

## DECORATION IN LIBYAN MOSQUE ARCHITECTURE

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The purpose of his paper is to present a new research on the Islamic architecture of Libya and to assess its contribution to the history of mosque architecture. I have to underline the fact that much of the material I am going to present is relatively unknown and unpublished.

However, Dr. Dalu Jones, the editor of the Art and Archaeology Research Papers, gave a lecture about architectural decoration in Libya which she delivered in the festival of the world of Islam held in London in 1976 (1). In addition Dalu Jones published an article in the Art and Archaeology Research Papers in 1978, about tile panels in North Africa including some decorative material about Libya (2).

In this scholarly gathering one finds it a great opportunity to give you a general ideas of the wealth of the decorative motifs found in the Libyan mosque architecture.

Before going into details let us go through a brief summary about the importance of the location of Libya, and the architectural background of the last four centuries in which Libya witnessed tremendous architectural activities. These are among principal factors in forming the type and characteristics of Islamic architecture in Libya.

Libya was and is a cross road and this is a point to be borne in mind throughout any discussion about art in Libya. It was only along the coastal plain and the trading routes that the monumental architecture could develop. The vernacular architecture has a very rich tradition of its own which at times influences the monumental architecture and its decoration. In connecting the African component, which is evident in the vernacular architecture, with the Libyan monumental architecture on the coastal line Dr. Dalu Jones was right in doing so (3). This component can be seen in such of transportable objects like carved wooden doors.

This may sound far fetched but we must not forget that

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from the earliest centuries of Islam and later the Ibadites sect was also one link between places like Sedrata in Algeria, Yemen, East Africa, Tunisia and Libya (4). In his articles about the staircase minarets Prof. Schacht tried also to prove this Ibadite connection (5).

However, if Libya is the cross road, does it also function as a crucible and does its art therefore have an identity of its own? This is difficult to establish at this stage at least to the extent of defining this identity and analysing the various influences. It is difficult, as Dr. Jones pointed out, because so little research has been done not only on Libya's Islamic past but also on North Africa and even Egypt: countries with which Libya's relationship is still somewhat unclear (6). Despite this we find that in the 17th, 18th, up to the 20 century a type of decoration which is certainly common throughout North Africa and to a certain extent Egypt as well as the other parts of the Ottoman empire which from the 16th century onwards dominated all North African countries Egypt and the Middle East.

Actually, through my study (in my Ph.D. Dissertation about Libyan mosque architecture) I found that Tunisia was often the source of artistic and architectural and even administrative influences seen in Libya. In the last four centuries Libya witnessed the combining of Maghribi and Ottoman Turkish artistic and architectural traditions. Any study of these aspects should be viewed in the context of these facts and events.

Generally speaking, most extant Libyan mosques and religious complexes as well as monumental secular buildings were built or rebuilt during the Ottoman and the Karamanli periods 1551-1911. Most of them are located in the region of Tripolitania particularly in the city of Tripoli and the surrounding settlements. On the basis of literary evidence it has been established that the city of Tripoli itself, which contains a large number of mosques, was devastated on different occasions, and when the Turkish forces captured Tripoli, it was in fact in ruins.

A comparative study of the mosques of the pre-Ottoman period with those of the Ottoman occupation indicates that mosque architecture in Libya underwent drastic changes, especially in details of decoration and structural aspects of the roofing system. Flat-roofed and vaulted mosques characterise the pre-Ottoman period, while in later period domed mosques became the dominant type.

Most of the extant mosques are of small size whether they are of pre-Ottoman or Ottoman construction. The domed mosques are very similar architecturally and aesthetically. The smaller domed mosques: (single-unit, six-unit, and nine-unit domed ones) have characteristic ground plan and spatial division. They are simple and austere.

The architectural scheme of the small multi-unit domed prayer chamber consists of square or rectangular prayer room divided by columns or piers into four, six, nine or more spatial units which are covered by small cupolas.

The structural framework of the prayer chamber consists of a skeleton of arches supported by columns or piers and pillasters. The walls are set within these arches and the arches project about 50 cm. from the wall surface on the interior. This interior arrangement characterises Libyan mosque architecture of both pre-Ottoman and Ottoman period. The zone of transition is always carried on this framework of arches and affected by pendentives or squinches.

The *mihrab* of these mosques are often simple having frontal arches of semi-circular or horseshoe form. The *mihrab* are also very simple and austere. With respect to *sahns*, available space dictates whether the mosque has a vestibule serving as access between the prayer chamber and street or contains a *sahn*. If the structure had a *sahn* one of its sides was always occupied by a portico which, in turn, contained fountains, latrines, and a bath (ablution facilities). This *sahn* arrangement is found in a large number of mosques of both pre-Ottoman and Ottoman date.

Minarets appear in two forms: square and staircase in both pre-Ottoman and Ottoman periods. However, the staircase minaret is a dominant feature in mosques located in the regions of Cyrenaica and Fezzan. In some cases a combination of staircase and square minaret is also used. Octagonal and cylindrical minarets were introduced into Libya only during the Ottoman period.

The hypostyle mosques, used for congregational prayer, have their interior space interrupted by numerous columns or piers. Perhaps a desire to create a unified central space encouraged architects during the 18th and 19th centuries to experiment with creating centrally planned structure.

It has been pointed out that the architectural tradition followed by Libyan mosque builders was to construct a simple mosque devoid of decoration. An emphasis on the functional rather than the aesthetic or decorative aspects was characteristic of all mosques not only of pre-Ottoman periods but also most mosques of the Ottoman rule.

However some mosques were decorated. For instance the Fatimid mosques (10th century) excavated recently at Madinat Sultan, (ca 500 km. east of Tripoli), and Ajdabiya (ca. 170 km. south of the city of Benghazi), had stone carvings, Kufic inscriptions and stucco decoration which actually conform with the style observed in other extant Fatimid mosques in Egypt and Tunisia.

Some mosques located in the Nafusa mountains are decorated only with simple patterns such as inscriptions on a floral background in relief, abstract incised patterns, or impressions of hands in plaster (7).

Mosques located in the Oases of the regions of Fezzan and Cyrenaica are even simpler. The dominant decorative motif is the triangle. This motif is seen on minarets, above gateways, and on the corners of buildings (8). These were the most popular decorative elements in Libyan mosque architecture beginning before the Ottoman conquest of Libya and continued to be used on vernacular architecture until the 20th century.

It is worth mentioning that in the Ottoman epoch greater variety of decoration is found in the coastal region where decoration consists of relief carving and painted wood and plaster, stucco, and marble slabs, polychrome and monochrome tiles. These new mediums of decoration were introduced into Libyan mosque architecture only in the 17th century onward.

This paper will explore decoration of this period on stone and marble doorways, on window frames, *mihrabs*, *minbars*, tilework, wooden painted ceilings and *dikkas* and stucco.

### Stone and Marble Decoration

From my study of the mosques of the 16th and 17th centuries I found out that a small number of mosques have simple decoration which was mostly confined to a boss-like rosette in each spandrel occasionally accompanied with a few other boss-motifs in the horizontal cornice of the doorway frame. In some

cases a crescent in low relief surmounts the apex of the arched entrance way. In some instances, the spandrels are filled with monochrome or polychrome tiles, while in other examples *mih-rabs* have decoration analogous to doorways.

This same arrangement is found in some congregational monumental mosques. In the late 17th century, the boss-like rosette was repeated over wider areas of the gateways. For example the mosque of Muhammad Sha'ib al-Ayn built in 1699, (PL XIII) was the first religious building to contain eight richly decorated doorways: two in *mihrab* and six in limestone. All of them have a similar decorative repertoire of flowers and foliage motifs. Odd numbers of boss-shaped flowers varying from three to eleven per entrance way can often be seen arranged symmetrically on voaussoire. These flowers vary in size, shape, depth, projection, and the number of their petals.

In many instances the keystone is surmounted by a crescent in low relief. Some spandrels contain two, six, or eight flowers, whereas others are filled only with a foliage motif. This mode of decoration is also echoed on the *mihrab* where, however, it is always executed in low relief (PL XIV).

This rich stone and marble ornament is without precedent in Libyan mosque architecture. Furthermore, it is interesting to note the relationship between religious and secular architecture during this period. Several gateways of identical design can be observed in contemporary houses and palaces located in the city of Tripoli, some of which were explored in a study conducted by Pietro Romanelli (9). These decorative doorways found in both secular and religious architecture reflect a decorative tradition also seen in other countries around the Mediterranean basin especially Italy (10), France (11), Spain, Malta (12) and Tunisia (13).

Finally the mosque of Sha'ib al-Ayn contains another component of carved stone decoration. Each side of its *minbar* is divided into twenty seven diamond-shaped compartments (PL XV) each of which is filled with a flower or crescent motif. The nine columns supporting the mosque's roof have capitals with leaves carved in very low relief (14).

Similar doorway arrangement is found in the mosque of al-Druj or Isma' il b. Yarbu, which was originally built before 1521 and which must have been rebuilt in about the 17th or 18th century. The entrance contains a floral pattern resembling

that of the two doorways, decorated with a floral and foliage motif, as in the mosque of Sha' ib al-Ayn. It too consists of continuous undulating scrolls of double stems with flowers and leaves, which occupy the two jambs and the arch of the entrance. The spandrels are filled with polychrome tiles.

However the complex of the mosque of Ahmad al-Karamanli built in 1738 represents the most decorated mosque and different decorative repertoire. It contains several marble and stone doorways on which traces of relief carved decoration can still be seen on the door jambs. These marble doorways are outlined by a very narrow strip of ceramic tile. Furthermore their spandrels are also defined in the same fashion and filled with polychrome ceramic mosaic.

The central marble doorway located on the *mihrab* axis is of a horseshoe form with alternating black and white voussoires. Here the spandrels are framed by two intertwined mouldings. This system of decoration using marble frames for doors and windows and placing panels of tiles between them is found on both the exterior and interior of the sanctuary. The same arrangement is found in the mosque of Gurgi built in 1834, (PLS. XVI, XXIV).

As is often the case particularly in congregational mosques the decorative structure of this doorway is reflected in that of the *mihrab*. The *mihrab* in the mosque of al-Karamanli has close ties with Tunisian decorative tradition. A study by Sulayman M. Zbiss on *mihrabs* in western Islamic countries included many Tunisian *mihrabs* with the same form, arrangement, and decoration as that of al-Karamanli (15). The presence of this unique *mihrab* in the Karamanli mosque enforces the suggestion that the whole complex was constructed by Tunisian architects and artisans. Many aspects of this mosque are without precedent in Libya.

Mosque construction in the period around 1738 shows several important trends. The tendency toward grandeur and profuse decoration in a variety of mediums reflects the economic growth and political stability of this period. At this time, political, social, economic and commercial ties with Tunisia as well as with some European states were strengthened. From the late 17th century onward, we begin to encounter the influence of European decorative themes in Libyan Islamic art and architecture.

The rich decorative repertoire employed in the mosque of al-Karamanli and more other European decorative themes are found in the mosque of Gurgi completed in 1834. This mosque appears to be a smaller version of the mosque of al-Karamanli completed in 1738. The decoration in the former mosque is the climax of the last phase of Libyan mosque architecture and was never again repeated in any subsequent Libyan mosque.

It is worth while to note that the complex of the mosque of Gurgi contains traces of the older tradition of stone and marble decoration. The main northeast and northwest entrances to the complex and the entrances to the domed tomb are all of horse-shoe form. The two spandrels each contains a boss-like nose now in very high relief, and the keystone has a smaller boss-like rose and a crescent resting on cloud-like form (16). The three doorways of the sanctuary and the mihrab have the same form.

The mosque of Gurgi in turn contains new decorative forms and material. The doorways and windows of the sanctuary bear floral and foliage decoration executed in polychrome inlaid marble (17). It consists of flowers, vase motifs and undulating marble inlay, scrolls with flowers and leaves. The *mihrab* also has an identical decorative repertoire, (PLS. XVII, XVIII, XIX). The rectangular marble frames of the windows have a continuous undulating garland of flowers which intertwines with three stripes in black, red, and brown marble inlay. The minar of the Gurgi mosque also contains marble inlaid decoration. In some details these motifs show European influences and they are foreign to Islamic architectural tradition. All the marble columns in the sanctuary, and those in the open court of the school adjacent to the mosque are of Neo-Tuscan form (18). Just below the abacus, each column is crowned with an egg-and-dart motif which is without precedent in Libyan mosque architecture (19). Some of the tiles on the walls of the sanctuary are certainly of European workmanship. Finally, the extravagant decor executed in varying media reflects the European taste in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Nevertheless, these imported decorative and architectural elements and forms are only part of decorative repertoire at this mosque and that of al-Karamanli. Elaborate decoration is found in stucco, the inscriptions, and tiles. A decor is seen on the painted wooden *dikka*, the carved doors and the painted ceilings. Similar decoration characterises some 17th, 18th and 19th century upper class houses and palaces in both Libya and

Tunisia.

Wooden Decoration:

Carved or painted wood appears in Libyan mosque architecture during the late 17th century (20). In addition to carved doorframes, the mosque of Sha'ib al-Ayn was also enhanced with two beautifully carved doors: one is still in situ the other was transferred to the Islamic museum in Tripoli. They are identical. Their decoration is in low relief and it is the most elaborate one. The wooden *dikka*, located just inside the entrance, which is on the axis with the minbar, has a polychrome painted under surface. The style of these paintings shows influences of Baroque and Rococo paintings. This reflects late Baroque style verging on Rococo but not yet Rococo because the whole pattern is symmetrical.

In spite of a lapse of forty years the same workmanship and style which are seen in the mosque of Sha'ib al-Ayn door recurs in the five doors in the mosque of al-Karamanli. They are divided into compartments. They contain a vase motif with undulating scrolls filling the background, (PL. XVI).

All of the previously discussed doors have low relief decoration consisting of naturalistic foliage and geometrical design. These doors illustrate a trend toward the use of naturalistic motif which had never been used in any Libyan mosque before the Ottoman period. The wooden ceilings of the overhanging second floor balconies are painted in polychrome colour squares containing four vases with undulating scrolls with tulips and carnations spread toward the centre of the square.

The wooden *dikkas* in the mosque of al-Karamanli and Gurgi are masterpieces of wood craftsmanship, (PLS. XIX, XX). The walls of the square platform on their inner and outer sides in both *dikkas* are decorated with blind arcades with arches formed by multi-levelled mukarnas layers. All of these arcades are supported by paired columns. The use of these arcades suggests the influence of Maghribi, and particularly Tunisian, stucco decoration. This type of decoration can be seen in identical stucco friezes in the Karamanli and Gurgi mosques, as well as, in a large number of religious and secular buildings located in Tunisia and built between the 16th and 19th centuries (21). The recessed underside of the *dikkas* was decorated in geometrical patterns in brown paint. This same decoration in low relief is a common feature in wooden or stucco ceilings in



other buildings of the 16th through the 19th centuries (22).

The similar wooden *dikkas* are found in the mosques of al-Kharruba and al-Druj. These two *dikkas* further illustrate the nature and evolution of wooden decoration in the 18th century. These two *dikkas* are very similar in form and decoration. The corner zones and the central area are differentiated in their decoration. Vases with undulating scrolls are depicted on these *dikkas*. The drawing of the vases and flowers shows the impact of French and Italian taste, (PL. XXI).

### Tile Decoration

Let us now turn to the tile decoration: a medium of decoration which was also introduced into both secular and religious architecture in Libya during the Ottoman period. So far only a few tiles found scattered in the castle of Tripoli can be attributed to the pre-Ottoman period. They are either of tile mosaic, *cuerda seca* tile or of glazed painted tiles.

The known tile panels in Libyan buildings can be classified as follows: Tile panels which contain vases (*Mahbis*) from which rise undulating scrolls, flowers, (23) and floral fillings, which occupy either the background of a horseshoe arch, or a rectangular or square compartment (24). A second tile panel contains Naskhi inscriptions filling the whole background of a horseshoe arch whose upper part is occupied by a domed structure (25). In other instance the panel contains also a horseshoe arch but here the upper part is occupied by an architectural scene and its lower section contains polylobed arches filled with scrolls and flowers (27).

In a few examples the tile panel has a vase motif (27), with scrolls and two confronted birds (28).

In the absence of documents concerning the importation of this panel it is necessary to consider decorative motifs of the tiles to determine their place of origin.

The Karamanli mosque is the earliest Libyan mosque with extensive decoration. The lower surfaces have tile dados while the upper levels have carved plaster decoration. Due to the diversity of decorative elements this mosque is almost a museum of the 18th century tiles. Sources for the varied tiles include the Turkish of Kutahya or Tekfur Sarayi; (29) and various European centres: Spain (30), Portugal, Italy (31) and Holland

(32). Despite their diverse designs the tiles have been arranged in an attractive fashion (33). Similar arrangements are found in Tunisian buildings of this period (34), (PL. XXII).

The vase is a decorative motif which has been in continuous use in all countries around the Mediterranean sea, it is worth while to observe that the vase motif, derived from Roman and Byzantine art, was reinterpreted in the 16th century onward as part of the Renaissance re-discovery of the classical past, (35) and echoed in early and later Renaissance art and architecture in European countries. The use of this motif continued in Baroque and Rococo art and architecture.

However, reflections of European art and architecture, particularly French and Italian, of the 17th, 18th centuries, are observed in Turkish art and architecture of the same period. Art and architecture of the central regions of the Ottoman empire are echoed in that of the Ottoman provinces.

The vases in the tile panels in the mosque of Al-Karamanli contain scrolls and leaves executed in an Ottoman Turkish style. The colours of the tile and tile panels found in the Karamanli mosque 1837, are the same as those which characterise most of the *Tekfur* Saray or Kutahya pottery production from Turkey of the first half of the 18th century. Despite their Turkish favour the place of manufacture of these tiles is uncertain. They may have been produced in Europe (36) under Turkish influence. However, it is also possible that they were produced in Tunisia using European and Turkish designs (37), (PL. XXIII).

Similar tile panels with vase motif are found in some houses and places of Tripoli such as the Rebbi Nasim house, in the Islamic Museum in Funduk al-Ghadamisi (38). They must be of Tunisian manufacture (39). Many Tunisian buildings are decorated with similar panels (40). The Kilns which produced these panels in the 18th and 19th centuries have not been exactly located. However, at present there are several pottery workshops in the city of Nabeul such as al-Kharraze, al-Majdub, al-Kaddidi and others (41). These workshops are famous and very active and are still producing tile panels with similar vase motifs which indicates the continuity of the tradition.

Tile panels analogous to those found in some buildings of Tripoli are found in a large number of buildings in Tunis, Qairawan, Algier, Alexandria and Cairo which date to the 18th

and 19th centuries.

In Libya, some other houses such as those of the Karamanli family and that of Gurji family have walls lined with diverse types of tiles. In particular the house of Muhsin in Tripoli contains a tile panel of great importance. It gives the date of execution as, 1228 A.H. (1813) and the name of the potter (Usta Yusuf al-Khamieri). It has six lines of Naskhi inscription (42).

The tile panel in Muhsin house in Tripoli is of Tunisian manufacture, and other very similar examples, with or without identical text can be cited in many Tunisian buildings, such as the Mausoleum of Sidi Mohriz dated 1220/1805 and the name of al-Khamieri as potter. In Bardo Museum three identical tile panels are displayed all having the same date 1216/1801, and the name of al-Khamieri.

Another example is in the Musee des arts Africains in Paris. The date 122 found on the panel which has been read as 1122/1710 must be commanded possibly to 1220/1805 because it is signed by the potter al-Khamieri (43) who was active in the early 19th century.

The mosque of Gurgi built in 1834 in Tripoli has its prayer chamber entirely faced with various types of tiles and tile panels which contain arches of horseshoe form enclosing architectural and floral elements. It is most likely that these tiles came from Tunisia (44). The Tunisian provenance of Gurgi tiles is suggested by the existence of large number of such panels in Tunisian mosques and secular buildings. The structure of the Gurgi panels is virtually identical to that seen in works signed by al-Khamieri, (PLS. XXIV, XXV).

However, similar tile panels are in the mosque and tomb of Sidi al-Sahib in Qairawan which contains at least nine panels made by a potter called Bu Shantuf in 1218/1804 (45). Many other similar tile panels are still in situ in the mausoleums of Sidi Mahriz, Sidi Ali Azuz, Turbet al-Bayat, the place of Bardo, the Museum of Bardo, Dar Husayn. Further examples are found in the tomb of Muhammad ibn Al-Dhahab in Cairo (46). These latter examples must have been executed in Tunisia or in Cairo by Tunisian potters (47).

Despite their wide distribution the significance of elements used in them is difficult to ascertain. One such feature is the

domed structure found in the arch's upper section. Does it represent a specific building or do the elements have a more general association in the minds of viewers? In connection with representation of this domed building it may be relevant to direct our attention to the sacred shrine -- the Kaba at Macca as a possible theme for representation. In this regard it is also necessary to refer to the study of iconography on the 16th and 17th centuries Turkish tile panels which depict the Kaba sanctuary explored by Erdmann (48).

A second possible theme for the North African tile panels is the mosque of the prophet at Madina. Painting of this building show the prophets' tomb with its surmounting dome as well as the sanctuary, courtyard and the enclosure wall of the mosque.

However, the elements shown in the tiles: a dome, two flights of steps or two minbars, a number of minarets, flowers, birds and cypresses, do not give an exact replica of the prophet's tomb at Madina (49). However, this group of elements may refer indirectly to the prophet's tomb. A popular hadith compares his mosque to a garden: "Between my tomb and my pulpit there is a garden (*Rawdah*) which is one of the gardens of Paradize".

Another interpretation of the domed structure is that it shows the frontal elevation of a minbar. It is well known that the minbar may symbolise royal authority. This may be further explained by the fact that the North African Husayneds and Karamanly dynasties, during whose rule most of these tile panels were made, had become independent from the Ottoman rule.

Finally, the depicted scene as a whole may represent a flat *mihrab* niche (51). The religious significance behind this representation is emphasised by the fact that the most decorated part in the mosque is the *mihrab* (52).

In this connection one may suggest that the domed building with minarets depicted on the tile panels found in a large number of secular and religious structures in Libya, Tunisia and Egypt represents the tomb and mosque of the prophet at Madina. However, the presence of these tiles in mausoleums, mosques, houses, and palaces gives the impression that the interpretation given to the scenes may have depended on the nature of building in which they were situated. As can be seen



Plate No. XIII — Libya : Mosque of Muhammad Pasha Shaib al-Ain, entrance (1698-99) Tripoli.

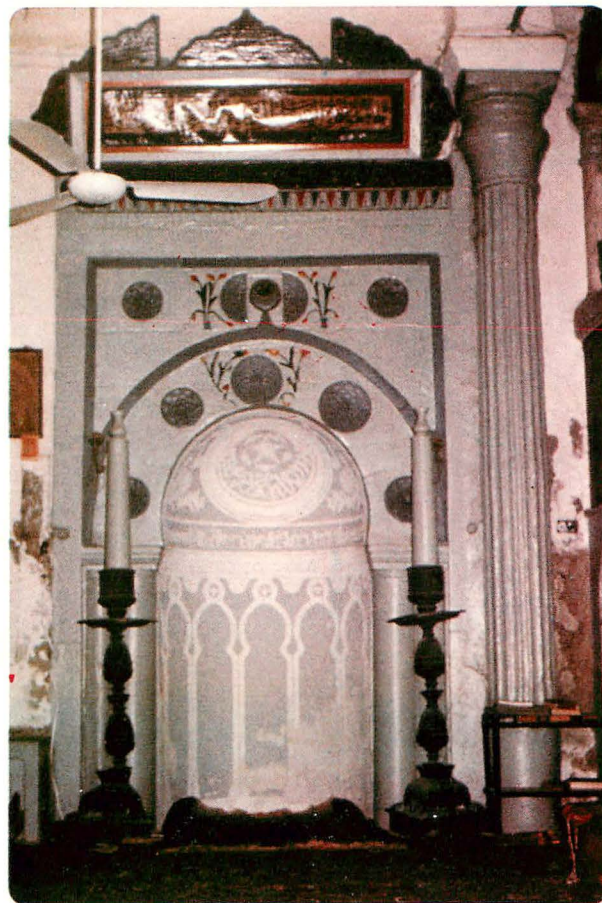


Plate No. XIV — Libya : Mosque of Muhammad Pasha Shaib al-Ain, *mibrab*, Tripoli.

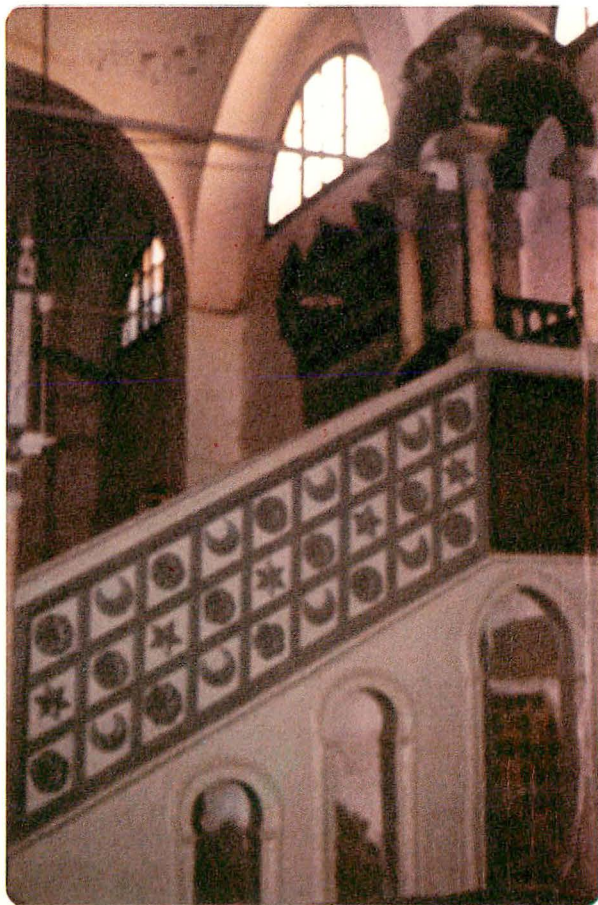


Plate No. XV — Libya : Mosque of Muhammad Pasha Shaib al-Ain, *mibrab*, Tripoli.



Plate No. XVI — Libya : Mosque of Ahmad Pasha, entrance (1738). Tripoli.

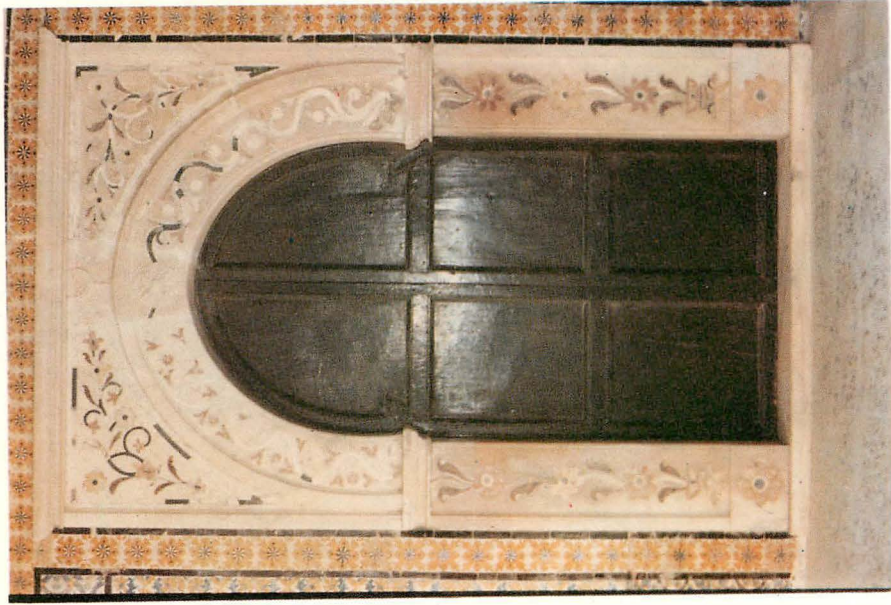


Plate No. XVII — Libya : Mosque of Mustafa Gurgi, doorway with marble inlay. Tripoli.

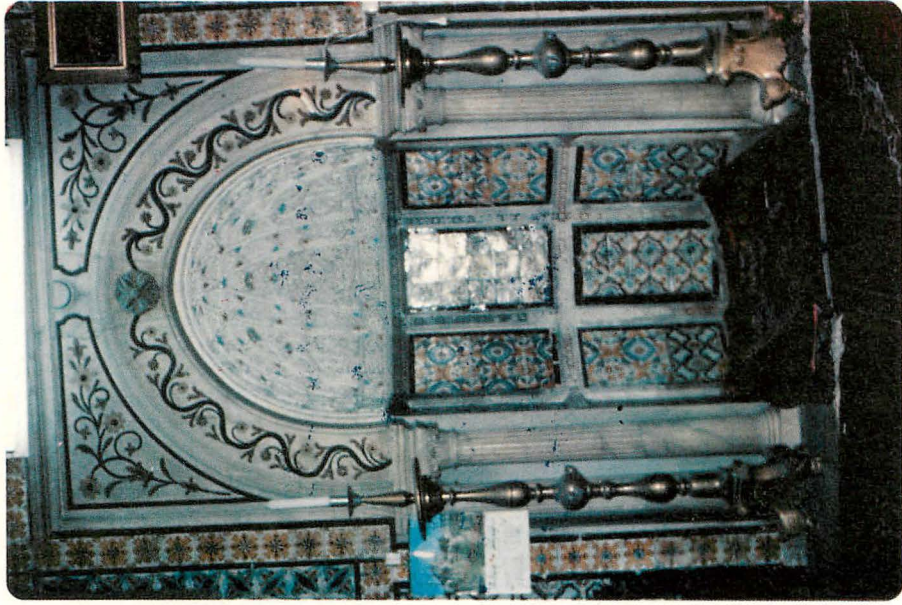


Plate No. XVIII — Libya : Mosque of Mustafa Gurgi, mihrab (1834). Tripoli.

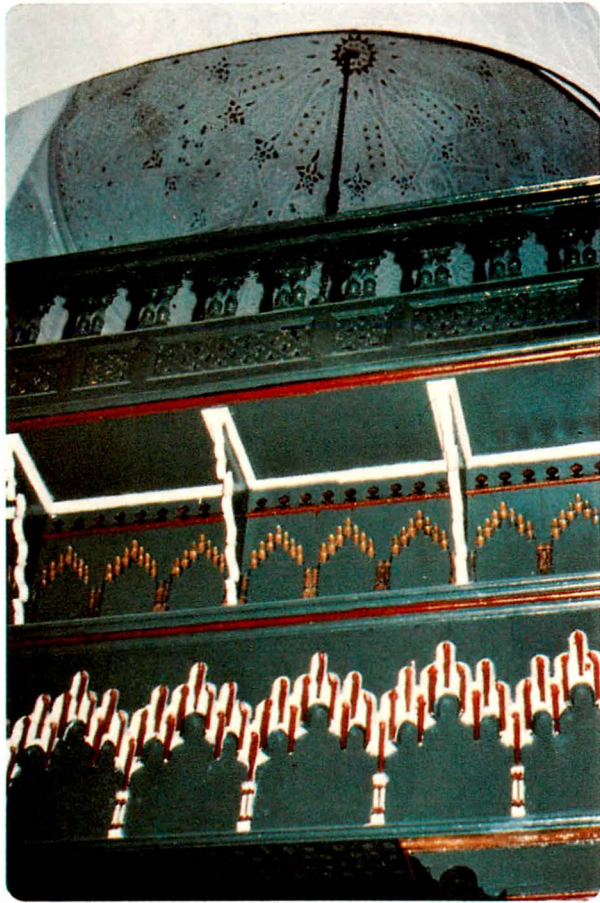


Plate No. XIX — Libya : Mosque of Ahmad Pasha, the wooden *dikka* (1738). Tripoli



Plate No. XX — Libya : Mosque of Mustafa Gurgi, the wooden *dikka* Tripoli.



Top :  
Plate No. XXI — Libya :  
Mosque of al-Druj Ismail  
bin Yarbu, wooden *dikka*.  
Originally done before  
(1521) Tripoli.



Bottom :  
Plate No. XXII — Libya :  
Mosque of Ahmad al-Kara-  
manli, tile and panel, mbrm  
manli, stucco and tile deco-  
ration.



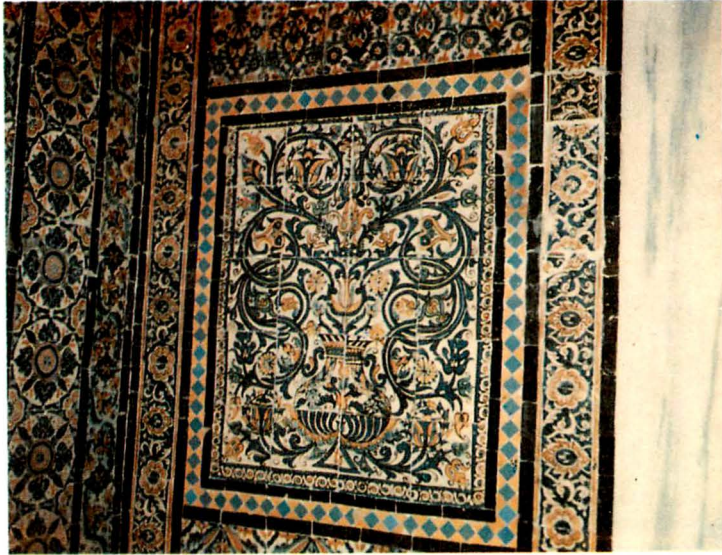


Plate No. XXIII — Libya : Mosque of Ahmad  
al-Karamanli, tile panel,  
Tripoli.

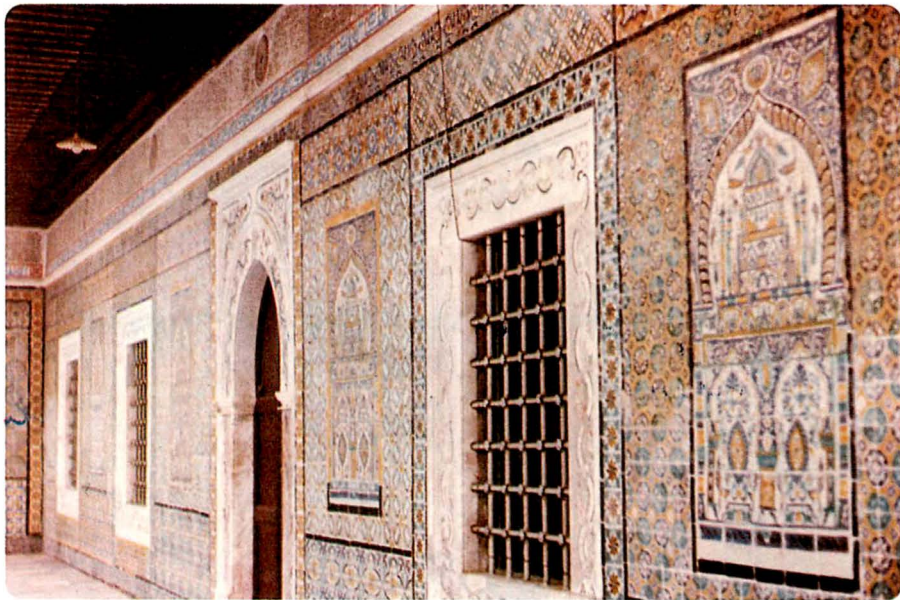


Plate No. XXIV — Libya : Mosque of Mustafa  
Gurgi, north tiled facade  
(1834). Tripoli.



Plate No. XXV — Libya : Mosque of Mustafa Gurgi, tile panel. Tripoli.



from the inscription which accompanies some examples they were prized for their association with the blessing derived from the Quran, the prophet, his companions, and saintly followers (53).

#### NOTES

1. Dalu Jones, "Architectural Decoration in Libya", A lecture delivered on the third of May, 1976 in London during the Festival of the World of Islam. She kindly sent me a copy of this lecture while I was putting the final touches of my dissertation in the University of Michigan in the U.S.A.
2. Dalu Jones, "Qallaline Tile Panels: Tile pictures in North Africa", Art and Archaeology Research Papers, (London: December 1978).
3. Dalu Jones, Architectural Decoration in Libya, unpublished lecture p. 2.
4. Ibid.
5. Joseph Schacht, "Ein Archaisches Minaret -- typ in Egypten und Anatolien", Art Islamica, (University of Michigan publication, Ann Arbor 1938) Vol. 5 pt. I, pp. 46-54. "Sur la Diffusion des formes d'architecture religieuse ??? Musulmanne a travers le Sahara" Travaux de L'Institut de Recherches Sahariennes, (E. Imprimerie Imperiale, Alger 1954), Tome II, I er Semestre, pp. 11-27. "Further notes on the staircase minarets", Ars Orientalis, (University of Michigan -- Smithsonian pub. 1961), Vol. 4, pp. 137-140.
6. Dalu Jones, Architectural Decoration in Libya, p. 2.
7. Antony Hutt and Guy Pertherbridge, Islamic Art and Architecture in Libya; Vernacular Architecture, (Exhibition Catalogue, London, 1976), p. 32.
8. Ibid, p. 33.
9. Pietro Romanelli, "vicchie eae arabi di Tripoli". Architettura e arte decorative, I, anno 3 (Roma; Casa Editrice d'Arte Besetee e Tumminelli, 1923); Figs. 13-15.
10. Charles B. McGrew, Italian Doorways, with preface by Garham Phillips Stevens (Cleveland: J.H. Janesn publishers, 1929).
11. George Leighton Dahl, Portals -- Doorways and Windows of France, with preface by George H. Edgell (New York: The Architectural Book Publishers, 1925).
12. Quentin Hughes, The Buildings of Malta 1530-1795 (London, 1956): See p. 193

- for the types of lime stones and the sites of the quarries. The solid limestone is called in Libya marble of Malta.
13. P. Lisse, "Tradition, evolution, adaptation de la sculpture sur pierre dans le cap Bon", Revue de L' Institute dea Belles Littres Arabes, No. 73, 19 e annee (Tunis, 1956), pp. 81-92.
  14. Gaspare Messina, L'architettura Musulmana della Libya, trans. III al-Sadik Hasanayn (Italy: Edizione Del Grifone, 1972, Tripoli : al-Nashir Dr. Mustafa al-Ajaili, 1973), p. 155.
  15. Sulayman M. Zbiss, "Al-Maharib fi al-Imarah al-Diniyya bi al-Magrib al-Islam", al-Mu'tamar al-Raba Li-l-Athar fi al-Bilad al-Arabiyya, held in Tunisia between 18th and 29th of May 1963 (Cairo, 1963), pp. 553-562, figs. I-36, see especially figs. 14, 26-30, and 33.
  16. Dalu Jones indicated that there are records of how much the marble decoration cost and how it was imported from Italy to be used in the construction of the mosque of Sahib al-Taba 1782-1814 in Tunisia. There must be similar records in Tripoli.
  17. Anthony Blunt, Neapolitan Baroque and rococo Architecture (London: A. Zwemmer Ltd., 1975). The influence of marble inlay and Baroque and Rococo Architecture and art may have come from southern of Italy; See examples of marble inlay in Certosa di S. Martino, church in Naples, figs. 106, 107. The marble inlay is a common feature in these regions. -- There are religious and secular buildings in Tunisia which contain marble inlay such as Dar Husayn, Jami Sahib al-Taba and Turbat al-Hayat.
  18. Salvatore Aurigemma, "La moschea di Gurgi in Tripoli", Africa Italiana, I, anno 6 No. 4 (Rome: A cura del Ministro delle colonie, 1928), p. 262.
  19. *Ibid.*, fig. 10.
  20. The mosque of Mahmud Khaznadar in Tripoli, built in 1680, contains a wooden dikka with floral painted decoration.
  21. Jacques Revault, Palais et demeures de Tunis XVI et XVII siecles (Paris: Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique, 1967); figs. 144 the upper one. Palais et demeures de Tunis XVII et XIX siecles, Paris, 1971; figs. 5, 29, 57, 83, 84, 89, 92, 93, 95, 105-107, 122, 128.
  22. Salvatore Aurigemma, "La moschea di Ahmad Qaramanli in Tripoli", Dedalo, II, anno 7 (Rome: Casa Editrice d'Arte Bestette e Tumminelli, 1926, 1927), 509.
  23. Romanelli, fig. 16 on p. 206.

24. Examples are found in the mosque of Karamanli.
25. Romanelli, p. 207, fig. 17.
26. Other examples are found in Gurgi mosque.
27. Esin Atil, Ceramics From the World of Islam, (Washington: Freer Gallery of Art, 1973), pl. 88, p. 191.
28. Antony Hutt and Georgs Michll, Islamic Art and Architecture in Libya, (Exhibition catalogue, London: 1976). Fig. on p. 13.
29. John Carswell, Kutahya tiles and pottery from the Armenian Cathedral of St. James, Jerusalem II (Oxford, 1972), p. 11.
30. Anne Berendsen and others, Tiles: A General History, trans. by Janet Seligman (New York, A studio Book, The Viking press, 1967), pp. 69, 70.
31. Ibid., pp. 125, 126.
32. Ibid.
33. Muhammad S. Warfelli, "The Old City of Tripoli", Art and Archaeology Research Papers (Tripoli, Department of Antiquities, 1976), p. 12.
34. Aurigemma, La mosquee di Ahmad Qaramanli, p. 510.
35. Metropolitan Museum, Bulletin Winter 1972, 1973. object inv. 16.32.323.
36. Romanelli, p. 207.
37. Berendsen, p. 42 -- Arthur Lane, A Guide to the Collection of Tiles, (London, Victoria and Albert Museum 1939), p. 20.
38. This tile panel may have been removed from one of the old houses of Tripoli, possibly the so-called Hebbi Nasim house. However similar tile panels are found in the Museum of Bardo in tunisia.
39. Romanelli, Fig. 17.
40. Some of the famous potters or kiln owners whose names appear on some tile panels are: al-Khamieri: appears on tile panel, dated 1220-2 / 1805-7, in the mausoleum of Sidi Mahriz Tunis. Usta Yusuf al-Khamieri: appears on tile panel, dated 1228 / 1813, in Muhsin house in Tripoli. Bu Shantuf; appears on tile panel in the mosque of Sidi Sahib, dated 1218 / 1804 in Qairawan. al-Hajj al-Jazzar (?): appears on undated tile panel in the palace of

Bardo (now Museum of Bardo) in Tunis. Muhammed Ahmad al-Nu aimi (?): appears on undated tile panel in Bardo museum, pottery section, in Tunis. al-Hajj Masud al-Saba: appears on undated tile panel in Dar al-Sattari in Tunis. The name appears on another panel in Sidi Ali Azuz in Tunis; and a third one in the mosque of Abd al-Baqi al-Shurbaji built in 1758, in Alexandria.

41. As the potter Faraj al-Abadi in Nabeul.
42. Romanelli, Fig. 17.
43. Dalu Jones, depending on the information given about this tile panel by the musee des arts Africains in Paris, assigns it to 1710. See her article above p. 12, fig. 34, see also p. 28, no. 34.
44. Six years ago the mosque of Gurgi was completely repaired. Some parts of the tile panels were replaced by new similar tiles which were manufactured in Nabeul by al-Kharraz pottery workshop. some panels bear the signature of al-Kharraz and the place of manufacture, Nabeul.
45. Aurigemma, la moschea di Gurgi, p. 285.
46. Claude Prost, Revetements Ceramiques dans les monument musulmans de L'Egypte, Memories de L'Institut Francais d'Archeologie Orientale du Caire, tomb 40, (Caire, 1917), p. 11, no. 2, and p. 43, note 1.
47. Ibid.
48. Kurt Erdmann, "Ka bah Fliesen", Ars Orientalis, III, 1959, pp. 192-197 with 8 figures.
49. Dalu Jones, p. 13.
50. Ibid.
51. Claude Prost, p. 43. He indicates that the panel represents a pseudo mihrab.
52. Geza Fehervari, "Tombstone or Mihrab? A seculation", Islamic Art in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (new York, 1972), pp. 241-254 with 8 figures.
53. Dalu Jones, p. 14.