

Style Analysis and Interior Design Renovation Study for Al Othman Mosque in Kuwait: Eclectic Style

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Abstract:

Interior Designers shall be able to identify the style of buildings when starting a renovation project. Accordingly, this research illustrates that knowledge of eclectic design styles is essential to the success of buildings rehabilitation, especially for those projects completed in the mid-20th century. The study shows that eclectic design styles are common in an open, global city, especially at certain periods, and where materials and techniques are scarce. Thus, like many modern buildings built in the mid-twentieth century, Abdullah A. Al Othman Mosque, located in the Hawally district in the state of Kuwait, employed an eclectic style intentionally or unintentionally. The researcher found many elements within the projects that belong to the Islamic, Victorian, Tuscan, modern, and Art Deco styles. The paper gives an overview of the project, describes the elements that make up an Islamic Mosque, defines in a broad sense the eclectic style, and outlines its benefits, especially to Interior design works.

This study is qualitative and descriptive, based on data collection, and aims to construct a theoretical framework. It seeks to build an understanding of the formal structure of the interior design of the building. It took Al Othman Mosque as a case study and analyzed its Interior design elements specifically within the prayer room, in order to identify its style. The analysis was part of a renovation project that aims to renovate the mosque to its original condition at the time of opening in 1958.

This paper confirms that designers may resort to eclectic style in modern projects, and in places where the available materials are scarce. The value of eclectic style lies in the freedom it gives to designers and builders. Designers may arrive at successful projects using the eclectic style by selecting modest materials and colors.

Keyword:

Interior Design – Renovation – Eclectic Style – Mosques

ملخص البحث:

تعد خطوة تحديد طراز المشروع من أهم الخطوات التي يمر بها المصمم عند البدء بدراسة مشاريع إعادة التأهيل. وإن هذا البحث يؤكد على أهمية الطراز الانتقائي لنجاح مشاريع إعادة الترميم. وخاصة للمشاريع التي أنشئت في منتصف القرن العشرين. إن هذا البحث يظهر أن استخدام الطراز الانتقائي دارج في المدن المعولمة والمنفتحة، حيث تتوفر مواد تستورد من أقطاع مختلفة. لا سيما في فترات معينة وعندما تكون المواد وتقنيات البناء محدودة. ويرى الباحث بأن مسجد المرحوم عبدالله عبداللطيف العثمان الواقع في منطقة حولي في دولة الكويت، ككثير من المباني الحديثة والذي تم بناءها في حقبة الخمسينيات والستينيات، قام بتوظيف الطراز الانتقائي قصداً أو دون قصد. وقد وجد الباحث في مسجد العثمان عناصر ذات طرز إسلامية وفكتورية توسكانية وحديثة ومن طراز الأرت ديكو. إن هذا البحث يعطي صورة عامة عن المشروع، ويشرح العناصر

المكونة للمساجد الإسلامية بشكل عام، ويقدم تعريفاً عاماً عن الطراز الانتقائي ويشرح مميزاته وبالتحديد فيما يخص أعمال التصميمات الداخلية.

إن هذه الدراسة كيفية ووصفية، قائمة على جمع المعلومات لبناء إطار نظري. وتسعى الدراسة لفهم بنية التصميم الداخلي للمشروع، ولذلك اتخذت الدراسة حالة مسجد العثمان كعينة تعبر عن الظاهرة، وقام الباحث بتحليل عناصر المسجد الأصلية وتحديداً قاعة الصلاة الرئيسية حتى يتمكن من تحديد طرازه. وقد كانت أعمال التحليل جزءاً من مشروع إعادة تأهيل المسجد وإعادته للوضع الذي كان عليه في عام ١٩٥٨م.

وحيث أن هذا البحث يؤكد بأنه بإمكان المصممين اللجوء للطراز الانتقائي ضمن المشاريع الحديثة، وفي الأماكن التي تندر فيها المواد وتقنيات البناء. كما يؤكد البحث بأن قيمة الطراز الانتقائي تكمن في مدى الحرية التي يقدمها هذا الطراز للمصممين والبنائون. وأنه بإمكان المصممين أن يصلوا إلى مشاريع ناجحة باستخدام الطراز الانتقائي من خلال توظيف المواد البسيطة والألوان الهادئة.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

التصميم الداخلي – إعادة التأهيل – الطراز الانتقائي – المساجد

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to document the design process for the renovation of the Al Othman Mosque, one of the most important modern buildings built in Kuwait in the 1950s—in the era of growth and urban renaissance.

This article will focus on the interior design portion of the project. It aims to highlight the importance of the project in Kuwait and features examples of the first modern buildings completed during the country's modernization phase. In addition to its religious and cultural values as a community hub, the authors emphasize the building's design significance as an example of a modern Kuwaiti building.

This article also emphasizes the importance and utility of eclectic style. It shows how eclectic design styles are expected in an open, global city with scarce materials and methods. Besides, the research shows that knowledge of eclectic design styles is essential to the success of renovation projects, especially those completed in the mid-20th century. The eclectic design style is valuable because it allows architects and designers to integrate different themes and elements freely incorporate different themes and elements freely. To demonstrate this point, we illustrate here that Al Othman Mosque is an example of the use of eclectic style as it encompasses Islamic, Tuscan, Victorian, modern, and Art Deco styles.

This paper outlines the research problem and methodology, applying the descriptive method to analyze the phenomenon and establish specific findings and conclusions. To fully describe the project, we begin with a discussion of the background of the project and explain the formal structures of the Mosque in Islam, as well as describe the specific significance of the Al Othman Mosque as a design project.

Research problem:

Based on the researcher's experience and to address the project requirements—to renovate Al Othman Mosque to its original condition—the first step a designer must take is to identify the design style of the building. During this study, the author faced various signs and motifs and could not identify a critical, pivotal style for the building. The absence of a comprehensive style posed a significant challenge for the design team. Due to the scope of this research, which is

limited to the Interior Design aspect of the project, we will seek to cover only specified Mosque's elements, for instance, the dome, mihrab, main gate, lighting, columns, flooring, ceiling, and minbar, and minaret.

Research Objectives:

- Discuss the significance of the eclectic style in Interior Design.
- Identify the utility of the eclectic style in young states like Kuwait.
- Confirm that Al Othman 'Mosque's design followed the eclectic style, intentionally or unintentionally.

Methodology:

This study is both qualitative and descriptive. It seeks to build an understanding of the formal structure of the interior design of the building. The findings are based on the author's analysis of collected data which is non-numerical. The research aims to accurately and systematically describe the project and answer the outlined research questions. To cite Nassaji (2015, n. d), "the goal of descriptive research is to describe a phenomenon and its characteristics." This research concerns what rather than how or why something has happened. Therefore, observation and survey tools are often used to gather data (Ibid).

The qualitative research methodology was considered the most appropriate method for this exploratory study. The case study approach was also chosen in particular to gather the maximum amount of data targeted at describing existing conditions and design of Al Othman Mosque. According to Yin (2014, n. d), case studies can be categorized into taking three approaches: Explanatory, exploratory, and descriptive. These approaches provide answers to the research questions of how and why.

This study is undertaken by using the descriptive-analytic methodology to distinguish what is the original essence of style in the Al Othman Mosque (See Figure 1). Accordingly, the main object of this study is to analyze the interior elements of the prayer room to define a distinct style that would guide and coordinate the renovation process. The information is gathered by taking pictures and observing the prayer room's interior design via several mosque visits. Based on the analysis for the data collection, the mosque interior rooms elements (mihrab, dome, columns, main gate, windows, lighting, flooring, and walls, ceiling) would be renovated with modern and updated materials, preserving the original theme that was designed in 1958.

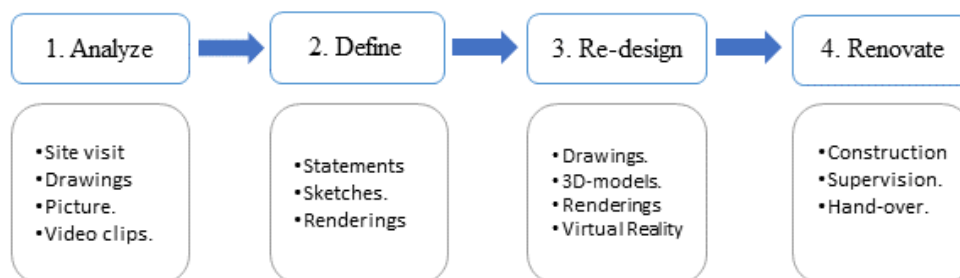


figure 1. study, design, and construction process of al othman mosque. (author. 2022).

The Mosque in Islam

Mosques are important Islamic monuments. They are the primary place of worship for Muslims and have been since the early years of Islam. Quba Mosque is the first Mosque established and located on the outskirts of Medina in today's Saudi Arabia. Shortly after, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) built his Mosque, Main Mosque of Medina, quickly becoming the center of the newly established Islamic state. Since then, Islam has spread worldwide, and mosques have been built in many places.

Moreover, mosques took many shapes but always maintained their inherent structure. Mosques are the focal point of Islamic communities and serve as a place of worship, education, and social gathering. Mosques are often seen as a symbol of faith and are a place to celebrate religious events and festivals. They provide an essential platform for Muslims to connect with their faith and culture and to develop relationships with other Muslims. Mosques are essential for the well-being of Muslim communities, as they provide a safe and welcoming environment for them to come together, learn, and practice their faith (Rasdi, 2010). “Etymologically, masjid is *isim makân* (doing-place noun) that is the derivation of the Arabic word, *sajada yasjud sujûd*, which means place of prostration; the place where someone *wadha'ajabhah 'alâ al-ardh* (puts his forehead to earth). The word that is almost equal to masjid is *mushallâ* (place of prayer)” (Kamil and Darajat, 2019, 40).

Mosques are among the most important Islamic buildings, imbued with various unique characteristics. Functionally, it is a place of worship, socially, it is a place of gathering and discussion, aesthetically, it is an architectural object that possesses beauty and inspires creativity. (Al Naim, Al-Ajmi, Al-Huneidi, and Khattab, 2022, n.d). Throughout the years, the Mosque was able to take various shapes in a range of localities while maintaining special features. “In addition, the mosque has been able to maintain its unique character which has enabled it to bridge and embrace cultures. It does so by interacting with divers' cultures deeply to express their creative expressions and reflecting these as mosques spread and evolve” (ibid). Mosques are a symbol and a vital community institution in the development of the Islamic community. Their pivotal role is highlighted by the act of the Prophet of Islam, as the first thing he did after relocating to Medina was to build a mosque. The Mosque can be defined as a place of worship and gathering to perform other activities that denote their devotion and submission to Allah. Mosques take the role of the institution or madrasah (school) to develop humans based on the teachings of Islam. (Omar, Muda, Yaakob, and Maoti, 2019, 765).

In the Holy Quran, God praised his faithful servants. He said: “The mosques of Allah shall be visited and maintained by belief in Allah and the Last Day establish regular prayers and practice regular charity and fear none (at all) except Allah. They are expected to be on true guidance” *Sourat altauba ayah18* (Ali, 2006). Moreover, the Messenger of God, peace be upon him, says: “Whoever builds a mosque for God, God will build for him in Paradise like it” (Ibn Majah, 738). To that extent, the Mosque plays a significant role for Muslim believers.

The project to rehabilitate and restore Al-Othman Mosque in the Hawalli region continues the march of the late / Abdullah Abdul-Latif Al-Othman, who was keen on building the houses of God. From the Islamic aspect, Muslims believe that the building, care, and maintenance of mosques is one of the best acts of worship to God Almighty. This is due to the reward and benefit of the Muslim community, in which the Mosque is considered an essential pillar for the practice of the most important ritual of the religion—prayer.

Despite the differentiation of the architectural design for all mosques worldwide, whether the interior or the exterior, mosques hold similar functional spaces and elements. The regional traditions of the era and location in which the Mosque was profoundly influenced its architecture. Style, layout, and ornamentation can therefore differ widely. Nonetheless, because mosques serve the common purpose of communal prayer, a similar style of architecture may be found in mosques all around the world (Weisbin, 2015). The following are descriptions of the most fundamental elements of the Mosque:

Mihrab (Niche)

When entering most mosques, one usually sees a central niche in the wall pointing toward Mecca. This niche may act as the place where the leader of the prayer stands as well. Muslims worldwide face Toward *Ka'ba*, the holy Mosque in Mecca, in today's Saudi Arabia. Mecca's significance is symbolic, as it is the birthplace of Islam and the Prophet of Islam (PBUH) and the place where the Quran was first revealed to the Prophet. "The *Kaaba* (it is the black square structure in the Holly Mosque where people perform pilgrimages and cruising around it, it considers the holiest holy sanctuary in Islam. The wall where the mihrab is placed must be toward Kaaba, and it is called Qibla" (Weisbin, 2015).

Minbar

The pulpit or Al-minbar in Arabic. "In many mosques, a small staircase leading to a seat stands to the right of the mihrab. This is called the minbar, from which the imam delivers the Friday khutbah, or sermon" (Plurism Project, 2020, n. d). The minbar is another feature that takes various forms. It could be simple and limited to three steps only, or extravagant, raised high, and highly decorated, depending on the size of the Mosque and the sophistication of its building style.

Minaret

Another prominent architectural feature of mosques is the minaret. They are one of the most notable structures in many Islamic cities. As Muslims pray five times a day, calling for prayer is mandatory. In the past, the man who performed the call for prayer (*Athan*) must climb a tall structure usually located on one side of the Mosque, using his voice to call for the prayer. Today, the mics are located on the top of the minaret to perform the task; sometimes, some mosques have more than one minaret. "The main function of the Minaret in the mosque is a place to echo the (*Athan*) call of prayer. Also, the Minaret is used as a marker of the existence of a mosque, a complement to the mosque building, and a landmark of an area/city" (Astrini, Santosa, and Martiningrum, 2019, 118).

Dome

Dome is known in Arabic as (*Quba*). Many mosques include one or more domes. Usually, the dome is built above the prayer room as the dome structure allows for larger spans and create an ample open space; also, the sound quality is greatly influenced by the dome structure during prayers, Friday ceremony, or recitation of the holy Quran. "Formation of the dome from time to time is a symbol for the building of the mosque which is an architectural form and it is used as a marker of the existence of mosques in various places in the world. But lately the design of the mosque with a dome which is a shell structure not just to the top only(decoration), but more flexible so that the area inside the shell is also used as a space that is the prayer room and other functions" (Nugrahini, 2019, 1).

Prayer Room

The prayer room is the primary and central part of the Mosque. It is where daily prayers are held and most other social and educational activities occur. Sometimes, women would have a dedicated, attached prayer room. In many cases, prayers rooms are carpeted and indicate parallel lines so that the congregation can form lines facing the mihrab wall while performing the prayers (Plurism Project, 2020, n.d).

The Mosques in Kuwait

Kuwait was a small trading center; its founding dates back to the 18th century. However, after the discovery of oil and establishing the state in 1962, it has seen decades of fast growth and development. Unfortunately, under the first plans of development, the government decided to demolish the old town and its building and begin to construct a modern capital. Few pre-1950 buildings remain, but mosques certainly make up most of Kuwait's historic structures. In his article *Historical Mosques in Kuwait*, Hossam M. Mahdy writes that “by the seventies, almost all the urban fabric of the old city was gone. Old mosques were not demolished for religious reasons and whenever the master plan suggested a road or any other development on the site of an old mosque, the plan was altered to allow the mosque to survive. Today the remaining old mosques stand like dwarfs amongst huge office buildings, multi-storey car parks, and ultra-modern shopping malls. They form a good part of the very little that remains from the architectural heritage of Kuwait” (Mahdy, 1999).

In general, mosques in the Arabian Gulf region share similar characteristics and features due to the desert climate and the shared traditional building techniques. Thus, mosques in the past were built in a simple and humble style for two main reasons—the conformation with religious teachings that call for simplicity and discourage exaggeration in spending and ornamentation. Secondly, the harsh environment and scarcity of local materials hindered people from building significant or outstanding designs. Before the discovery of oil, Kuwaiti people depended on local materials to build their domestic houses and buildings, as well as their Mosques, which were made of mud, palm tree branches, sea stone, coral stone, and gypsum. The economic prosperity after the discovery of oil in Kuwait and the influx of global materials and building techniques prevented people from preserving their traditional building styles. “The problem with defining the traditional Kuwaiti mosque is that there is no single mosque that exists today exactly as it did before the 1950s. The sweeping restoration and reconstruction of the 50s not recorded” (Mahdy, 1999). As such, historians and interested professionals resorted to verbal accounts or writing and photographs of travelers to restore historic mosques' original forms.

Al Othman Mosque's History

The Al-Othman Mosque was built in 1958 by the late Abdullah Abdul Latif Al-Othman in the Hawally Governorate area on Al-Othman Street. This distinctive Islamic structure was built and decorated in various Islamic styles and was a destination for worshipers in Kuwait. (See Figure 2), Al Othman Mosque is considered one of the landmarks of the State of Kuwait. It bears witness to a period that accompanied the renaissance of the State of Kuwait and its development in various fields, especially religious buildings and Islamic endowments. The materials used in construction have developed, and mosques have spread and expanded and were provided with various facilities and services.



Figure 2. A view of Al Othman Mosque (Author. 2022).

Today, the Mosque is managed by the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs and is considered a Waqf or A ḥabs or mortmain property that is an inalienable charitable endowment under Islamic law. In 2022, the Al Othman family trust decided to restore the Mosque and return it to what it was in 1958 while preserving the original interior design style and the architectural character of the Mosque without changing the fundamental Islamic architectural elements like the dome, minaret, and niche. The author partnered with Dar Al-Shaheen Consultants to renovate the building. All engineering and electromechanical systems will be updated without prejudice to the existing character.

Al Othman Mosque Architectural Elements Analysis

To achieve the project's objective and restore the building to its original 1958 form, the design team began to analyze the interior design of Al Othman Mosque. Unfortunately, no architectural drawings showed the original design of the Mosque. Thus, the author relied on various sources such as verbal descriptions, old photographs, and available short video clips. From the start, the author sensed the quality of the design and the great efforts and investment that were dedicated to the project. It was evident that the patron was keen to use the best architectural and engineering consultancy and construction techniques and building materials available at the time. This is apparent through the use of multiple natural materials, such as teak wood on the windows and Quran shelves, mosaic in the bases of the columns and the skirts around the prayer room, marble in the Mihrab and Minbar, wrought iron on the windows and main gate doors, in addition to the elegant lighting fixtures through the use of chandeliers of different sizes made of crystal, lighting up the central dome, and smaller chandeliers around the dome that added an exquisite touch and elegance inside the prayer room.

Interior Main Gate

The Mosque's main gate uses a mix of Islamic and international motifs and Islamic and Victorian wrought ironwork. Islamic architecture is a centuries-old category of architecture rooted in Islamic principles, found primarily in Arab states and Muslim-majority countries. The sculptural forms and often astounding ornamental detail characterizes Islamic buildings. It includes minarets, domes, arches, muqarnas, and geometrical ornamental details. The Victorian style refers not to a particular style but to an era—the reign of Queen Victoria over the United Kingdom from 1837 to 1901. Victorian-era architecture spans more than 60 years and

encompasses a mix of styles. Interior design in the Victorian period was layered, cluttered, ornate, and eccentric. It includes elements like high ceilings, ornately carved wood paneling, geometric tile hallways, stained glass windows, and dark wood furniture. On the top, black Victorian cast ironwork panels with scrolls motives and transparent glass sheets in three rows. Designs in wrought iron often tend to be lighter than cast iron; leaves, scrolls, and collars are typical motifs. Wrought ironwork is also usually composed of several pieces fitted together, and because it is shaped by hand, matching elements will rarely be identical. (See Figure 3).



Figure 3. Ironwork on the interior main gates: Al Othman Mosque. (Author. 2022)

The Dome

The dome is one of the Mosque's leading architectural and interior features. It is hovering on top of the main prayer room. One can see the merger between Islamic and modern design. In this context, modern refers to the use of advanced technology and materials, simplicity, and buildings in a form that reflects the function of the building. We read that the design of the Mosque sought to combine the ancient Arab-Islamic character through arches around the windows and the niche at the bottom of the dome and the modern European character represented in the Art Deco era. The Art Deco style is seen through sunburst iron design in the openings of the dome and the interior main doors, in addition to the frame of the enormous pictures of Quranic verses above the main entrance door to the prayer hall. (See Figures 4 and Figure 5).

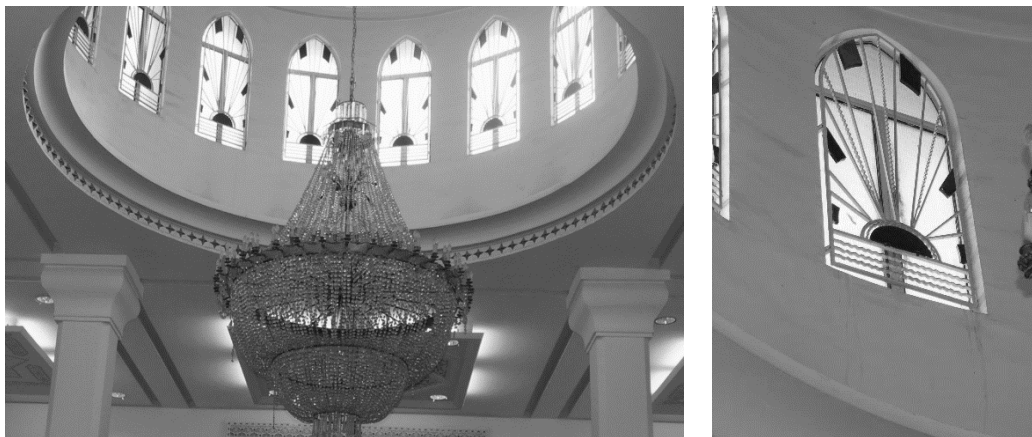


Figure 4. Dome windows motifs - Al Othman Mosque. (the Author. 2022).



Figure 5. Art Deco Ironwork. (newforestmetalwork.co.uk)

Mihrab and Minbar:

The author studied some old photographs and the short video clips the owner's family provided and noticed that the mihrab design changed lately. Their design altered from modern with simple Islamic motives (See Figure 6) to something resembling Moroccan heavy gypsum decorations (See Figure 7) along with the ceiling around the dome and the windows.



Figure 6. Mihrab – Minbar: Al Othman Mosque (Al Othman Trust)



Figure 7. Mihrab-Minbar: Al Othman Mosque (the Author. 2022)

Columns

Al Otomán Mosque has unique columns. The author noticed that they are Tuscan columns. The Tuscan architectural style blends classical architectural elements with modern touches. It is traced to the area now known as Tuscany, a region of Italy. It includes interior elements like plaster or stucco walls, textured ceilings, and mosaic flooring. Dewidar explains that “Tuscan: The Tuscan order, like the Composite order, was developed by the Etruscans and Romans, but not the Greeks. Tuscan columns were influenced by the Doric columns of Greece but they were made even simpler. The shafts are smooth with no decorations on the capital” (Ancient Columns, 2023, n. d). Besides its practical use in supporting the dome, the original columns decorated by Muqarnas resemble stalactites or honeycombs made of dark wood; most likely, teak wood adds a contrasting element with the column's light color. (See Figure 8 and Figure 9). All columns, including the stalactites, are painted white using regular plaster paint. The

columns in both periods were also used to hang fans during intensive summer heat temperatures. (See Figures 10, 11 and 12).

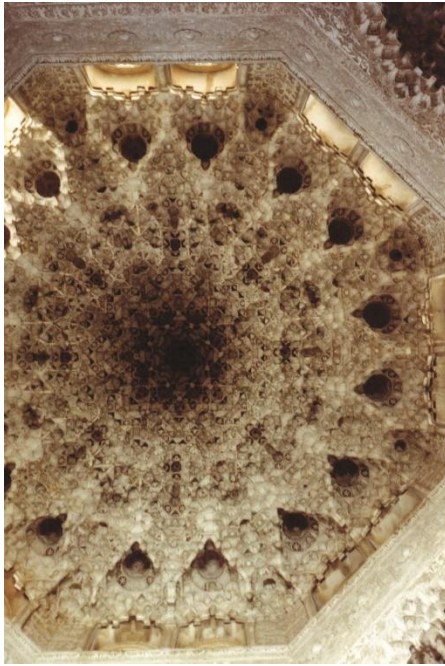


Figure 8. Interior Muqarnas (Imam Dur, Iraq). (Sakkal. 1982, 25)



Figure 9. Muqarnas at Al-Tawheed Mosque, Aleppo. (Sakkal. 1982, 139).



Figure 10 Al Othman Mosque columns (Al Othman Trust & the Author)

Woodwork

Looking at the original woodwork of Al Othman Mosque, specifically the doors and windows, one can see that they follow the Art Deco style. The Art Deco style emphasizes modernity, elegance, and functionality. Woodwork has the strong characteristic of a smooth, sharp, and linear appearance. The designs are appropriate to the Mosque as they use geometric forms. The Art Deco style encourages using high-quality wood and materials with simple designs. (See Figure 13).



Figure 11. Woodwork: Al Othman Mosque. (the Author)

LIGHTINGS

Al Othman Mosque is supplied with various lighting elements. However, the three main types of lighting used in the prayer room are fluorescent lights, spotlights, and the central chandelier. Initially, the Mosque had the modern Art Deco outdoor obliques used on Mihrab's wall (See Figure 12), the large crystal chandeliers that were used in the dome (See Figure 13), and small chandeliers around the dome (See Figure 14). The big chandelier is still in its place. The modern obliques have been removed and replaced by the Islamic metal golden/bronze style lighting units. In addition, the small crystal chandeliers have been replaced by Islamic metal chandeliers. (See Figures 15). The big Italian crystal chandelier inside the prayer room and small chandelier in the corridors and around the doom.



Figure 12 Wall oblique: Al Othman Mosque.

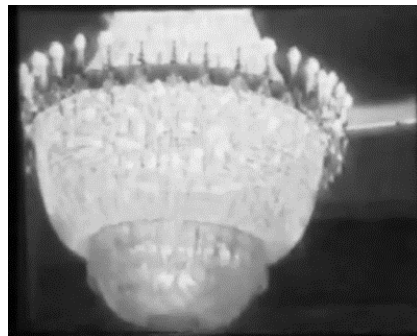


Figure 13 . Main Chandelier: Al Othman Mosque (Al Othman Trust)



Figure 14 Small chandeliers: Al Othman Mosque (Al Othman Trust)



Figure 15 Small chandelier: Al Otomán Mosque (the Author. 2022)

Flooring

Today all mosques in Kuwait are managed and maintained by the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs; according to most mosques, interiors use similar designs and finishing materials. Most mosques in Kuwait use the same polyester manufactured carpet, mostly in red and beige colors, and have the same pattern design (See Figure 16). At the time of completion, Al Othman fitted the Mosque with Persian carpets in a runner style which was used as a linear guide for worshippers (See Figure 17).



Figure 16. Persian linier rugs: Al Othman Mosque (Al Othman Trust)

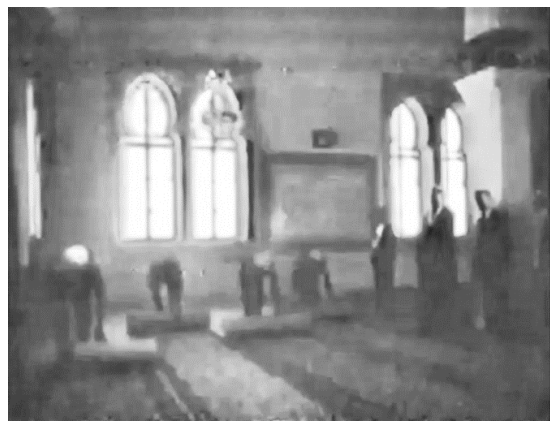


Figure 17. Carpet: Al Othman Mosque. (the Author. 2022).

Style

During the modernization period in Kuwait after the 1950s, Mr. Al Othman wanted to create a landmark building demonstrating his generosity and philanthropy. As such, he attempted to use the best available materials, furniture, and lighting despite their origin. The author argues that priority was given to quality and durability over appearance and design. For analysis and to best redesign the Mosque, this paper outlines evidence of applying the eclectic style, including Islamic, Tuscan, Victorian, modern, and Art Deco. The author believes the eclectic style is

unconsciously embedded within the mosque's style. As a result, one can see that the original Mosque, whether in architecture or interior design, has a mixed design that combines various styles.

For example, the Art Deco/Nuevo ironwork is seen on the dome, the interior main doors, windows, and the frames used on hanged artworks. One can see Art Deco characteristics in the sunburst ironwork motifs used in the dome's windows. "Art Deco," also called style modern, was a decorative arts and architecture movement that originated in the 1920s and developed into a significant style in Western Europe and the United States during the 1930s. Its name was derived from the *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* in Paris in 1925, where the style was first exhibited. Art Deco design represented modernism turned into fashion. Its products included both individually crafted luxury items and mass-produced wares, but, in either case, the intention was to create a sleek and anti-traditional elegance that symbolized wealth and sophistication." (Augustyn, 2023). The Islamic style was used on various elements, like the wooden shelves and the primary columns. The Islamic Moroccan stalactites on the columns, Muqarnas, resemble stalactites or honeycomb and become the 3D sculptural ornamentations that often appear in historical Islamic architecture and decoration. "The muqarnas squinch, which consisted of four units: A niche bracketed by two niche segments, superimposed with an additional niche" (Grabar, 2021). The author extracted the Persian rugs with their particular motifs and style separately. Moreover, The Italian chandeliers stand alone as well. And finally, there are various modern elements like the industrial light oblique in the niche.

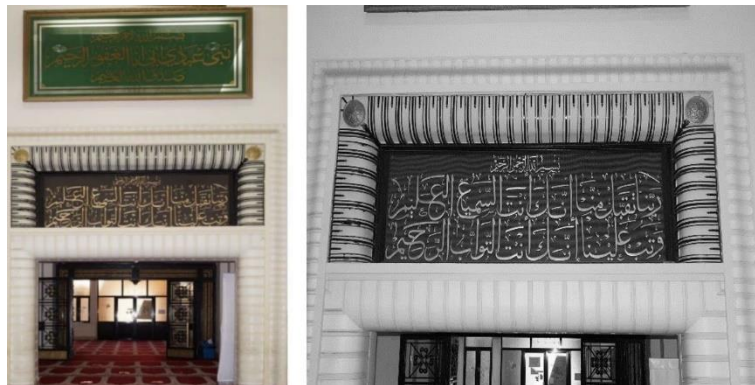


Figure 17 . Artwork: Al Othman Mosque (the Author, 2022).

The Definition of Eclecticism

The eclectic style is considered one of the manifestations of the postmodern movement. It is a design direction that prevailed after the long-time domination of the modernist movement. From the 1970s onward, the legitimacy of basic modern design was questioned as a style encompassing a comprehensive answer to all environmental challenges. Designers sought inspiration from historical contexts, local and regional styles, crafts, and building techniques.

“The word eclectic comes from the Greek word *eklektikos* which means to choose the best. The eclectic style of architecture became popular in Europe and America in the 19th and 20th centuries during the revival movement series. The eclectic style refers to each design incorporating elements of previous traditional motifs, decorative aesthetics, structures that come from other cultures or past architectural era. This style combines such elements from the past to create something new and original” (Karsono, Koesmeri, Wahid, and Saleh, 2021, n. d).

The Eclectic style allowed architects and designers to “free themselves from the stresses of the classical and the importance of the creative (romantic) from this time till the Middle Ages” (Enab, 2018, 84). This term is defined in Arabic as either electoral or selectivity. This style is characterized by several names like “eclecticism, selective architecture, non-direction in architecture, eclectic architecture, and collective style” (ibid, 84). This style follows the rule of eclecticism, which combines multiple styles in terms of style in periodic characters, geographical history, landscape characters, or communal lifestyles. The principle of eclecticism in an application of interior styling relates to complex conditions, not only becoming a referral to its architectural character but also representing the intangible aspect of interior design such as brand identity, historical location, and lifestyle phenomena (Widyaevan and Rahardjo, 2018, 122).

Global interaction and the movement of architects and designers from the West and East widened the field of inspiration and encouraged the rise of the eclectic style. “Cultural exchange is considered the main factor in the emergence of eclectic architecture” (Cheng and Neisch, 2023, 3). Instead of having one dominant style, the eclectic interior design incorporates several styles. The colors, materials, and textures used in this type of design are typically diverse. It promotes creativity and flexibility because any particular style does not limit it. Interior designs in the eclectic style can be both modern and traditional. It is typically used in projects with a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Eclectic styles borrow from various styles, concepts, and ideas from several origins and periods to create a single piece. Eclectic is a process used in interior design to blend or interpret specific interior design components or styles into a unified aesthetic or conceptual framework (Widyaevan and Rahardjo, 2018, 123).

Renovation Design Process

The objective of the project, as set by the client, is to renovate the project to its original state at the time of opening. The author analyzed the existing interior after fieldwork, observations, and analyses of the Al Othman Mosque. The design team faced many challenges, needing more data, such as drawings, pictures, and records. Moreover, the Mosque has undergone several renovations that changed its original condition.

The central design concept was to bring the Mosque to its original condition and maintain simplicity and elegance simultaneously. The process started by removing layers of added interior finishes, like paint or false ceilings made with gypsum boards. The design team created a Mode board that visually represents various collages, images, text, and sample materials. The mode board consisted of the following:

Color Scheme

The designer extracted the color scheme from the original interior and exterior. The central theme of the design concept was to maintain the simplicity and humility encouraged in mosque design. Accordingly, the designer proposed a set of natural colors such as olive green, beige, black, and white, and the natural color for the teak wood. In addition, mosaic, marble, and gold colors were proposed to complement the paint and add an accent. In selecting these colors, the designer was aware of colors mentioned in the Holy Quran, green, white, and gold, which establish a religious and cultural meaning to the overall design.

Materials

The project had a simple palette of materials: First, a beige mosaic was proposed for the windows' frames and the Mihrab and Minbar. Second, light green mosaic was proposed for the columns base and the dado of the prayer room walls creating the area that is in contact with the community, as usually, worshipers lean back on the wall while sitting on the floor. Moreover, teak wood would be used as the windows, shelves, and stands. Third, black painted ironwork windows and main gates.

Lighting

At the time of construction in 1958, the lighting was simple, and the choices were limited. To preserve the original look and feel of the Mosque, the designer emphasized the use of the main central chandelier hung at the dome and created several replicas—smaller in size—to be used around the dome in the main prayer room and the interior corridors. This replication is believed to accentuate simplicity and elegance to the ceiling. A gilded Art Deco outdoor oblique would also be used for the Minbar and Mihrab walls.

Flooring

To emphasize simplicity and maintain harmony within the Mosque, custom-made carpets would cover all mosque flooring. Its design was inspired by the Art Deco motifs used in the ironwork on the dome's opening, using the same color scheme of beige as a background and a sunburst design colored in gold. The texture of the carpet would be lope cut.

Artwork

The original Mosque and the prayer room, in particular, are decorated by several significant artworks that consist of calligraphy. Arabic calligraphy is a highly traditional art form that is fluidly handmade to convey harmony, grace, and beauty. The text would consist of various selected verses of the Quran of the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Some art was removed throughout the years. Hence, the designer sought to reintroduce this vital design element into the Mosque to preserve its original condition. (See Figure 18).

Conclusion

This research documents the design process of the renovation work of the Al Othman Mosque project. It highlights the project's significance in Kuwait, showing an example of one of the first modern buildings completed in the country's modernization period. The author sought to highlight the design significance of the building, in addition to its religious and cultural values, as a central hub of the community. This paper emphasizes the interior design element of the project.

This paper highlights the importance and practicality of the eclectic style. It illustrates how the eclectic design style is expected in an open and global context. The paper shows that designers might resort to the eclectic style where the material and techniques are scarce. The research shows that knowledge of the eclectic design style is essential for successful renovation projects, especially for projects completed in the mid-20th century. The eclectic design style is valuable as it allows for freedom and integration of various themes and elements. From a design point

of view, the subtle use of material and colors can lead to a successful implementation of the eclectic design style.

Acknowledging the importance of eclectic design in academia and practice is recommended, especially in young, vibrant countries like Kuwait, which is undergoing rapid growth and development. And where the economy is open and provides a wide range of building materials. Following a thorough study and analysis, this research can confirm that the interior of Al-Othman Mosque can be classified as an eclectic design. The eclectic style is manifested through Islamic motives, Victorian elements, Tuscan items, and modern Art Deco features in the main prayer rooms and other mosque spaces. Unfortunately, the author could not find evidence that documents the owner or the designer's design intention; nevertheless, the existing building confirms the findings.

Further research can be done to research the sources of materials, designs, and motifs that contribute to the eclectic design in Kuwait and to trace other examples of mid-century buildings and projects that applied eclectic design in the Gulf state.

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