regional schools that have transformed the imported or borrowed features of one of the main schools in accordance with local climatic conditions and cultural and artistic traditions. In addition, many regional Islamic schools (including the Libyan school) were formed at the intersection of zones of many external influences, which in turn left an imprint on the architecture of mosques.

Compared to the Islamic architecture of other countries in the Muslim world, Libya's Islamic architecture is much less known, and as a result of current political developments in the country, most of the monuments in the east remain inaccessible for study and restoration. As a result of hostilities in the country, some monuments were damaged and destroyed.

Today there are attempts to draw the world's attention to Libya's historical and cultural heritage and its

preservation. At the same time, a large historical layer remained unexplored. There is a noticeable unevenness in the degree of research of mosques from different periods. Although mosques built in the tenth and eleventh centuries are important historical and cultural sites, the unexplored mosques of later times are also an important part of Libya's historical and cultural heritage.

Even in the thorough publications devoted to the architecture and art of Islam in the *Bibliography of Architecture, Arts and Crafts of Islam* [Creswell 1973] there is no mention of the Islamic architecture of Libya, except for some studies by Creswell that focus on Tripoli. It was not until 1984 that Creswell's publication was once again supplemented, and this led to a growing interest in Libya's Islamic heritage. Subsequently, all academic studies of Islam, not only in Libya but also in North Africa as a whole, including those published, were based, among other things, on the works of predecessors in the years 1969–1984. Research has become the starting point for so-called Islamic tourism, as this issue was discussed at the International Conference on Tourism in Islamic Countries (Tehran, Iran, 2007), and accordingly a number of recommendations for infrastructure management, foreign policy and tourism development were adopted, as well as relevant media. Here we should note a very specific use of architectural monuments, because Islamic tourism is very specific,

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Cytowanie / Citation: Sulayman M. Formation of Regional Features of Libyan Mosques under the Influence of External and Internal Factors. *Wiadomości Konserwatorskie – Journal of Heritage Conservation* 2023, 74:51–59

Otrzymano / Received: 10.12.2021 • **Zaakceptowano / Accepted:** 09.04.2023

doi: 10.48234/WK74LIBYAN

Praca dopuszczona do druku po recenzjach

Article accepted for publishing after reviews

and aims to promote Islamic heritage as the embodiment of Islamic identity by visiting mosques and other holy places and narratives about Islamic heritage, history, art and culture in general.

The main monuments of Islamic architecture, including in Libya, date back to between the seventh and eighteenth centuries.

It is especially important for us to study Libya's Islamic heritage from different periods, comparing historical and architectural periods, and thus show the transformation of the appearance of mosques over time. Significant mosques from different historical periods were selected for this purpose.

Academic sources were developed in the following areas:

- 1) degradation of cultural space, museification of monuments, preservation of architectural heritage [Petrušonis 2018, pp. 39–49; Pujia 2016, pp. 213–218; Spiridon, Sandu 2016, pp. 87–92; Spiridon et al. 2017]—analyses of problems that arise in the locations of historical Islamic heritage sites in Libya;
- 2) studies of the Islamic architecture of countries that influenced the Islamic architecture of Libya [Ivashko, Rezga 2019, pp. 143–147; Ivashko, Rezga 2020, pp. 80–84; Ivashko, Dmytrenko 2020, pp. 46–53; Ivashko et al. 2020a, pp. 113–124]—to conduct a comparative analysis between the architecture of mosques in Libya and other countries and the factors that affected their formation in different countries;
- 3) the influence of natural and climatic conditions on the transformation of borrowed styles [Ivashko et al. 2020b, pp. 101–108]—to justify the influence of local traditions on borrowed styles of Arabic and Ottoman architecture in Libya;
- 4) general restoration approaches, the concept of art in restoration measures [Gryglewski et al. 2020, pp. 57–88; Orlenko, Ivashko 2019, pp. 171–190].

Materials and methods

The objectives of this study led to the appropriate choice of general research methods, including historical analysis (to determine the effects of external factors on the formation and development of mosque architecture), culturological analysis (to analyze cultural and artistic specificities), ethnographic analysis (to analyze ethnographic features), and comparative analysis—to compare mosques from different periods, mosques of Libya and other countries and on this basis to determine the architectural periods of construction of mosques in Libya and the main architectural types of mosques.

Results and discussion

Natural, climatic and historical preconditions for the formation and development of Islamic architecture in Libya

As in most other countries of the Islamic world, the direct influence on the emergence and development of

the school of Islamic construction in Libya was influenced by both natural and climatic conditions, and historical events associated with the conquest and change of ruling dynasties.

Libya is located in northern Africa and has an area of almost 1.76 million km². The climate on the Mediterranean coast is mild, in most other areas mostly dry and hot with cool and humid winters. The largest city is the capital, Tripoli.

Traditionally, the main concentration of the population was observed near the coastline, as a very large part of the territory of modern Libya is formed by the Sahara Desert, which covers 90% of it. Adverse living conditions in most parts of the country led to constant military clashes over possession of the Mediterranean coast, as is known from history.

We can identify several major historical periods that have affected the changes in political and cultural development of the country.

The oldest is the period of the domination of Berber tribes, who settled in Libya along the Mediterranean coast from about 8th thousand BC and engaged in early agriculture. Thus, in the early historical period, the culture of Libya was formed under the direct influence of the Berber tribes, which explains its certain commonality with the culture of other Maghreb countries—Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia.

A particular period is associated with the domination of the ancient world by the Romans, and later the Greeks, which should also be seen as the influence of ancient traditions on the culture of Libya during this period. The ancient Roman period in the history of Libya is represented by the Roman ruins of Leptis Magna excavated in 1994 on the Mediterranean coast. The ancient Greek period is represented by the development of the city of Cyrene on the Mediterranean coast (listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site).

The next period is the so-called period of Islamic foreign rule—first by the Persians, then the Arabs and then the Ottomans. It should be noted that these three types of conquerors were characterized by their own cultural (and therefore architectural) traditions, so a more detailed analysis of the Islamic architectural school of Libya should analyze it for similarities with the schools of:

- Persia, based on a combination of Islamic and local pre-Islamic traditions;
- Arab countries, where the canonical type of the Arab multi-column mosque, which was the prototype of the prayer hall of the Prophet Muhammad;
- The Ottoman Empire, whose Islamic school was under some influence of Byzantine architecture in its territory. Ottoman rule lasted from the middle of the sixteenth century until 1815, when the Ottoman Empire was defeated in the Second Barbary War with the British and Americans.

The Arab conquerors arrived in North Africa in the first half of the seventh century AD. In 640 Amr ibn

al-As al-Sahmi captured the territory of Egypt, then in 641 he marched troops to Cyrenaica, where he established his base in Barka. In Tripoli, he defeated the Byzantine garrisons and in 642 took control of the city. Amr ibn al-As was followed by the troops of Uqba ibn Nafi, a historical figure seen as significant in Islamic history not only in Libya but in all Maghreb countries, who marched towards Fezzan in 663 and occupied Herma, later capturing the Roman province of Africa in 670 and established his military base in Kairouan (Kairavan), preparing for the further destruction of Byzantine Carthage.

By 647 AD, Arab troops had driven the Byzantines and the Berber tribes out of Libya. At the same time, adopting from them the canonical principles of the new religion of Islam, these peoples sought to preserve their own cultural and national identity, including in Islamic architecture, which embodied the syncretism of borrowed religious canons and modified local architectural traditions. Influenced by numerous external and local architectural and construction traditions, the Islamic architecture of Libya gradually formed into a well-established concept of design, styles and forms.

The period of Abbasid rule (750–1258) was an important period for the formation and development of the Islamic architectural school of Libya, when, along with the active construction of mosques, the development of education in schools near mosques was continued.

As a result of numerous hostilities, most of the Islamic monuments in the country date back to the Ottoman period. One example is the construction of the capital—the city of Tripoli, where many Ottoman buildings remain, the most famous of which is the enormous palace complex of Assaraya al-Hamra, which overlooks the entire city.

The history of Tripoli is a history of change of domination. First it was the rule of the Phoenicians, then the Byzantines, then the Ottomans. We do not touch on the Italian rule of the twentieth century, as we are limited to the periods associated with the development of Islamic architecture in the country.

Modern military operations have negatively affected the state of the historic buildings of the capital, many facilities within the old city are in disrepair, and some—in ruins.

A notable problem today is the arrangement of new transport networks, parking lots in historic cities, which changes their historically established buildings and negatively affects the preservation of authentic character. There have been cases of destruction of historical sites, even of high historical and cultural significance, for the sake of new modern construction, inconsistent with the historical environment. These processes are spontaneous due to the weak responsibility of monument protection institutions, which must monitor the preservation of historical and cultural heritage. So historic buildings are often completed with modern elements and additions, which negatively affects their authenticity (Assaraya al-Hamra Palace Museum, residential and public buildings in the old city of Tripoli).

Islamic architecture of Libya

According to archaeological and historical research, the Islamic period in Libya lasted from 641 (beginning of Arab rule) to 1911 (end of Ottoman rule). This period of time is accepted as the chronological limits of this research.

As already mentioned, the Islamic architectural school of Libya was formed at the intersection of the Maghreb (Berber), Ancient Roman/Byzantium, Arab, Persian and Ottoman traditions, so in a thorough analysis of Islamic monuments of Libya, including mosques, it is necessary to apply comparative analysis with the architecture of other Islamic countries to determine the commonality and regional features of architecture. In addition, when analyzing the architecture of Libyan mosques, it is necessary to simultaneously analyze the impact on the architecture of natural and climatic conditions in different parts of the country, as changes in external natural factors often contributed to certain changes in architecture. The traditional main building materials in Libya were natural stone and brick for masonry, gypsum and palm trunks for roof structures, as well as the formation of compact development.

The early Islamic period of Arab rule in Libya is represented by the city of Ajdabiya—this is the period of the Fatimid dynasty. This period includes the remains of forts in Kharouba, Medinat Buhindia and Cyrene, a round tower in Sidi Kherbish in Benghazi and two buildings in Cyrene and Derna.

The Fatimid Mosque is the Sahnun Mosque, built by Abu al-Qasim between 934 and 946. It has a typical structure of an Arab column mosque—a rectangular plan with a courtyard, measuring about 31 m in length and width, the main entrance is located in the center of the northwestern wall. The mosque has a flat roof with several domes. On the north side of the mosque is an octagonal minaret with the size of each side being about 1.5 m. The mihrab is traditionally accentuated by a semicircular niche and a horseshoe-shaped arch.

Another mosque of the Fatimids is the Ajdabiya Fatimid Mosque, which is also preserved in ruins and is dated to the tenth century (one of the inscriptions on display at the Cyrenaic Museum in Cyrenaica is dated 932). It also has the traditional scheme of an Arab column mosque, i.e., a rectangular plan with a courtyard surrounded by an arcade, decorating the facade of the sanctuary with massive pillars with semicircular niches, traditional for the Fatimids. The inner space is divided by columns so that the nave is located perpendicular to the qibla.

Near the city of Ben Jawwad there are the ruins of an ancient mosque in Umm Al Barakeem.

The small Libyan village of As-Sultan about 50 km east of Sirt, which was also known as the “ancient city of Sirt,” is an important Islamic center. This settlement was an important strategic site during the reign of the Fatimids due to its location between the three provinces of Libya: Cyrenaica, Tripolitania and Fezzan. Archaeological remains of a Fatimid mosque were found in Sirt itself in 1963–1964. The Sultan Mosque was



Fig. 1. Atiq Mosque, Awjila; source: <https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/07/21/historic-mosque-in-awjila-damaged/> (accessed: 23 XI 2021)
 Ryc. 1. Meczet Atiq, Awdżila; źródło: <https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/07/21/historic-mosque-in-awjila-damaged/> (dostęp: 23 XI 2021)

built around the tenth century and its dimensions in the plan were 41 m in length and 31 in width.

Remains of the ancient Albarouni Mosque in the Nafousa Mountains have been found in western Libya. In eastern Libya, in the Berber oasis of Awjila, an ancient mosque, the so-called Awjila Mosque, was also later destroyed. Islamic construction in Awjila was due to historical events, when the Arabs began hostilities against the Byzantine Empire in 632, conquered Alexandria in 643, Cyrenaica in 644, Tripoli in 646, and Fezzan in 663. The area around Awjila had been captured by Abdullah bin Saad bin Abi Al Sarh, and he was buried there. The Arab historian al-Bakri says that in the eleventh century there were already many mosques around the oasis.

The current Atiq Mosque (Fig. 1), otherwise known as the Great Mosque in the Jallow Oasis in Awjila in the Sahara Desert, in the Cyrenaica region in eastern Libya, was built a little later, in the twelfth century, although it is the oldest in the region. The area of the mosque is 400 m². It has a non-traditionally shaped roof that consists of twenty-one domes of adobe and limestone with small holes for light transmission and natural ventilation. The mosque was rebuilt in 1980 and renovated in 2006.

The ancient Atiq Mosque in the Old City of Ghadams is one of the city's twenty old mosques and one of the largest. It was built in 1258 using clay bricks and is modestly decorated. It is a rare example of an existing mosque of the pre-Ottoman period. Whitewashed outside and inside, thick walls keep the mosque cool even in the hot desert summer. The mosque was badly damaged during the Second World War, but was later rebuilt.

Mosques of the pre-Ottoman period have survived to the present mainly in the form of ruins. Instead, the Ottoman period of mosque construction in Libya (lasted from 1531 to 1815) is quite broad and it is worth identifying the most important of them.

The Murad Agha Mosque (Fig. 2) is located in Tajura, which has now become a suburb of Tripoli, about 15 km east of the capital. An Ottoman military base was located in Tajura at that time. There are also the ruins of Leptis Magna—the ancient Roman city. After the conquest of Tripoli in 1551, Murad Agha was appointed the first Ottoman *wali*, governor of the new Ottoman province on the southern shores of the Mediterranean. Initially, he planned to build a fortress in Tajura, but later changed his plans and built a mosque, which has survived to this day.

In the architecture of the mosque, Berber features are combined with ancient classical ones, as in the interior forty-eight marble columns that had been taken from the Roman ruins of Leptis Magna, 200 km east of Tripoli. The columns have traditional horse-shoe-shaped Maghreb arches that support the vaults. The minaret on the courtyard side also has features of Maghreb architecture.

Here we see an interesting fact, when in the early stages of domination the Ottoman governors did not build Ottoman-style mosques, as they would do later, but invited Maghreb architects and engineers who were familiar with the conditions of construction in the local climate and local building materials.

The Ottoman period includes the Amr ibn Al-Aas Mosque (also known as the Abu Qalaz Mosque) in Benghazi in the Cyrenaica region, which dates from the eighteenth century and is one of the oldest in the city. According to historical evidence, it was built in 1740 by members of the al-Barakat tribe, and the mosque was named after Abu Qalaz. In 1882, the Ottoman governor of Cyrenaica, Rashid Pasha, demolished the old mosque and in 1883 built in its place a new, central dome, with a round minaret with a conical end, which still exists today, but is in disrepair and is inoperable.

It is worth mentioning the mosques of the Arab and

Ottoman eras in the Old Town of Tripoli. The oldest is the al-Naqah Mosque, in addition to which the Muhammad Pasha Mosque, the Karamanli Mosque, the Mahmoud Mosque, the Darghut Mosque, the Sidi Salem Mosque, and the Gurji Mosque are mentioned. Some of the mosques are located close to the Mediterranean coast—the Darghut Mosque, the Muhammad Pasha Mosque, the Karamanli Mosque, the al-Naqah Mosque, a little further—the Sidi Salem Mosque, the Gurji Mosque, the Mahmoud Mosque. The palace complex of Assaraya extends directly to the coast.

The Al-Naqah Mosque is one of the few examples of Arab mosques of the early Islamic period, so it is especially valuable. The mosque was built during the time of the first Arab ruler of Tripoli, Amr ibn al-Aas. This mosque is located in the southeastern part of the old city near Finidqa Square in a narrow lane that departs from it, near Ahmed Pasha Qaramanli Mosque. It has a square plan and an area about 900 m², divided into square cells, each of which is topped by a simple-looking dome supported by columns taken from earlier, much older Roman buildings. The mosque has a total of thirty-five 5 m tall marble columns and forty-two small domes. The area of the courtyard is almost equal to the area of the mosque itself. The general architectural look is quite simple, unornamented. This mosque is often mentioned in sources as an example of early Islamic Libyan architecture.

The Gurji Mosque was built in 1834 by Mustafa Gurji, the head of the port of Tripoli. Located west of the Arch of Marcus Aurelius, the mosque, with its exquisite Islamic stone carvings and floral ornaments, is one of the finest examples of Ottoman Islamic architecture in Libya, despite its small size. The central entrance to the mosque is accentuated by a portal framed by intricate polychrome ceramic ornaments. The upper and lower galleries are decorated with ceramic tiles and geometric ornaments, columns, windows and mihrab—made of marble and inlaid with colored stones. The prayer hall is decorated with a mosaic floor of natural stone. The highlight of the interior is the imam's pulpit, a minbar decorated with marble and stone carvings. The mosque includes a school and the burial place of the founder and his family. In the years 1994–2005, a project for the restoration of the Gurji mosque complex was developed.

The Sidi Draghut Mosque is the first Ottoman mosque in Tripoli. It was built in 1561 (1560) by Darguth Pasha after his arrival as Governor of Tripoli in 1557. Previously, the site of the mosque was a Catholic church, and in accordance with Islamic tradition it was not destroyed, but made part of the mosque complex, so the complex has a non-traditional L-shaped plan, where there is a T-shaped prayer hall according to the plans of Anatolian mosques and the complex includes the former Church of the Hospitallers—a small, rectangular in plan with wooden beams that support a flat roof, to which during its transformation into part of the mosque on both sides added new masses. The reign of



Fig. 2. Murad Agha Mosque; source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f9/Murad_Agha_minerate-Trajoura-Libya.JPG (accessed: 23 XI 2021)

Ryc. 2. Meczet Murada Aghi; źródło: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f9/Murad_Agha_minerate-Trajoura-Libya.JPG (dostęp: 23 XI 2021)

Dragut Pasha was marked by the development of fortifications and the overall growth of Tripoli, as well as Islamic construction. He built a mosque named after him in the area near Bab al-Bahr in Tripoli. It is also the mosque-tomb where the founder was buried after he was killed in 1565 during the great siege of Malta. At the same time, the mosque currently does not look as it did in the 1560s, because in the early seventeenth century. Iskander Pasha reconstructed the mosque with the reconstruction of the minaret and the completion of the hammam.

In fact, it is not a separate building, but a complex inside a trapezoidal fence, which also includes a cemetery, which later spread to other mosques in the region. It has a courtyard with a fountain for ritual ablutions (*midha*) and is decorated with floral decor and stylized canonical decor, each of two side sections of approximately 438 m² consists of three parts covered by twelve round domes on ancient Roman columns, which fix the square in plan cells. The mosque has the status of *masjid jāmi* (congregational mosque), two mihrabs, near one of which is the burial of the founder and his family. Initially, the mosque had twenty-seven domes above the prayer hall, after the reconstruction in 1947 there were thirty-two of them. The mosque was inspected in 1921 by the Office of Monuments and Excavations during the Italian occupation and reconstructed. Dur-



Fig. 3. Al-Naqah Mosque; source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d9/Naga_Mosque_Exterior_Tripoli_Libya.JPG (accessed: 23 XI 2021)

Ryc. 3. Meczet Al-Naqah; źródło: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d9/Naga_Mosque_Exterior_Tripoli_Libya.JPG (dostęp: 23 XI 2021)

ing the Second World War, Tripoli was badly damaged, as was the mosque, and it was rebuilt in 1947 under the leadership of Ali Mohammed Abu Zayan, but with a departure from its pre-war appearance.

The location of the old mosques on the plan of Tripoli in the same scale allows us to compare their size in terms of plan. The smallest mosques are: from the Arab period—the al-Naqah Mosque (Fig. 3); from the Ottoman period—the Gurji Mosque, the Mahmoud Mosque, the Sidi Salem Mosque; the largest mosques of the Ottoman period—the Darghut Mosque and the Karamanli Mosque. Among them, all mosques are square in plan or close to a square, except for the Darghut Mosque, which is L-shaped in plan. Some mosques are located along the waterfront, and the entrances to others—from the side of secondary streets. Entrance from the waterfront and from the streets to the Darghut Mosque and the Karamanli Mosque; from secondary streets to the al-Naqah Mosque, the Muhammad Pasha Mosque, the Mahmoud Mosque; the Sidi Salem Mosque and the Gurji Mosque are located at the corners of streets.

This allows us to formulate the characteristics of Ottoman Islamic architecture in Libya: despite the preservation of common features of Ottoman architecture, it is adapted to local climatic conditions. The architecture of mosques of the Ottoman period combines the simplicity of domes and forms of minarets

and decoration with stone, marble and wood carvings. Ahmed Pasha Mosque, Darghut Mosque, Osman Pasha Mosque and others belong to the Ottoman period. In general, the Ottoman period was very positive for Islamic construction in Libya, as the Turks built many mosques with schools at them, as well as engaged in the development and strengthening of cities, built palaces, markets, houses.

It is worth mentioning that after the capture of Libya in 1551, the Ottomans were engaged in fortifying cities and rebuilding the mosques of some Christian churches, which is also a feature of the Islamic school of Libya. Thus, in the Old Town of Tripoli, the church of St. Leonard was turned into a mosque as part of Assaraya al-Hamra.

Characteristic features of Libyan Islamic architecture and its connection with other Islamic schools

Although the literature mentions six Islamic architectural periods in Libya, including the period of Italian colonization in the twentieth century, in our opinion, there were two such major periods—the Arab-Persian and the Ottoman, which were marked by a radical change in architectural and stylistic features, and within each period it is possible to define smaller periods.

The first major period is the so-called era of the early Islamic conquest of 642–1510 (the rule of Arabs, Berbers and local tribes). Mosques of this period are marked by a simplicity of forms and décor, the direct borrowing of the traditions of the multi-column Arab mosque, the use of local materials. From this period, almost no mosques have survived in their original form, they were either destroyed or rebuilt in the Ottoman period. This period includes two minor periods—the rule of Arab rulers and the rule of the Berber dynasties (this period includes the period of domination of the Berber military dynasty of the Almohads in the twelfth century). The most famous examples of mosques of the first period are the Sahnun Mosque (934–946) in the city of Ajdabiya and the al-Naqah Mosque in the southeastern part of the Old Town of Tripoli (according to some sources from the tenth and eleventh centuries).

According to legend, the first mosque was built on this site by the fourth caliph of the Fatimid Caliphate, Al-Mu'izz li-Din Allah (953–975). According to another legend, the construction of the al-Naqah Mosque is connected with the story of a camel loaded with gold, which was donated by Caliph al-Aziz Billah (according to the other version—his commander Jauhar al-Sakali) to the people of Tripoli to build a new mosque. Hence the popular name of the mosque—“The Camel Mosque.” There is a version of the mosque reconstruction by Safarday in 1019, as this date appears on the marble plaque found during the mosque’s restoration. At the same time, the question of the original date is still controversial.

K. Rezga in his research described in detail the Islamic period of the Almohad period in Algeria (1121–

1269) and argued that this period was marked by an emphasized religiosity of rulers, and hence the construction of new and the remodeling and decoration of old mosques [Ivashko, Rezga 2019, pp. 143–147]. This was a Berber ethnic military dynasty known since 1130, which quickly captured the territory of Morocco, and in 1145 began the conquest of Al-Andalus and turned Seville into its second capital [Ivashko, Rezga 2020, pp. 80–84]. This dynasty lasted until 1269, when their capital, Marrakech, was captured.

Thus, the al-Naqah Mosque is logical to compare with other buildings of the Almohad era—primarily with the fortresses in the Maghreb (Marrakech, Rabat, Tazi, Tlemcen) and Al-Andalus. According to K. Rezga, some features of the defensive architecture were transferred to the Maghreb mosques, where the method of allocating the main entrance with a horseshoe-shaped arch (derived from fortifications) spread. He singled out the following features of the Algerian mosques of the Almohad reign, which can be compared with the features of the architecture of the Al-Naqah Mosque [Ivashko, Rezga 2019, pp. 143–147]:

- dominance of the type of Arab column mosque with naves perpendicular to the qibla;
- application of a system of square in plan or cross columns with arches in the interior;
- presence of architectural elements of the Caliphate of Cordoba (corner arches, shell ornaments, palmettes);
- decoration of the mihrab modelled after the Grand Mosque of Cordoba in combination with a fairly simple interior;
- use of sequential arches;
- specific decor on niches and false niches, cross arches, inscriptions, palmettes.

Around 1610, the mosque underwent the last changes by adding new masses. In the final version, the area of the mosque is 282 m², it has thirty-two domes and has the status of *masjid jāmi* (congregational mosque). It was destroyed during the Second World War, but was later rebuilt.

The Atiq Mosque (otherwise known as the Great Mosque in the oasis of Jallow in Awjila in the Sahara Desert in the Cyrenaica region in eastern Libya) belongs to the early Islamic period. It has the status of *masjid jāmi*. It is a unique regional type of mosque, completely different from both the Maghreb and Ottoman types, but somewhat similar to the mosques of Ibadite cities (associated with the reign of the Persian dynasty Rostemids) Mzab—Ghardaïa, El-Atef, Bunura, Beni-Yezgen, Melika, Guerara (Fig. 4). Before the Fatimid dynasty, the Kharijites ruled most of the Maghreb from parts of Morocco, the Tlemcen Mountains in Algeria, the Sedrates, the capital of the Rostemids in Tahert, west of Tripoli in Libya, except for the coastal part.

As K. Rezga notes, if we analyze the view of Ghardaïa from afar, with the ancient system of defensive walls, we can note a certain resemblance to the



Fig. 4. Algeria. Ghardaïa. El Guerara Mosque, 2018; photo by K. Rezga

Ryc. 4. Algieria, Ghardaïa, meczet El Guerara, 2018; fot. K. Rezga

fortress cities of the Almoravids, which indicates the authentic origins of Mozabit culture and architecture. This conclusion is important for this study, as it indicates the commonality of certain traditions in the construction of mosques of the Almoravid period in Libya and the Maghreb, Libya and the Mzab Valley in Algeria.

The construction of the Atiq Mosque in Libya used 40 cm thick masonry that consisted of unfired bricks, limestone and palm branches, its area is 400 m², the mosque has twenty-one conical domes with openings for lighting and ventilation. The building has nine entrances, a multi-column interior space where arches rest on columns. Many researchers adhere to the version that the mosque was built by Ibadites.

The second period is the Ottoman one, when the Arabic mosque type was replaced by the Ottoman domed mosque. At the final stage of the Ottoman period, a certain eclecticism appeared in the architecture of mosques. This minor stage, called the Karamanli era (1711–1835), was characterized by a combination of the Ottoman style with features of European and local architecture, which is felt in the mosques of this period (for example, in the Gurji Mosque). At the end of this period, mosques were decorated with ornaments, the minbar, minaret and columns are decorated with ceramics and marble. This is illustrated by the example of the Ahmed Pasha Qarmanli Mosque, located in the south-eastern part of Tripoli's Old Town at the entrance to the central market, near Bab al-Manshiyah, named after the Turkish governor who was buried here. In fact, it is a magnificent memorial mosque complex with madrassas and tombs of the founder's family. The multi-domed (twenty-five small domes) square mosque with three entrances, a courtyard, with a graceful octagonal minaret, with columns with arches and semicircular windows, was built in 1737 (1736) and is considered one of the most magnificently decorated Ottoman mosques. Although the literature claims that it has features of Moorish architecture, in our opinion, this is not the case, and here we can draw some analogies with mosques in eastern Algeria, which also felt



Fig. 5. Algeria, Ali Bitchin Mosque, 2018; photo by K. Rezga
Ryc. 5. Algieria, meczet Alego Bicziny, 2018; fot. K. Rezga

the influence of Ottoman traditions. As for Maghreb architecture, it is too magnificent, decorated, with a large courtyard (Maghreb mosques may not have a courtyard at all), Maghreb minarets are always simple, without finishes (due to seismic conditions), the color of red brick.

In 2014, during the civil war, the mosque was looted, and its ceramic and marble decoration was damaged, and later it was rebuilt.

At the end of the Ottoman period, the architecture of mosques acquired the features of eclecticism, as evidenced by the example of the Gurji Mosque in Tripoli (1833–1834). The area of the mosque is 16 m², the plan is square, with three entrances to the courtyard through a nine-columned portico. The mosque has sixteen small domes and an octagonal minaret, the tallest in the city and the only one with two balconies to call the muazzins. To the right of the entrance is a lobby with the tomb of the founder and his family. The interior is decorated with marble columns from Italy, ceramic tiles from Tunisia and stone carvings from Morocco.

In some cases, numerous Ottoman reconstructions of mosques of earlier periods led to the eclecticism of their architecture and a combination of disparate features. An example is the central-domed Atiq Mosque in Benghazi in the Cyrenaica region with the status of congregational mosque. It is the oldest in the city and was originally built by Sheikh Abd al-Sami al-Qadi in 1577, but was repeatedly rebuilt and redeveloped during the Ottoman period, then renovated in the 1970s, its old minaret was demolished and a new one was built.

We will not discuss Islamic architecture in the twentieth century, because during the Italian colonization between 1911 and 1943, many mosques were destroyed, especially at the beginning of this period, and the new ones under construction had a flat roof with a central dome.

Conclusions

It is easy to see the common trends in the formation of the Islamic school of Libya and Algeria: it can be argued that the Islamic architectural school of Algeria

was formed at the intersection of many cultures and the mosque became the main element in the formation of these features (Fig. 5). Such multiculturalism of the Algerian Islamic school is emphasized in many studies. The same is true for Libyan architecture, where there is a similarity with the Maghreb and Ottoman type mosques in Maghreb countries.

Based on the study of historical factors and features of the formation of Islamic architecture of Libya, we can conclude about the multiculturalism of the Islamic architectural school of Libya, which is clearly seen in the mixture of imported and local architectural and construction traditions. From period to period, the design of roofs changed—from flat roofs, a combination of flat roof and dome, to vaulted roofs, and from mosques with central domes to mosques with several domes. Including the period of Italian rule, mosques were mostly multi-domed, and the height of the roofs of mosques built before the Italian colonization was low compared to the roofs built during and after this period.

There are four main types of mosques:

- the Maghreb mosque type, but with certain Ottoman modifications and the use of interior elements from ancient ruins (the Al-Naqah Mosque, the Tajura Mosque—in the case of the Tajura Mosque, although the client was an Ottoman ruler, the construction was carried out by Maghreb architects);
- a purely regional type of mosque for desert climate conditions (an analog of the regional type of the Ibadite mosque type in the Mzab Valley in Algeria—the Atiq Mosque);
- two variations of the Ottoman mosque type—simpler and less decorated (the Darghut Pasha Mosque) or oversaturated with rich décor, the final stage of the Ottoman period (the Karamanli Mosque);
- an eclectic mosque type, due to the multiplicity of layers due to remodeling (the Atiq Mosque in Benghazi).

Despite the significant influence of Maghreb architecture, these features in the architecture of Libyan mosques have been layered, including the Ottoman period, so it is not fair to draw a conclusion about the Maghreb Islamic School of Architecture: more expression of the regional type of Maghreb mosque in Morocco and Algeria than in Tunisia, especially in Libya, away from the centers of its origin, and the similarity between the massing compositions of mosques in Morocco and Algeria is greater than in Algeria and Tunisia, due to the common ruling dynasties and direct influences of Al-Andalus.

Libyan Islamic heritage is an integral part of the national culture, and its preservation has currently become a significant matter. This problem is especially acute in the capital, Tripoli, where the chaotic intrusion of modern glass architecture, the intensification of uncontrolled urban tendencies and the weak activity of monument conservation services can lead to the loss of authenticity of the historical environment. The success

of the actions depends on the development and compliance with the mechanism of administrative management of monument protection activities (institutional support), participation in the discussion of experts and the public, economic support of projects by government agencies, private organizations and individuals. Such programs need to be developed for individual historic sites and groups of sites and historic areas.

Before any measures to intervene in the established environment of the historic city are taken, it

is necessary to determine the value of construction, determine the factors of external influence on urban processes (environmental, climatic, social, economic) and architectural features. Despite the need for modern architecture, the problem of preserving and reviving national architectural traditions and understanding that some forms of modern architecture may not be suitable for local hot arid areas and places of concentrated settlement of conservative groups remains relevant.

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Abstract

The article analyzes the genesis of the Islamic architectural school of Libya as a basis for the protection and restoration of historic mosques. The main historical periods related to Islamic and mosque architecture are presented. The main mosques in different parts of the country are analyzed and based on this the four main types of mosques in Libya are presented along with their characteristics. The problems of local monument protection legislation are highlighted and ways to solve these problems are suggested. It is emphasized that Libyan heritage is an important component of so-called Islamic tourism.

Streszczenie

Artykuł analizuje genezę libijskiej szkoły architektury islamskiej jako podstawę dla ochrony i rewaloryzacji zabytkowych meczetów. Przedstawiono główne epoki historyczne związane z architekturą islamską oraz architekturą meczetów. Przeanalizowano główne meczety w różnych częściach kraju i na tej podstawie zaprezentowano cztery główne typy meczetów libijskich. Nakreślono kwestię lokalnych przepisów konserwatorskich oraz zasugerowano sposoby rozwiązywania związanych z nimi problemów. Podkreślono, że libijskie dziedzictwo jest ważnym komponentem tzw. turystyki islamskiej.