

Al-Ateeq Mosque in Al-Bilad district in Darnah (1081 AH / 1670 AD)**Architectural and Archaeological study****Prof. Amal Ahmed El-Emary**

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Atiq Mosque is located in the center of the old city of Darna. It has four borders: from the west is Al-Thawra Square (formerly the Municipality Square), the east is the alley of Atiq, the north side is the El-Zalam (dark) market and the south are the neighboring residential facilities.

Origin and date of construction:

The mosque was built by Haj Mohamed son Haj Mahmud Bey, born in Derna. He was the son of Mahmud Bey al-Qarmanli who was the highest official of Jabal al-Akhdar (Darna and Benghazi). He led the military campaign against the city of Darna in 1066 AH (1655 AD) known as Habib campaign, which later became part of the city's history and heritage. Mohamed Bey becomes the highest official of Derna and Benghazi in the late Ottoman period I (1081-1108 AH / 1670-1696 AD).

While several sources mentioned that the mosque was established in (1101 AH / 1689 AD), it is likely, according with the above mentioned, the beginning of construction in the year 1081 AH / 1670 AD, and the completion of construction in 1101 AH / 1689 AD.

Naming:

This mosque was named the Atiq mosque because it is the oldest mosque in the city of Derna. It was also known as the Bey Mosque in relation to its origin, Mohamed Bey. It was also called the Great (Al-kaber) Mosque because of its large area, size and grandeur and the largest city landmarks. It was also known as EL Bilad - mosque because it was located in the El Bilad city.

Architectural description of the mosque: Planning of the mosque:

The mosque is followed by the non-traditional mosque style (the hall with lounges but without the nave). It is a rectangular area of 30 m x 32 m in size. It has four facades: western facade (the main) that opens on the Thawra Square (the former municipal square) and the eastern facade that opens on the alley of Atiq and the northern facade that opens on Al-Zalam (dark) market. The southern facade is bordered by neighboring residential buildings.

West facade

West facade is the main facade, with a length of 32 m, open on the Thawra Square (the municipality previously), and is currently two entrances, the main entrance at the northern end, and the second at the southern end of the facade, there are before them degree of stairs.

The height of this facade is 6 m. This facade extends south of the main entrance and opens two levels of opening: the lower level has a door opening with a motor tied that was originally in a semicircular tied. On each side of the entrance opening are opened two windows with semi-circular tied, and covered by metal columns.

The upper level has opening seven of rectangular windows like the openings of arrows with dimensions (15 cm x 40 cm)

It is clear from the archival photographs that this facade had a single entrance opening crowned by a half circle, there are before it several of stairs, and the windows were rectangular in shape with doorstep surrounded by prominent stone frames.

This facade, as shown by the archival photographs, was moved in by a cement-built porch. This porch was removed during the restoration of the mosque in 2002.

East facade

The length of this facade is 32 meters, opening on the Atiq alley, and consists of two levels of openings; the lower level has a rectangular door opening with doorstep with dimensions (2.50 m × 1.60 m)

It is followed in southern direction, the facade of the tomb of Mohamed Bey, which opens on the courtyard leading up to the mosque. This facade faces the north from the modern building. The upper level has the opening seven with rectangular windows like the openings of arrows with dimensions (15 cm x 40 cm).

It is clear from the archival photographs that this facade on the north side has the rectangular porch, which is covered by a knotted arch consisting of five joint, the middle of which is the widest. It is based on four columns and there are inside the courtyard of the mosque. It included a group of tombstones may be come back to family's Mohamed Bey, And workers who participated in the construction of the mosque, this tombstone was removed during the restoration and maintenance in 1988 and was included within the area of the mosque.

The east side of this old-fashioned facade was located outside the area of the mosque in Al-Atiq alley, it was a rectangular area with dimensions (5.90 m × 3.70 m) with a rectangular entrance opening with an opening for illumination and ventilation.

South facade

The length of this facade is 30 m, height 6 m, and consists of two levels, the lower level, has two window openings joint with a semi-circular and covered with metal columns. And opened at the top level six rectangular windows, vertical openings, similar to the openings of arrows with dimensions (15 cm x 40 cm)

North facade:

The length of this facade is 30 m, height 6 m, open on Al-Zalam (dark) market, consisting of two levels, the lower level opening with a rectangular entrance opening joint with a semicircle. And at the top level has six vertical rectangular window openings, similar to the openings of the arrows with dimensions (15 cm x 40 cm).

It is clear from the archival photographs that a group of shops were attached to this facade to become part of this market. The center of the entrance is an entrance opening joint with semicircular joints, which leads to a long corridor (3 × 16 m) leading into the mosque.

On both sides of the corridor are a group of commercial shops that have been exploited in the Business of Al-Zalam (dark) market. The minaret located on the eastern side of this facade.

Entrance:

Located at the north end of the western facade, the main entrance is a door opening with a 2.80 m x 1.60 m joint with as motor joint, a door opening with two shutters of modern wood.

Minaret:

It is located on the eastern side of the northern facade and on the north side of the courtyard. It is separated from the mosque. Its height is 15 meters above the ground. The entrance of the minaret is a rectangular opening of 0.70 × 1.70 m, crowned with joint as a semicircular with wooden door. The minaret is ascended through a 35-degree staircase, with 1 m wide of each stair and height of each stair is 0.20 m, and the stairs are spiral wraps around a cylindrical shaft with diameter 0.30 m.

It consists of a square base with a length of 4 m and a height of 5 m. It extends to the top of the mosque surface without any decoration. Each of the four sides of the mosque has rectangular vertical windows for lighting, ventilation and lighting of stairs. The windows are lined with semi-circular joints that specific simple ornament and ends in the four corners with the shape of a triangle with its head down and its base up to turn the square shape into an octagon where the first floor of the minaret is.

The first floor: the octagonal, with a length of 1.22 m and a height of 9.80 m. It is free of decoration. Each side of its eight ribs is opened with a rectangular joint, crowned by a hollow joint with a rectangular window opening for illumination and ventilation.

This corridor is followed by a corridor resulting from the retreat of the third floor of the minaret. It was replaced by the porch. The muezzin stands and surrounded by a handrail of octagonal wood. This corridor surrounds the minaret with a cylindrical shape at a height of 3.90 m. A conical top of height 2 m in the shape of the octagonal tops of the Ottoman minarets (Pencil), ending with the metal stand and the crescent (drawing 15)

Inside the mosque: (drawings 16-17 Figure 4)

It is a rectangular area of approximately 23 x 29 m in size, his construction is similar to the non-traditional mosque style (the hall with lounges but without the nave.), with 30 columns of marble with a circular scope with a diameter of 30-50 cm and a height of about 5 meters (drawing 18) which brought from ancient buildings, some of them Corinthian and some other Ionian and the last are periodic in addition to the crowns (bells), and there are 26 large stone pillar (shoulder) built into the walls of the mosque, divided the mosque to seven corridors and six vertical tiles and parallel to the wall of the Qibla (the direction of Mecca).

In the top, there are vertical semi-circular joints parallel to the qibla wall that divided the surface into forty-two square areas. Each area is covered with a shallow dome (in the Aghlabids style), with a diameter of between 3.30 and 3.60 cm. It is based on the corner niches resulting from the parallel and cross legs (columns), which is simple and completely devoid of openings and any decorations.

The northern part of the mosque (gate) is built of concrete with length 12 m and 3 m wide. And rise from the floor of the mosque at a distance of 2.5 m (8), such as those still in the Dargut Pasha mosque in Tripoli.

Two levels of openings for illumination and ventilation were opened in the mosque. The first level consisted of rectangular window openings that were covered with wooden columns, two in the southern wall, four in both the western and eastern walls and two in the northern wall.

In top level, there are windows opening with dimension (15 x 40 cm) with semi-circular joints covered with wooden columns, seven in each of the eastern and western walls, six in both the northern and southern walls, and the center of the southern wall direction of the mihrab.

The entrance to the mosque is through five entrances, two in both the western and northern walls, and one in the eastern wall.

In 1988, maintenance of the mosque was carried out, where these domes were covered with a layer of cement, resulting in the blocking of limestone and tova stones, in the domes which was constructed of the mosque.

The mihrab (a hollow place in a mosque, in which a sheikh speech)

It is a hollow with joint as the shape of a horseshoe without any decoration, with a 90 cm-deep, 1.60 m wide, and 2.25 m height, with two limestone pillars, both of which are Moroccan crown is largely a Roman crown compound, except that the paper of plants used in the implementation of the crown is smooth and unbroken from the middle.

The mihrab facade has a rectangular frame of limestone, and a smooth body interior. The architect was careful to place the mihrab in the center of the qibla wall, cutting one of the built-in pillars in the middle of the wall, which appeared to be truncated in the lower part.

There is a rectangular entrance of 30 cm x 20 cm in the east of the mihrab, which was designated as a safe for the preservation of the hair of the Prophet's head.

Minbar (a low stage that you stand on when you are making a speech) (drawing 30)

It located in the east of the mihrab, which is made of wood. It is one of the most important mosques in Libya. It represents a wonderful wooden masterpiece decorated with geometric, vegetative and Graphic writing decoration that reflects the artist's taste and creativity in the sculpture of this magnificent masterpiece.

The Minbar (pulpit) consists of a chest of 1.60 meters and a width of 80 cm, one step ahead of it. The middle of the chest is a door opening, jointed as shape of the horseshoe. The decoration is decorated with geometric motifs of semi-circular motif distributed on whole door, the legs of the joints are decorated with a shell-shaped is similar to shell decoration, and the cochta is decorated with vegetal motifs of a vein within an ornate area. Above of door is covered with a wooden fill with the Basmalah (the name of Allah, most merciful and gracious) written on it, and this inscription is mentioned

Graphic writing decorations, in the first form, seven patterns are decorated with vegetal motifs executed in a pattern of colors, and the chest ends with a set of opening with decorative units. The opening of the door led to eight degrees, a wooden ladder ascending to the speech of the khateeb, which leads to a conical top.

The Minbar (pulpit) was decorated with wonderful geometric motifs. Each feather was divided into five square fillings, six rectangular fillings and two fillings in the shape of a right-

angled triangle, one at the top of the handrail and the other at the bottom. Each of these fillings consisted of a group of small wood executed as the shape of the cartel forms regular geometrical shapes.

The rectangular fillings were carried out in one form in the form of Spokes, which extends from the top and bottom of the geometric decorations of the starry dish surrounded by a strip of plant decoration.

The handrails have geometric motifs that implemented in a manner of emptying in addition to other fillings and the Al-Rawda door, which is decorated with an (Al Maaqly) ornamental decoration.

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