

Typology Study of Mosques in the City of Mascara during the Ottoman Period

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Received: 01/08/2023; Accepted: 01/10/2023 Published: 14/10/2023

Abstract

It is a fact that the diversity of different environments and cultures of peoples, under the banner of Islam, has an active role in the formation of Islamic architecture in general and religious in particular, Moreover, this latter unifies all architectural achievements in all countries of the Islamic world marked with a particular style thanks to the spirituality of the Islamic religion. Due to several religious, political and environmental factors, The Ottomans in Algeria in general and in the city of Mascara in particular, produced a building that still preserves its architectural and artistic traditions, Where it is replete with mosques dating back to the Ottoman period: The Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami, The Mosque of Ain al-Bayda, The Mosque of Abd allah bin maseud in Al-Kart, which we aim through its stereotype study, to deepen in and know the similarities and differences in terms of its plans and components And the incoming artistic effects.

The methodology of our study is based on the plans of mosques in the city of Mascara in the Ottoman period and its architectural system. We concluded that it was built according to two styles, the local style, which is the traditional style in which the house of prayer is based on columns and pillars, and the second style is the one that came to Algeria, which is based on the central dome surrounded by domes in its side, influenced by ottoman mosques.

Keywords: Ottomans, Algeria, Mascara, Mosque, Typology.

Tob Regul Sci.™ 2023 ;9(2): 239-262

DOI: doi.org/10.18001/TRS.9.2.17

Introduction:

Archaeological heritage is a source of pride for nations of all races. It represents the national identity of every society, and a link and communication between the past and the present. No matter how advanced and advanced these nations are, they remain connected to this legacy. Civilized nations, aware of the value of this legacy, have worked to study it, and delve deeper into its components to inspire solutions for the present and future.

The city of Mascara possesses a rich cultural, archaeological, and historical heritage due to its strategic location, which has allowed it to play significant roles throughout history. It is recognized as one of the most important cities in western Algeria, with a long history of human settlement and urban development spanning from prehistoric times to the Ottoman period.

During the Ottoman era, Mascara was liberated from Spanish occupation, and Khair al-Din Bayler Bey was appointed as the governor of the Ottoman state of Algiers. Following Algeria's integration into the Ottoman Empire, the rulers of Algeria focused on establishing administrative, political, and economic organization both internally and externally. The entry of Algeria into the Ottoman Empire facilitated political, economic, cultural, and religious connections between the two, leading to notable artistic and architectural influences. The city of Mascara, in particular, experienced a significant impact from these influences. Under the rule of the "deys," the rulers of the time, Mascara saw a vibrant period characterized by the construction of various religious facilities in the Ottoman style. These structures exhibited a range of architectural variations and styles, incorporating both foreign and local elements.

The problem of the study:

The Ottomans produced in Algeria in general and in the Mascara in particular religious architecture that still maintains its architectural and artistic traditions to this day thanks to the availability of several religious, environmental and political factors. Examples of mosques that date back to this period are: The Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami, Ain al-Bayda Mosque, and Mosque, Abd allah bin Maseud in Al-Kart. Therefore, the problems of our study focused on the following:

- What are the Ottoman methods and influences in planning mosques in the Ottoman period in Algeria?
- What are the styles of Ottoman religious architecture of mosques in the city of Mascara?
- What are the characteristics and features of the Ottoman religious architecture of the mosques in the city of Mascara?
- What are the architectural units and elements that make up the models chosen for the study? What are the similarities and differences?

Objectives of the study:

By studying the typology of mosques in Mascara during the Ottoman period, we can discern and identify the key models of mosques that were established during that time. This analysis allows us to distinguish between the local architectural characteristics that were indigenous to the region and the imported influences that emerged as a result of the Ottoman presence.

Significance of the study:

Ottoman religious architecture in the city of Mascara exhibits unique and distinct urban and architectural aspects that allow for the recognition of its characteristics, features, and architectural influences. These architectural traits spread to various cities in Algeria, including Mascara, leaving evident marks on its urban and architectural identity. Consequently, there is a need to conduct in-depth studies to explore its history and architecture. Additionally, it is essential to undertake a typological study of its religious mosque architecture, considering the limited

research available on Ottoman religious structures and the inadequate state of preservation. Failing to address these issues may have adverse consequences on the future architectural and artistic dimensions.

First: The historical study of the Ottoman mosques in the city of Mascara:

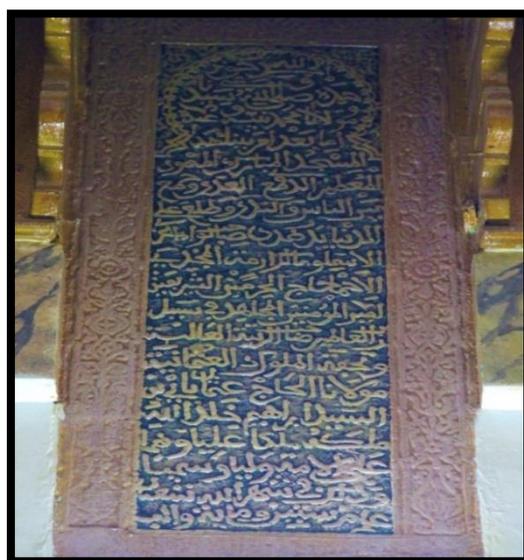
1. The Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami in Mascara:

• Location:

The Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami, located in the heart of Mascara, holds a prominent position in the city. It is situated west of Ain al-Bayda Mosque, just a few meters away, and its construction was of great significance during the Ottoman period (Hassani, 2017, p. 55). Referred to as "Mustafa ibn al-Tohami Square," it occupies a strategic location, serving as the nucleus of the city. Surrounding the Great Mosque, we find the Culture Commission to the east, while streets leading to the mosque can be found on its west and south sides. On the northern side, it is adjacent to the bathhouse known as "Hammam al-Baraka." This mosque is considered the initial center of religious architecture in the city during the Ottoman period, as documented in historical sources. Furthermore, the remaining structures from that time continue to bear witness to this era in the city's history (Bouaziz, 2009, p. 55).

• Its history:

The Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami was established by Bey Hajj Othman in the year 1160 AH, which corresponds to 1747 AD. This information is supported by a founding plaque located at the top of the original main entrance. The plaque measures 65 cm in height and 33 cm in width and was specifically placed to introduce the mosque and its founder (Tawama, 2019, p. 119). The text on the plaque was inscribed using the relief style and written in Moroccan script (Ben Bella, 2008, p. 83; Qarman, 2014, p. 124) and it stated the following:



الحمد لله حق
 حمده وصلى الله على سيدنا
 وولانا محمد نبيه وعبيده.
 اما بعد امر ببناء هذا
 المسجد الميزك المحمود.
 المعظم (الرافع القامع) العداء وجمع
 بين الناس والندى وطلع على
 الدنيا بدر هدى صاحب فواء الحمد
 الاسما ومالك لمة المجدي
 الاحما حاج الحرمين الشريفين
 امير المومنين المجاهد في سبيل
 رب العالمين صاحب الرتبة العالية
 وتحفة الملوك العثمانية
 مولانا الحاج عثمان باي بن
 السيد اواهم خلد الله
 ملكه ملكا عليا وهما
 على الامة ولنا وساميا

Photo (1): The first founding painting installed in the main original entrance to the Great Mosque.

We also find another founding plaque in the dome of the mihrab, written in Moroccan script, which reads as follows:



Photo (2): The second foundation panel installed in the dome of the central spire perpendicular to the Qibla wall of the Great Mosque in Mascara.

According to the analysis of the foundation paintings, it was established that the construction of the Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami began in the year 1160 AH, equivalent to 1747 AD, and was completed in the year 1162 AH, equivalent to 1749 AD. Being the first core of religious architecture in Mascara during the Ottoman period, the Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami remained untouched by any form of sabotage, demolition, or alteration during the period of French occupation. It has maintained its original state throughout the ages (Ibn Hattal al-Tilmisani, 1969, pp. 27-28) (Ibn Sahnoun al-Rashidi, 1973, p. 127). As the oldest mosque in Mascara and the most significant in its modern era, it received special attention from the governors throughout the Ottoman rule.

The Bey Muhammad bin Othman the Great renovated and expanded the mosque, with the intention of establishing it as a prominent center for education in the region. However, this plan was ultimately thwarted by the French occupation of Mascara, which occurred less than forty years after the mosque's construction. Nonetheless, the Bey successfully completed the construction and incorporated a Qur'anic school into the mosque. The mosque employed a preacher, an imam, four muezzins, a teacher's assistant, four teachers, and a number of students (Saad Allah, 1998, p. 260). The mosque played a significant role in the religious life of the city, serving as a source of enlightenment for generations of Algerian Muslims, and enhancing the overall quality of life. It fostered widespread and effective intellectual and cultural education, attracting numerous distinguished scholars, including the notable scholar Al-Hafiz Abu Ras Al-Nasser Al-Rashidi (Bouaziz, 2009, p. 208).



Photo (3): The Great Mosque in Mascara 2021.

- **Founder:**

The Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami in Mascara was founded by Bey Haj Othman, as documented in various historical sources. One notable source is "Muhammad bin Yusuf al-Zayyani" in his book "Dalil al-Hiran..." where he explicitly states that Bey Haj Othman built the mosque during his rule. Bey Haj Othman, the twenty-third bey in the lineage of beys ruling the Beylik of the West, assumed power in the year 1160 AH/1747 AD and passed away in Mascara after a nine-year reign (Bin Odeh Al-Mazari, 1986, p. 284) (Bin Abdul Qadir Al-Wahrani, 1974, p. 21). The architectural design, inscriptions, and calligraphy of the mosque were executed by Ahmed bin Sarmashq, a member of a knowledgeable family from Tlemcen. The Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami employed a significant number of staff, including a Friday preacher, an imam for the five daily prayers, four muezzins, a teacher for the students, and others. It is worth mentioning that these employees received salaries from the endowment established by Bey Muhammad al-Kabir for the Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami (Jaker, 1996, pp. 25-26).

Ain al-Bayda Mosque in Mascara:

- **Location:**

The Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami, also known as the Ain al-Bayda Mosque, is situated in the heart of Mascara, approximately 400 meters from its eastern wall. The mosque acquired its name due to the presence of a spring located at the base of the city wall, which had water of a whitish color. This name, Ain al-Bayda, extended beyond the mosque itself, as the entire neighborhood became known by this name (Boaziz, 2009, p. 215). The mosque was constructed on a land that slopes towards the east, after Bey Muhammad bin Othman Al-Kabir purchased the land from its owners at a considerably high price, to which they gladly agreed (Ibn Sahnoun Al-Rashidi, 1973, p. 127).

- **History:**

This mosque was built in the month of Dhul-Qi'dah in the year 1195 AH, corresponding to 1780 AD, and this is according to what was stated in a writing engraved on plaster (Bouaziz, 2009, p. 208), which decorates the facade of the mihrab, and it reads as:



بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
 صلى الله على سيدنا محمد واله وصحبه
 الحمد لله
 أما بعد أمر بتشبيد هذا الجامع المبرك خليفة السلطان السيد
 محمد باي بن عثمان الله أمين
 انتهى بحمد الله على يد المعلم أحمد بن محمد بن حج احساين بن صر مشيق
 التلمساني رحمه الله في أول يوم من ذي القعدة عام خمس مائة وتسعين ومائة وألف

Photo (4): The founding writing in the mihrab of Ain al-Bayda Mosque.

The mosque contains another inscription, which is a marble plaque installed to the right of the main entrance, on the southern side, which reads as follows:



"الحمد لله الذي وفق عباده لسلوك المتقين ودلهم لصالح الأعمال
 التي ينتفع بها الإنسان والصلاة والسلام على المبعوث بالمعجزات
 والآيات البينات صلى الله عليه وعلى آله صلاة وسلاما دائما بيوام الأرض
 والسموات أما بعد وأن السيد ابن محمد بولكباشي بن عثمان جمع الدار
 الكائنة على ملكه بأمر العساكر التي كان اشترها من صوره الناسك الإمام أمير
 الوقت مولانا الحاج عثمان باي كما هو ذكر الشراء بيده مختوما بطابعه
 التحبيس على عقار الذكور والإناث ما تناسلوا وامتدت فروعهم على عقبهم
 وعقب عقبهم ومن مات عن غير عقب رجع نصيبه إلى الباقيين إلى النسل
 رجعت الدار المذكورة إلى مكة والمدينة تحبيسا لا يبدل ولا يغير وسيعلم الذين
 ظلموا أي منقلب ينقلبون بتاريخ ربيع الأول عام أربعة وستين ومائة وألف
 شهد بذلك السيد الحاج مصطفى بن بوشلاغم رحمه الله."

Photo (5): The founding writing installed at the entrance to Ain Al-Bayda Mosque.

When examining this painting, several questions arise regarding its presence in the mosque, considering various factors. Firstly, the painting's history dates back to the year 1164 AH, which is approximately 31 years before the construction of the mosque. Secondly, the names mentioned in the painting, such as "Muhammad Boulkbashi bin Othman" and "Al-Bey Hajj Othman," raise curiosity. Bey Hajj Othman, who ruled between 1160-1170 AH / 1747-1756 AD, and Mustafa bin Abi Bushlagham, referring to Bey Mustafa, the leader of the Masrati gold, who ruled between 1155-1160 AH / 1742-1747 AD, are mentioned. It is worth noting that Bey Mustafa was the only contemporary ruler during Bey Othman's reign (Qaraman, 2014: 116) and was subsequently removed from power by Bey Othman's brother-in-law, Hajj Usman bin Ibrahim, as mentioned by Al-Mazari (Bin Odeh Al-Mazari, 1986, p. 280).

The mosque is known by four different names. The first name is "Al-Ain Al-Bayda Mosque," which refers to the presence of a white-colored spring in the area, from which it derived its name. The second name is "Al-Bay Muhammad Al-Kabir Mosque," named after its founder. The third name is the "Mosque of Pledge of Allegiance," referring to the act of pledging allegiance to the leaders of the Gheris and Al-Hashem regions, specifically Prince Abdelkader, who was a prominent leader in the early days of 1832 AD. Lastly, the fourth name is the "Sidi Hassan" mosque, named after a revered saint named Saleh who is buried near the mosque.

After the Treaty of Tafna was broken by the French in late 1839 AD, they proceeded to occupy the city of Mascara the following year. The Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami endured a period of closure for nearly seventy years. During this time, the French used it as a stable for the horses of the Sabahi soldiers and as a warehouse for their fodder and military equipment. Subsequently, a Jewish individual named "Ben Adi" rented the mosque and converted it into a grain store, attempting to establish it as a Jewish monastery. However, with the support of the city's governor-general, the residents of Mascara restored the mosque and reclaimed it from its Christian captivity. In the year 1910 AD, the mosque was reopened for worship, and it was freed from its occupation by Christian forces. It resumed its religious, educational, and cultural functions (Bouaziz, 2009, pp. 216-217) (Ben Abaji, 2010, p. 103). The Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami is highly regarded as one of the most significant mosques in Algeria that has preserved its beauty and originality since the Ottoman era. Bey Muhammad the Great, after purchasing the land at a high price, constructed magnificent buildings and remarkable monuments, surpassing the achievements of previous rulers in terms of perfection and beauty. The mosque also included a large attached school with a library, as well as facilities such as a bakery, shops, and other amenities that catered to the needs of students, teachers, and all those associated with the mosque and school (Bouaziz, 2009, p. 217).



Photo (6): Ain Al Bayda Mosque in Mascara.

• **Founder:**

According to historical sources, the Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami, also known as the Ain al-Bayda Mosque, was founded by Bey Muhammad bin Othman bin Ibrahim al-Kurdi, commonly known as Bey Muhammad al-Kabir. This information is mentioned by Ahmed bin

Ali bin Sahnoun in "Al-Thaghr Al-Jumani," where he states that Bey Muhammad al-Kabir began constructing the Great Mosque, which surpassed any previous prince's construction in terms of perfection and beauty (Ibn Sahnoun Al-Rashidi, 1973, p. 127). Additionally, Ahmed bin Hattal Al-Tilmisani mentions that Bey Muhammad built the mosque that bears his name, "The Great Mosque of Muhammad" (Ibn Hattal Al-Tilmisani, 1969, p. 28). Furthermore, Al-Zayani recorded that Bey Muhammad built the Great Mosque in Ain Al-Bayda in the city of Mascara (Bin Yusuf Al-Zayani, 2007, p. 204).

He was the governor of Beylik al-Gharb in the Algiers province of the Ottoman Empire and played a significant role in shaping the history of Algeria during the late eighteenth century. Muhammad Al-Kabir served as bey from 1779 AD to November 1797 AD (Amirawi) (Ben Odeh Al-Mazari, 1986) (Meheres, 2009) (Boaziz, 2009) (Bin Abaji, 2010) (Bin Youssef Al-Zayani, 2007) (Balbarwat, 2003, p. 157). He received a good academic education and became known for his eloquence (Bin Youssef Al-Zayani, 2007, p. 199). What set him apart from other beys was his commitment to a civilizational project driven by a reform movement that was being reshaped during his reign (Qaraman, 2014, p. 120). According to sources that discuss Muhammad al-Kabir's biography, he was the son of Othman al-Kurdi, suggesting a lineage from the Kurdish dynasty settled in Turkey (Ibn Hattal al-Tilmisani, 1969, p. 15) (Leclerc, 1859-1860, p. 43).

1. Abd Allah bin Maseud Mosque in Al-Kart:

The municipality of Al-Al-Kart is situated at the base of Mount Bani Shughran, southwest of the city of Mascara, at a distance of 4 km. It is located at an altitude of 529 meters, with geographical coordinates of latitude 35 degrees 22' 52" North and longitude 0 degrees 5' 30" East. Administratively, it is part of the Tizi district and has a population of approximately 13,000 people. Among the notable figures in the region, Abdelkader Al-Misharafi, also known as the Imam of Al-Rashidiyya, has gained significant renown as one of the prominent scholars (Boudjelal, 2008, p. 210) (Boudjelal, 2016).

• Location:

The mosque is located in the municipality of Al-Kart. It was built on a relatively high plateau with a steep slope, extending from east to west, supported by a staircase extending from the bottom to the top in the same direction, next to the shrine of Sidi Youssef Ben Aissa.

• History:

The mosque is situated on the western side of the village, but there are no historical documents or archaeological evidence that provide specific information about its foundation or construction. However, based on the architectural characteristics of the mosque, such as its style, layout, building materials, and the design of its square minaret, it is considered the oldest mosque in the region. There are differing opinions regarding its founding. Some attribute it to the Zayani state during the reign of Prince Yahya Yaghmwarun al-Zayani in the 18th century AD, while others attribute it to Bey Muhammad bin Othman the Great during the Ottoman era. The mosque,

known as "Mosque Abd Allah Bin Maseud," still stands today (Interview with Mr. Salah al-Din Bin Naoum, 2021).



Photo (7): Abd Allah bin Masoud Mosque "Al-Kart".

• **Founder:**

The local people of the Al-Kart region attribute the construction of the mosque to the revered saint, Sidi Yusuf bin Issa Al-Sharif Al-Arabi. However, there is no definitive document that either confirms or denies this attribution. Ibn Al-Hajj Al-Baidari, in his book "Enlightening the Hearts of the People of Piety," mentions the lineage of Sidi Youssef bin Issa and states that he is the builder and founder of this mosque. To seek further confirmation, an interview was conducted with the mosque's sheikh, Mr. Darrar Naoum. According to Sheikh Darrar Naoum, Sidi Youssef bin Issa migrated from Boussemghoun to Al-Kart, where he settled and became the leader of the district. He founded the Al-Kart Mosque and resided there until his passing, being buried in his ancient mosque (Interview with Mr. Darar Naoum, 2021).

Second: Typology Study of Mosques in the City of Mascara during the Ottoman Period:

1. Planning study:

The layout of the Ottoman mosques in the city of Mascara was similar to mosques from the Ottoman period in Algeria. The mosques typically followed a square-shaped layout, which was common during that time. One notable example is the Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami. Originally, its plan had a semi-square shape due to the sloping land from west to east. The total area of the mosque is estimated to be 1,670 square meters. There are three main entrances to the mosque, with the main entrance located on the southern side, featuring a wooden door with two panels. During the contemporary period, the mosque underwent an extension, resulting in a rectangular shape. The late imam of Mascara, Bakara Belhashemi, added a significant portion to the southern side of the mosque. This addition included the main entrance and a dome that served as the shrine for the three Al-Bay. As a result, the main facade underwent substantial changes, and there were also expansions on the northern side, where the original shrine of the Imam was located.

This addition was inaugurated by the late President Houari Boumediene on Sunday, Rajab 20, 1385 AH, corresponding to November 4, 1965 AD. Years later, another part was added to this hall to its left, consisting of two galleries (Bouaziz, 2009, p. 204). We find in the Great Mosque

of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami another subsidiary entrance located on the western façade, but what is currently noted is that the mosque has undergone several changes. According to those in charge of it, the western side was a garden, through which one can reach the main entrance, which is now integrated into the house of prayer, and in view of the expansions that it was completed in the contemporary period. It appears as an entrance without a wooden door held by a border arch. Its dimensions are 2.60 x 1.70 M. At the top of it was fixed a rectangular fresco containing the founding writing. It is surmounted by an ornate and beautifully crafted wooden canopy, the purpose of which is to protect the painting from damage. In addition to stopping rainwater and preventing it from seeping into the mosque, as well as giving an aesthetic look to its entrance, the mosque is separated from the eastern street by a longitudinal corridor next to the qibla wall, surrounded by an iron fence whose purpose is to protect the qibla wall.

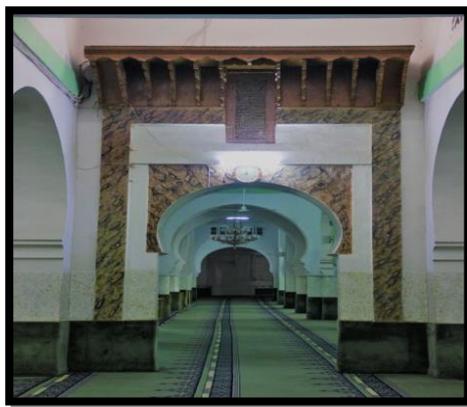


Photo (8): The original main entrance to the Great Mosque and its founding plaque.

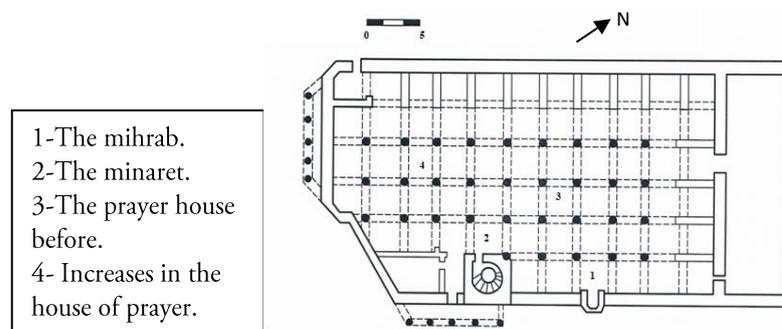


Figure (1): Plan of the Great Mosque after expansion.

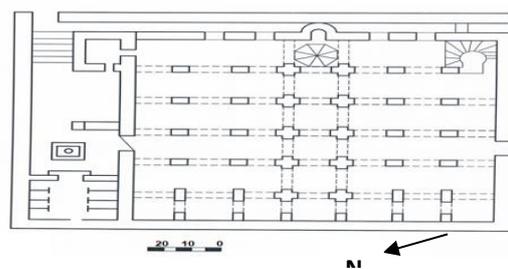


Figure (2): The original plan of the Great Mosque in Mascara.

As for the Ain al-Bayda Mosque, its general layout appears to be almost square, with a length of 20.16 m and a width of 18.16 m. However, it has been subjected to several changes, including the addition of an external wall on the western side, where the school attached to it was located. It currently contains two entrances, both on the north and western side, through which one can access the courtyard.

But originally, its main entrance was located on the southern side. This is clearly evident from an old picture of it dating back to the period of the French occupation. It is four steps in front of it, equipped with a wooden door with two leaves, surmounted by a lobed arch and a frame decorated on its sides with two crescents, which still maintains its original shape.

The mosque belongs to the style with a central dome and cupolas and vaults surrounding it (Dokali, 1974, p37). The prayer house is roofed with a central dome supported by columns lined up at the bottom of the square of the dome. It is a group of four columns in the corners of the square and two in the sides, and the central dome is surrounded by four Low cupolas, while the rest of the spaces were covered with a group of twelve intersecting vaults, the main entrance of which was preceded by a rectangular courtyard representing the courtyard of the mosque, and bordered in the south-eastern corner by a polygonal minaret (Boabdallah, 2012, p. 192).

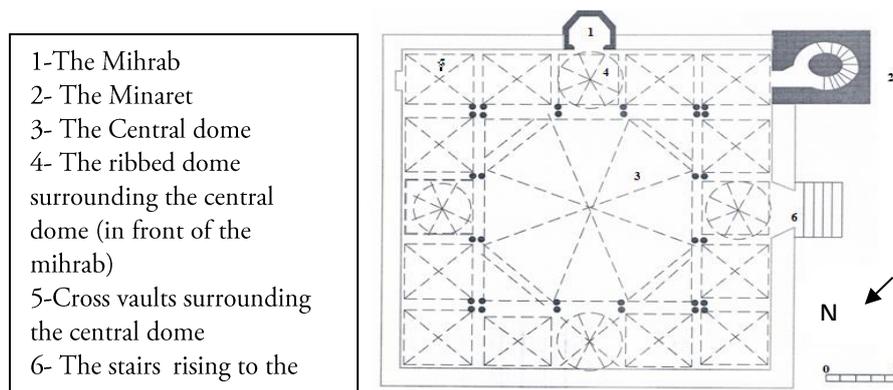


Figure (3): Plan of Ain al-Bayda Mosque in Mascara.

As for the Abd allah bin Maseud Mosque in Al-Kart, its general layout appears to be a simple square, with a total area estimated at 22.44 M2, Several expansions were made to it in the contemporary period from the western and southern sides, but its prayer house has maintained its original character. Its four facades are distinguished by simplicity, Surrounded by a wall that covered its courtyard on all sides, the mosque included a minaret, a shrine containing the tomb of Sidi Youssef Ben Aissa, and a side room in which the imam prepared his lessons and sermons.

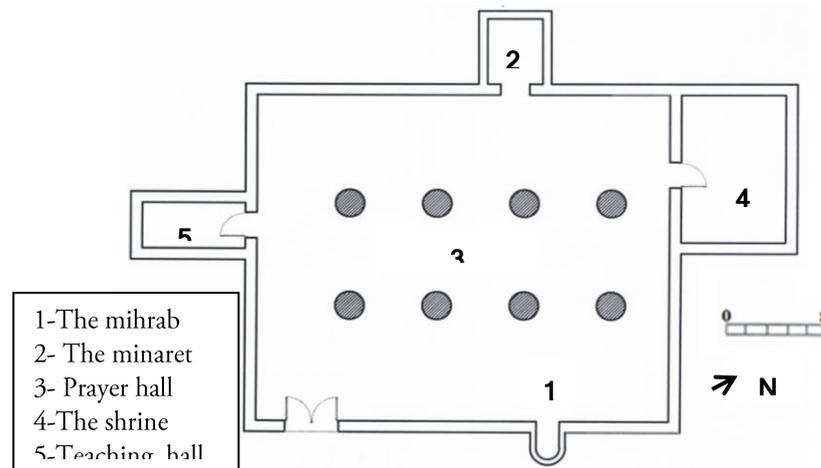


Figure (4): Plan of Abd Allah bin Masoud Mosque “Al-Kart”.

2. Architectural elements:

• Interfaces:

The Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami in Mascara is characterized by its simple facades, with three of them being visible. The fourth facade faces the bathroom on the eastern side. The main southwestern facade is adorned with simple semicircular arches and columns of two types: single and double (Qaraman, 2014, p. 111). On the other hand, the Ain al-Bayda Mosque is composed of four facades, which are simple in shape and tall in height. The southern side and the western side are the two facades that are prominently visible. The western side houses the minaret and the main entrance, which is surrounded by a rectangular courtyard adorned with trees.

As for the Abd Allah bin Maseud Mosque in Al-Kart, it consists of four simple and unadorned facades, dominated by green. It has a main entrance in the corner of its southeastern facade, except for the eastern side of it facing the shrine of Sidi Youssef bin Issa. As for its square minaret, it is located in the northern corner. The eastern one is where the muezzin enters from its door inside the mosque, and in the middle of the southern side of the mosque we find the new teaching hall, which appears square in its external appearance.

• Prayer houses:

During the Ottoman era in Algeria, prayer houses in mosques were typically rectangular in layout, although some mosques, like the Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami in Mascara, had an irregular layout. The Great Mosque initially had a square shape, but after undergoing expansion, its layout changed to a rectangle. The prayer house has a depth of 22.80 meters and a width of 30.40 meters. The original prayer house of the mosque consisted of six porticoes perpendicular to the qibla wall, with an additional portico at the end of the mosque that differed in construction. This portico formed five pillars, and there were five porticoes parallel to the qibla wall. Among these porticoes, the widest one is the transverse slab, also known as the mihrab slab, as it overlooks the mihrab. The builder of the mosque displayed skill in their work,

particularly evident in the construction of the mihrab. The mihrab is a recess that is 1.60 meters deep, 1.10 meters wide, and 3 meters high. It is surrounded by two cylindrical columns topped with a capital decorated with floral and geometric motifs.

They have a semicircular arch, followed by a dome known architecturally as the dome of the mihrab.

The mihrab appears in the shape of an octagon. It is decorated with various decorations, and this slab differs from the other slabs in terms of planning and construction, as it consists of arches extending on the four sides, which in turn are supported by four adjacent and grouped columns, except for the one at the end of the two columns which is made of three columns as we can see at the back of this mosque. A hallway is not directly open, so that its corridor is surrounded by medium-height entrances, with semicircular arches without doors leading to an entrance on the northwestern side, open to the watering hole. This is an architectural phenomenon that we rarely find in mosques (Qaraman, 2014, p. 114). This hallway also contains a private room for the imam, which is known as the maq̄sora, but according to the mosque's curator, it is newly built, and its original location was in the southeast corner, as it was demolished in the year 1965 AD when the House of Prayer was expanded from the eastern side. This hallway was also decorated, in the northwestern side is decorated with a variety of ceramic squares that originally decorated the dome of Sidi Abdul Qadir al-Jilani, so it belongs to the local style.

The House of Prayer in the Ain al-Bayda Mosque follows a square plan with a side length of 16.84 meters. The central space within the House of Prayer is covered by a large polygonal central dome that occupies almost the entire area. It is surrounded by a series of border arches, totaling five, which are supported by columns. The number of columns varies, with quadrilateral columns placed at the corners and double columns positioned in the middle of the sides. The transition area features recessed corner arches, indicating its affiliation with the style of imported mosques that have a central dome surrounded by domes and vaults. The mosque also has a main entrance. On the other hand, the Abd Allah bin Maseud Mosque in Al-Kart follows a local style. The prayer house of the mosque extends over a rectangular space, with five vertical bays on the qibla wall and three naves parallel to it. It is covered with a flat and modern roof. The length of the prayer house is 14.70 meters, the width is 12.71 meters, and the estimated height is 3.36 meters. Originally, the eight pillars in the mosque were square in shape, but in the contemporary period, they were changed to a circular shape for the safety of worshipers. This change was made to prevent worshipers from colliding with the sharp corners of the square pillars, which were located at the same height as the heads of the worshipers.

• **Entrances:**

The Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami features three entrances. The first entrance is located in the western wall and faces the fourth slab. It consists of a wooden door that is 1.50 meters wide and 2.50 meters high. This entrance directly leads from the street to the house of prayer. The second entrance is situated in the eastern wall and faces the fourth portal. It also

provides direct access from the street to the house of prayer. This entrance is a wooden door surrounded by an iron door, measuring 1.80 meters wide and 2.50 meters high. Additionally, there is a third entrance specifically designated for women. It opens in the southwestern wall and leads from the street to the house of prayer on the first floor. This entrance is a wooden door that is 80 centimeters wide and 2 meters high (Waziri, 2004, p. 111).

Upon entering the Ain al-Bayda Mosque through its main entrance, one will notice its distinctive border-lobulated arch. The façade of the mosque is adorned with two inverted crescents. The wooden door, measuring 2.87 meters wide and 3.95 meters high, consists of a frame and two leaves. The arch of the door's frame features decorative elements. The top of the arch has two pointed shapes, and the shutters of the door are embellished with pieces resembling semi-palm fans, arranged in various positions from opposite to side by side. The main entrance opens to the courtyard, which is situated in the southern wall of the mosque. There is also a small secondary entrance in the same wall that provides direct access to the minaret cavity located in the southeast corner of the mosque. The minaret cavity is constructed using regular stones and lacks extensive decorations, except for what appears to be stacked stone apples positioned above the four corners of the square base (Tawama, 2019, p. 124). Regarding the Abd Allah bin Maseud Mosque in Al-Kart, it comprises a main entrance to the prayer hall located in the southeast corner of the mosque. The length of this entrance is 2.4 meters, and its width is 1.55 meters. The mosque also has two secondary entrances. The first secondary entrance is situated on the southern side of the prayer hall, and it is a new addition. It measures 1.98 meters in length and 1.85 meters in width. The second secondary entrance, also newly constructed, is positioned on the western side of the mosque. This entrance is 2 meters long and 80 centimeters wide. It serves as a designated entrance for women, specifically for Friday prayers and the recitation and memorization of the Holy Qur'an.

- **Minarets:**

The minarets in the city of Mascara were distinguished during the Ottoman era by having two types of projections: the square and the octagonal projection. The Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami has a square-projected minaret that was originally located in the southeast corner. However, due to the expansions the mosque underwent, it became part of the eastern wall. It is distinguished by its square projection. In the body, there is a base surrounded by arched arches. From the bottom to the top, we find a wide, lobed arch, surmounted by two arches, followed by a colonnade of three lobed arches. The minaret was constructed using stones for the interior and bricks for the exterior, which were then covered with a layer of plaster. The staircase inside revolves around a central core, which is cylindrical and blind (Ben Bella, 2008, p. 294). Additionally, the Ain al-Bayda Mosque features an octagonal minaret located in the southeast corner, which can also be accessed from the square base. Above the base is the octagonal projected body of the minaret.

Its octagonal arch is surmounted by a small ribbed dome adorned with three balls and a crescent. The minaret is constructed with regular stones and lacks decoration, except for what appears to

be stone apples that are superimposed on the four corners of the square base. Similar to the previous minaret, the stone staircase inside revolves around a cylindrical and solid central core. Moving on to the minaret of the Abd Allah bin Maseud Mosque in Al-Al-Kart, it is located in the right corner of the northeastern side of the mosque. The minaret has an entrance with a medium-sized wooden door measuring 2.10 cm in length and 95 cm in width. The minaret has a square plan and is topped with two balconies: the first one is wide, and the upper one is smaller, both adorned with ornaments. The rectangular shape of the minaret narrows towards the top, where it culminates in a metal column and ends with a crescent facing the Qibla. The body of the minaret features four small square-shaped openings distributed for ventilation on each side.



Photo (11): The minaret of the Abd Allah bin Masoud "Al-Krat" Mosque in Mascara.

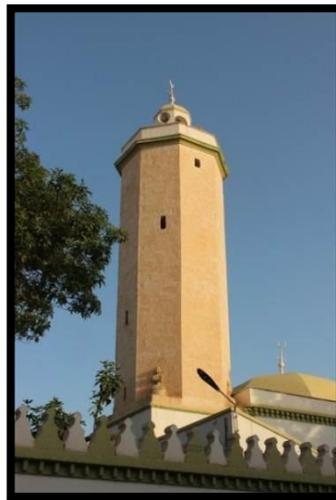


Photo (10): The minaret of Ain al-Bayda Mosque in Mascara.

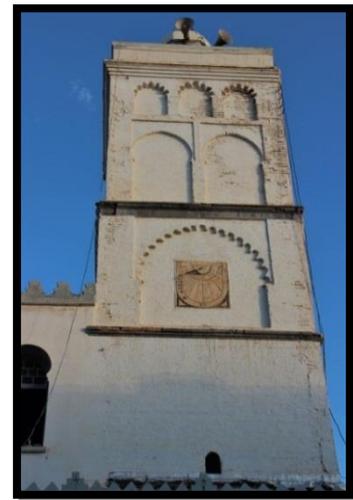


Photo (9): The minaret of the Great Mosque in Mascara

• Niches:

The original prayer house of the Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami features five windows, all located on the southeastern side of the qibla wall. They are designed in a unified geometric shape. Additionally, there is one window on the western side, which has a rectangular shape ending with a bordered arch. The dimensions of this window are 2.5 m in length, 1.5 m in width, and 85 cm in thickness. In the contemporary period, five windows were added on the southern side and northwest side of the mosque, following the same shape. However, their sizes are smaller, measuring 1.5 cm in length, 50 cm in width, and 45 cm in thickness. Moving on to the Ain al-Bayda Mosque, its prayer hall includes four windows on each wall, except for the northern wall, which contains only three. These windows are open from the outside and have a narrow shed-like appearance. Their dimensions are 60 cm in length, 45 cm in width, and 95 cm in thickness. As for the Abd Allah bin Maseud Mosque in Al-Al-Kart, the prayer house has six new windows for ventilation and lighting. The sizes of these windows vary from one to another.

- **Mihrabs:**

As for the mihrabs in the mosques of the city of Mascara, they have remained stable in their positions despite the changes that affected the prayer halls. The mihrab of the Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami is located in the middle of the qibla wall on the southeastern side. It has a polygonal shape and is adorned with a horseshoe arch supported by columns topped with capitals made of limestone. The upper part of the mihrab is decorated with various intricate plaster decorations, including floral motifs known as serif or arabesque decorations, as well as foundational epigraphic decorations and Qur'anic verses within a geometric frame. At the top of the mihrab, there are three similar-shaped openings covered with transparent glass and decorated with plaster ornaments, specifically designed for lighting. Similarly, the mihrab of the Ain al-Bayda Mosque is situated in the center of the qibla wall on the southeastern side. It has a polygonal shape at the lower part and is embellished with a horseshoe arch supported by columns topped with capitals made of limestone. The upper

part of the mihrab features exquisite plaster decorations, including floral motifs or arabesque decorations, as well as decorative writings and Qur'anic verses such as "In the houses of God's permission, to be raised and His name is mentioned in them. His name is praised in the morning and the evening. Men who are not distracted by trade, nor are they heedless of the remembrance of God, and the establishment of prayer and the giving of zakat." These decorations are placed within a geometric frame. At the top of the mihrab, there are three similar-shaped openings covered with transparent glass and adorned with plaster decorations for lighting purposes. As for the mihrab of the Abd Allah bin Maseud Mosque in Al-Al-Kart, it has a simple shape and decoration. It is located in the middle of the qibla wall and has a semi-recessed cavity. The mihrab is circular, approximately 1.20 m deep, and 3 m high. It terminates with a semi-circular arched arch made of plaster, which is a recent addition. The lower section of the mihrab is adorned with new square ceramic tiles.



Photo (14): The Mihrab of the Abd Allah bin Maseud "Al-Kart" Mosque in Mascara.

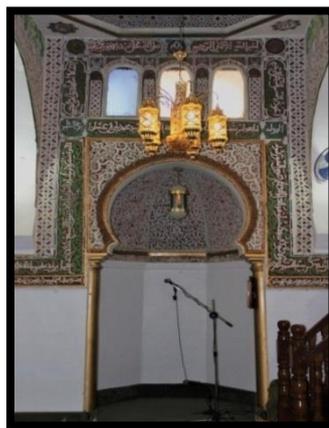


Photo (13): The Mihrab of Ain al-Bayda Mosque in Mascara.



Photo (12): The Mihrab of the Great Mosque in Mascara.

• Columns:

The columns of the Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami exhibit a distinct distribution in various shapes. There are two types of columns: the first type consists of 28 columns with double circular bodies. The second type comprises 14 columns with a single twisted circular body, supporting the arches of the eastern and southern facades. These columns have a leg length of 1.90 m. Another type of column in the mosque is quadrilateral in shape. It is divided into five groups, each consisting of four columns of two different types. These columns also have a leg length of 1.90 m and a height of 35 cm. They are topped with a stepped upper part that resembles capitals, featuring corner cavities to connect to the bases of the supporting arches. Notably, these columns lack bases and are among the largest bodies used in the construction of the mosque. Similarly, in the Ain al-Bayda Mosque, the columns can be classified into two types: quadrilateral columns located in the corners and double columns found in the ribs. These columns bear resemblance to the columns in the Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami, with the main difference being the graduated design of the upper parts of the columns. In the Abd Allah bin Maseud Mosque in Al-Karat, the columns initially had a square shape in their original construction. However, they were later changed to thick cylindrical columns. The eight supports of the mosque were originally square-shaped, but in contemporary times, they were modified to a circular shape for the safety of worshippers. This change was made to prevent any potential collisions with the four sharp corners of the columns, which were positioned exactly at the level of the worshippers' heads.

There are 14 pillars in the Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami that have a cross-shaped (+) shape, with a height of 1.75 M. We find them in the fourth, seventh, and eighth gallery, and they are decorated with new tiles, while in the Ain Al-Bayda Mosque and the Abd Allah bin Maseud Mosque in Al-Kart, they do not contain supports.

• Domes:

The Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami features two domes. The first dome is situated in front of the mihrab, resting on a square base and equipped with a window for ventilation and natural light. Its interior is adorned with geometric patterns intricately intertwined with floral motifs, specifically flower designs. The second dome, known as the Sheikh Sidi Dome, is named after Sheikh Abdul Kadir Gilali. It is located on the western side of the prayer house and has a polygonal shape. At the top of the dome, there is an iron pillar that extends to the surface, forming a square. Inside the dome, a notable feature is a finely crafted iron chain, attributed to Beii Muhammad Kabir, as a mark of respect to Sheikh Abdul Qader al Jailali. A commemorative board hangs on the tribal wall, serving as evidence of this dedication. The Ain Beida Mosque follows a distinct architectural model, featuring a central roof dome. Below the dome, there is a square with corner nodes, which support the aforementioned dome. The corners of the square are formed by four columns, while the ribs are supported by two columns. In addition to the central dome, there are four smaller domes surrounding it. The remaining area is covered by a series of 12 intersecting domes, as described by Goknil (1965, P91). Notably, unlike the other

domes, the ones directly preceding the mihrab are richly adorned with exquisite arabesque stucco decorations. This dome showcases the new architectural style that emerged in Algeria during the Ottoman period, influenced by Ottoman mosques.



Photo 16: The internal appearance of the central dome of the Ain Beida Mosque in the Mascara.



Photo 15: Appearance of the central dome of the Ain Beida Mosque in the Mascara.

As for the Abd Allah bin Maseud Mosque in Al-Kart, it does not contain any dome, unlike the previous two mosques, but we find it in the shrine of Sidi Youssef bin Issa, which is located on the side of the mosque's minaret, which stands on a square base with eight corner corners to reach the dome.

Hallways:

The ratio of the corridors parallel to the Qibla wall in the Ottoman Mosque in the city of Al-Muhammad ranges from 2 to 6, while the ratio of the horizontal corridors varies from 1 to 10. The size of these corridors varies depending on the specific mosque. In the prayer house of the Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami, there are five galleries running parallel to the qibla wall. Additionally, there are six galleries running perpendicular to the qibla wall. The horizontal galleries are positioned on the axis of the mihrab and are connected by two columns that support five broken semicircles. In the Ain al-Bayda Mosque, there is one gallery running parallel to the qibla wall. At the top, there are two vertical panels that follow the pattern of the central dome. These panels rely on corridors that run both perpendicular and parallel to the qibla wall. As for the Abd Allah bin Maseud Karat Mosque, its prayer house is composed of three corridors that run parallel to the qibla wall. These corridors are nearly equal in size and intersect with six vertical corridors located on the qibla wall.

• Contracts:

The arches observed in mosques exhibit a variety of styles, including single, crossed, broken, and semi-circular arches. In the Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami, all three types are prominently featured and distributed throughout the mosque. However, the majority of arches in the original plan are the ones that cross the semicircle. After subsequent expansions that impacted the mosque, broken semicircular arches were also utilized (Rachid, 1986, p129). Additionally, there are semi-circular arches present in the mosque. In the Ain al-Bayda Mosque, the arches are found in its sole portico located in front of the mihrab, as well as in the two side

porticos. As for the Abd Allah bin Maseud Mosque in Al-Kart, the arches are predominantly of the semicircular type, running parallel to the qibla wall.

- **The ablution house:**

The House of Ablution in the Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami is situated on the ground level of the mosque's western side (Mu'nis, 1981, p. 80). It is accessed through a newly constructed open entrance in the western wall (Muhairs, 2009, p. 199). Similarly, the House of Ablution in the new Ain al-Bayda Mosque is also located on the southern side of the mosque, separate from the main structure. In the Abd Allah bin Maseud Mosque in Al-Kart, the ablution facilities are separate from the prayer house. They are situated within the outer courtyard of the mosque and have a rectangular shape. However, it is worth noting that the House of Ablution in this mosque has undergone modifications over time, resulting in the loss of its original character. Several elements, such as ceramic tiles, have been added to it.

- **The yards:**

The open space within a mosque, designed to provide lighting and ventilation to the internal areas of the building, is commonly referred to as the courtyard (Waziri, 2004, p. 111). This term is widely recognized in various Islamic countries, both ancient and modern (Hamza Haddad, 2001, p. 34). Regarding the location of the courtyard in relation to the prayer house, in the Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami, it is positioned to the left of the prayer house and is characterized by its rectangular shape. Some historical and archaeological research mentions that the mosque's original courtyard was situated on the southern side, referred to by the locals as the garden. However, it was integrated into the prayer house following the expansion carried out by Al-Jami' (Ben Bella, 2008, p. 166). In the Ain al-Bayda Mosque, the courtyard is located on the southern side, but its shape has become irregular due to alterations made during the period of French occupation. It is noteworthy that the prayer house is elevated six steps higher than the level of the courtyard. Based on the information collected about the Abd Allah bin Maseud Mosque in Al-Kart, it is evident that this mosque does not have a courtyard.

- **Bishop:**

The Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami employed two methods for roofing. Firstly, domes were utilized, with a total of two domes present. Additionally, tiles were used for the roofing, arranged in a gabled shape. This design considered the local climate, which experiences snowfall in winter. This roofing method effectively protects the mosque's roof from water accumulation. However, after the expansions on the southern side and the addition of a section, a modern cement roof was observed in that area. In the Ain al-Bayda Mosque, the roof construction relied on the use of domes. It features a central dome surrounded by smaller domes, which is a characteristic style associated with the Ottomans (Qarman, 2014, p. 127). On the other hand, the Abd Allah bin Maseud Mosque is covered with carpet, and it has a newly constructed flat roof.

•Wooden pulpit:

The pulpit in the Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami is made of wood and is a recent addition, lacking descriptions of an authentic pulpit. Similarly, the pulpit in the Ain al-Bayda Mosque is also made of wood and is

not an original piece. In the case of the Abd Allah bin Maseud Mosque in Al-Krat, the pulpit is newly constructed and made of wood. However, it is worth noting that the designs and decorations of these pulpits do not align with architectural elements from the Ottoman period.

• Building materials:

During the Ottoman period in the city of Mascara, a variety of building materials, both organic and inorganic, were used, reflecting the local characteristics. In the Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami, we observe the extensive use of stone materials in the walls and the minaret from the interior. However, the exterior surface was covered with a layer of plaster. Additionally, bricks with dimensions of 21 cm in length, 12.5 cm in width, and 2.5 cm in thickness were utilized. Wood was used as the primary structural material for the roof, while the roof itself was covered with tiles. In the construction of the Ain al-Bayda Mosque, the primary building materials were stones and baked red bricks (Maheres, 2009, p. 74). Stones were employed for the foundations and walls, with a thickness of approximately 1.20 m. Bricks were used for the construction of arches and domes (Boabdallah, 2012, p. 194). The Abd Allah bin Maseud Mosque utilized various building materials, including limestone, which served as a fundamental material for the walls. Baked bricks were used for the construction of the qibla wall and its original supports. However, the roof of the mosque is newly built using cement and iron beams. Ceramic tiles were also used to clad the ablution house.

• Decoration:

Ottoman mosques in Algeria were renowned for their diverse decorations. In the Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami, floral motifs can be observed in some of its architectural elements. Despite the mosque being subjected to ruin, destruction, and erasure, remnants of decorative elements remain in the dome adjacent to the mihrab. These decorations consist of engraved plant leaves and flowers in various shapes and colors, intricately intertwined with plaster. However, geometric decorations featuring shapes such as rectangles, rhombuses, circles, triangles, and trapezoids are scarce, except for certain areas like the main doors. Written decorations are also minimal in this landmark, with the Rayhani script used in two memorial plaques and modern plaques added after the expansion, including a plaque commemorating the date of the addition and another displaying the hadith of Al-Qudsi. The Rayhani script is also employed in four integrated panels inside the dome adjacent to the mihrab, which represent a memorial text for the construction of the mosque. In the Ain al-Bayda Mosque, decorations were varied and manifested in plaster. Floral and geometric motifs adorned the dome of the mihrab, the dome of the corridor parallel to the qibla wall, and the upper portions of the arches supporting the dome. These decorations are considered among the most beautiful in Algerian Ottoman mosques. In contrast, the Abd Allah bin Maseud Mosque in Al-Krat lacks significant and elaborate

decorations. It is characterized by simplicity in every part, except for the edges of the mihrab, which feature geometric decorations.



Photo (18): Floral and epigraphic decorations in the dome of the mihrab of Ain al-Bayda Mosque in Mascara.



Photo (17): Floral and geometric decoration in the dome that precedes the mihrab of the Great Mosque in Mascara.

Conclusion:

There is no doubt that the diversity and differences in environments and cultures of the peoples who embraced Islam played an effective role in shaping Islamic architecture in general and religious architecture in particular. All architectural achievements in the Islamic world, across different countries, exhibit a unity of character that embodies the spirituality of the true Islamic religion.

With the entry of the Ottomans into Algeria, the region was liberated from Spanish occupation, and Khair al-Din Bayler Bey was appointed as the governor of the Ottoman province of Algeria. Since becoming part of the Ottoman Empire, the rulers of Algeria have worked towards organizing the state administratively, politically, and economically, both internally and externally. They aimed to establish connections between politics, economy, culture, and religion. The influence of Ottoman art and architecture clearly permeated the cities, witnessing an active construction movement under the ruling dynasties. Many religious facilities were constructed in various types and styles, incorporating both imported and local elements of the Ottoman style. Through a combination of religious and environmental factors, the Ottomans contributed to the architectural heritage of Algeria, particularly in Mascara, where the architectural and artistic traditions are still preserved.

The various Ottoman mosques in Mascara, like other Ottoman mosques across the country, were established with simplicity while incorporating local features. Despite the destructive impact of the French occupation, many of these mosques have managed to retain their structural and artistic condition. During the Ottoman period, the mosques in Mascara played a significant role in various aspects, thanks to their religious and educational facilities. The efforts of the sheikhs and scholars who emerged from these mosques contributed to the preservation of their cultural,

religious, urban, architectural, and artistic significance. Mascara is home to three important models from the Ottoman period: the Great Mosque of Mustafa bin Al-Tohami, the Mosque of Ain Al-Bayda, and the Mosque of Abd allah bin Maseud in Al-Kart. Through a typological study, we can delve deeper into these mosques and explore their similarities and differences in terms of planning and architectural components.

Upon examining the plans and architectural systems of the mosques studied in Mascara during the Ottoman period, it becomes evident that they were constructed according to two main styles. The first style is the local style, which follows a traditional approach where the prayer hall is supported by columns and pillars. This style can be observed in the Great Mosque of Mustafa ibn al-Tohami and the Mosque of Abd allah bin Maseud in Al-Kart. The second style is the imported style, which exhibits various architectural forms and planning patterns that were prevalent during the Ottoman period. This can be seen in the Ain al-Bayda Mosque in Mascara, which stands as the sole example of the imported style in Algeria. The mosque features a central dome surrounded by smaller cupolas on its sides, showcasing influences from Ottoman mosques. The architectural elements utilized in the mosques of Mascara during the Ottoman period were diverse, incorporating both local and imported elements. This diversity had a positive impact on the planning, engineering, and technical aspects, ultimately influencing the visual outcomes and aesthetics of the mosques.

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