

Islamic Arches Are Source of Contemporary Architectural Creativity at the Sheikh Zayed Mosque in Abu Dhabi

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Abstract:

Architecture of mosques has been associated with the pillars of faith until the spiritual relationship between man and God has been confirmed, with all its moral and material meanings in a distinctive architectural character. Many unique architectural creations have been introduced throughout the Islamic civilization until our present times and many styles and forms have appeared and maintained the essence of the religion. The building of mosques in far distance of Asia is different in its architecture than that in the far west. Also mosques in Egypt do not look like a mosque in Damascus or Cordoba. It is the truth that has emerged as a result of the influence of design of the mosque according to its surroundings so as to acquire the spirit of the spatial place in order to create a strong link between the mosque and the external buildings. The mosque architecture has developed significantly due to many inspirations of the environment and the vocabulary of ancient and modern architecture, leading to changing in some religious architecture elements in terms of form and content, to highlight the aesthetic meaning of the cultural identity in Arab societies. Despite the civilization and communication, means of development as well as the rapid social and economic transformations, the architecture becomes the mirror that reflects the contributions of progress, development and change as well as the impacts of thought and perception streams and global behavior. Therefore, UAE has been interested in the establishment of mosques across its cities and regions, which exceeded 4000 mosques, and has promoted and enhanced their religious and cultural roles, using all the potentials and dimensions of modern technologies, taking into account the philosophy of modern architecture, as in the mosque of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, Sheikh of the United Arab Emirates, which is considered as one of the finest and largest mosques in the world in the present era. It is also a religious architecture edifice that simulates in its design the reciprocal relationship among the elements of Islamic architecture and the natural environment features, while taking care of the functional aspect of each architectural element and maintaining the intellectual philosophical framework that exists in the formation of the arches of this mosque in an architectural system in which the architectural element is associated with the nature. Thus, the arches in the Sheikh Zayed Mosque are architectural phenomena in which the components of many civilizations combine in one modern architecture mold which needs a research and interpretation to identify the dimensions of this architectural phenomenon, because it is a strong physical evidence that the elements of religious architecture keep pace with the modern age culture, so that the national and global competitions continue to achieve the contemporary architectural creativity.

Keywords:

Islamic Arches, the system Contemporary Architectural Creativity, the Sheikh Zayed Mosque in Abu Dhabi.