

Contemporary Mosques: Conventional and Innovative Approach in Mosque Design at Turkey

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Abstract: Mosques are spaces that are prepared to be proper for praying and worshipping they are one of the most repeated building types in Muslim countries and consist to be potentially a visual attraction and a landmark in metropolitans. Turkey is rich in term of the mosque design and had its own unique linkage with the ottoman mosque design, on the other hand in the main time the innovation produced can be observed for various architectural forms that immerge to mosque design to create innovative mosque styles that are new interpretation or abstraction of the conventional mosque's architectural elements. Moreover, the traditional imitated mosques are using different constructional technologies and building materials that separated them to be within the classification of the traditional ones. In order to classify the styles of the mosques based on a coherent style expression which were distinguished into looking for two main distances from traditional wise to modern wise.

This article aims to define the contemporary mosques and represent the critic's attempts to create a classification for the contemporary mosque's expressions based on the style. And based on the approach followed in the mosque design. The paper is qualitative analytical based, demonstrate the appropriate classification for the mosque expressions by looking to the traditional and modernity dimensions. And the categorization of the innovative approach and the conventional ones. Analyze the sorting of prominent designs of contemporary mosque architecture in turkey and introduce a contemporary case study. In order to lead for classification and evaluation of the contemporary styles expression and approaches based on the architectural values.

Keywords: Mosque design, style expression, Contemporary mosque, Innovative mosque, Innovative approach,

1. Introduction

Mosques are spaces that are prepared to be proper for praying and worshipping they are one of the most repeated building types in Muslim countries and consist to be potentially a visual attraction and landmark in metropolitans. Turkey is rich in term of the mosque design and had its own unique linkage with the ottoman mosque design. On the other hand, in main time the innovation produced can be observed for a various architectural form that immerge to mosque design to creates innovative mosque styles that have new forms and shapes, or a new interpretation or abstraction of the traditional mosque architectural elements, or imitating the original mosques using the new technologies and materials.

After the political changes the 1950s the development and established on the traditional places transformed through time toward contemporary and modern approaches in architecture (Turan, 2014). In last 50 years at the

20th century, a number of architectural achievements gave the opportunity to critically evaluate and classify the contemporary mosque architecture (Okuyucu, 2016). In order to define the contemporary mosques and merge to well-structured classification, the scholars were considering the essential distance of tradition and modernity. Subsequently to analysis for the prominent designs the contemporary mosque architecture lead to having four classifications of styles expression based on the architectural values.

2. Methodology:

The method of the paper is basically a descriptive analytical method on two theoretical bases. First is the tradition and modernity in mosque design. The second is the contemporary approaches. The paper reviewed the scholars' classification of the style's expression based on the tradition and modernity and based on the utilized approaches. These classifications assist to formulate the base to show

examples of the contemporary mosque architecture in Turkey and caption a case study.

expression for them. Generally, it gets its reputation in the late of 20th century. After the second world

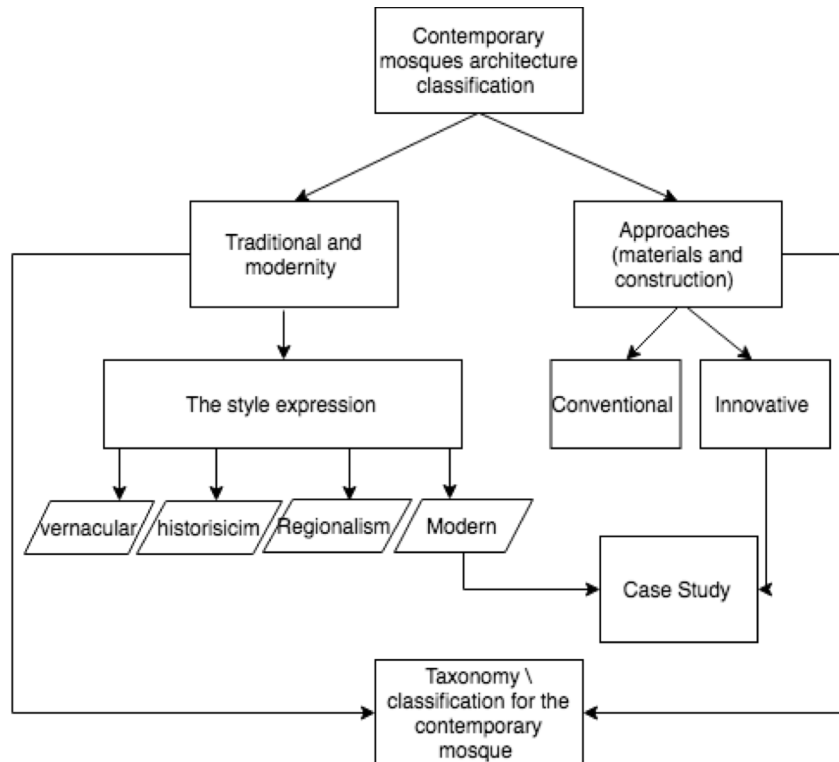


Figure 1. Framework for Methodology

3. Tradition and modernity:

The contemporary mosque implements a variety of used styles in one cultural environment is obvious from region to region. To be more precise, the different view in contemporary mosques should be looking for two essential distance traditions and modernity. The opinion derived from the clergy and was accepted as well by some architects, that mosques need to be maintaining the traditional architectural features of the old schools of regional architecture in order to be recognizable. Some architects tried to create a mixture between the “new” and “old” and merge the “tradition” with “modernity” and this style is called “panislamic”. The modernity is not linked to the international and universal formal principles of the internationalism and not necessarily related to the advanced materials. in other words, we can see two contemporary mosques one of them is built in traditional style using contemporary materials and technologies and the other is modern using the traditional material. Khan had asked “in order to understand the building as a traditional or modern on account of how they appear or on how they produced.

4. Contemporary mosque:

The contemporary mosque is a trend that appeared in the Islamic society and resembles a specific

war when mainly after a large part of the Islamic world gained its independence. The contemporary mosques are very different from the old monumental mosques. They resemble different social classes and groups from such the government to individuals. The contemporary mosques hide in its essence a pronounced spiritual symbolic message and a traditional background. In accordance to (Serageldin, 1990) in his book the architecture of the contemporary mosque, “contemporary mosques raised the critical discussion in defining and giving an expression for them” the reason is that the mosques have highly symbolism which makes it so like scrutinized by the critics as well as the users. The second 50 years from the 20th-century increases in the different approaches in style including numerous forms, construction symbols, ecologies and types of decoration. Hence, the derived approaches implementation so far raised the question that most of the researchers are trying to answer it today: what is the most approach for mosque architecture that is reflecting the contemporary world? Based on expressions of Islam in buildings, (Salam, 1990). When Ismail Serageldin was doing a seminar for the contemporary expressions of Islam in buildings: the religious and secular, he classified the architecture of the contemporary mosque into (vernacular or popular,

Traditional, populist, adaptive modern, modernist). Furthermore, a several stylistic expressions were identified based on analysis conducted on a number of prominent mosque design, whose are presented in the following order based on the integral architectural values: (vernacular architecture – historicism architecture – regionalism as a modern approach to creation- innovative approach or modern expression) as a modern approach or modern expression. Although these classifications had some deficiencies and limitations. Because some of the existed mosques show more or less from the defined expressions or have a mixture between two of them or more.

Several authors were concerned in the classifications of the contemporary mosque architecture, their definitions where somewhat vary between the range of the conventional - contemporary and innovative mosque. Fethi's "conventional/conservative" approach (Fethi, 1985: 55-57), Serageldin described a "traditional" and "modern adaptive approach" (Serageldin, 1990: 19-20;.), while Khan's call it "contemporary classic" (Khan, 1990: 124).

4.1. Vernacular architecture:

The vernacular approach in contemporary mosque designs is connected with the regions that still maintains their rural lives and didn't get affected by the recent societal technologies and styles. These mosques are consisting to be constructed with single architects and local masons and the indigenous vocabulary. This type can be noticeably founded in some region of Africa such as Algeria-Tunisia-Egypt. furthermore, it could be in contemporary regions that implement the vernacular architecture, A good implementation for this approach is the New Gournia village in Luxor, Egypt.



Figure 2. H. Fathy: Damija, Nova Gournia, Luxor, 1946. Source: by Roland Unger

4.2 Historicisms

The revivalism of the monumental historic styles for the contemporary mosque design drives from medieval Islamic styles. Sometimes this approach involves being mixed between the individual approach and the literal interpretation of the regional architecture (hassan, 2008). Some mosques show a mixture of two or more designs. The form and the external wall are the main constraints of the historicism type of mosques. Although seeking inspiration for new mosque designs within the traditional styles don't refer to any Islamic values and rules, or strict by Islamic sacral architecture, the historicism expression type still compromises to be most frequently used in the contemporary mosques rather than any other building type. A good replicant for this style can be seen in the works of the architect Abdel Wahed El-Wakil, Island Mosque, Jeddah, KSA. The mosque shows elements from the Ottoman, Suljuk, Mamluk and Rasulid architecture.



Figure 3. Island Mosque on the left, Plan and section on the right, Jeddah, KSA source: (Salam, 1990) and <http://middleeast-business.com>

4.3. Regionalism

This form gives attention to the specific local features and both physical and cultural context in a specific region. But also, with the consideration to use the contemporary technologies and concepts of form. A result of an interpreted and abstracted form from traditional in a modern manner can be obvious. The key element to fulfill this expression is that the architect's awareness of the indigenous building values and to interpret these values in the contemporary techniques.

An obvious paradigm can be found in the mosque of Imam Turki bin Abdullah Mosque in Riyad.



Figure 4. *Imam Turki bin Abdullah Mosque in Riyadh,*
source: Getty images



4.4 Modern expression

This approach comprises to use the pure geometric and abstract shapes and the implementation of the new technologies. The architectural modern expression or innovative approach requires quitting the traditional forms, decoration, and symbolism. On the other hand, they tend to meet the basic functional and ritual requirements such as decoration, Minbar, Mihrab, and Minaret but release their forms. The prayer hall shape and span are shaped in accordance with the modern methods.

expression styles of (Vernacular, Historicisms, Regionalism). And the innovative approach mainly displays three features which demonstrate mosques: pure geometric and abstraction for the shape that can obviously detect in the layout composition. It is quitting the traditional forms, decorations, and symbolism but they tend to regard the functional and ritual elements (mihrab, minbar etc.) of the mosque but by using a free form. Lastly, shapes and planning the prayer hall using the modern methods of



Figure 5. *A.No'e'man: Damija, Salman Mosque, Bandung, 1972.*



The historical development in the mosque forms and expression of the building defines the differentiation between the contemporary mosque to be observed as using an innovative approach or conventional approach. Classifying for contemporary mosques approaches in conjunction with the style expression was conducted. These conventional approaches have been defined based on the used materials and the technology “original and conventional materials”. That can be implemented on the

construction. The innovative is based on using the modern materials and technologies applied to the styles expression of Vernacular, Historicisms, Regionalism and modern expression). In other words, mosques with historical expression style and uses of the traditional materials can be defined as “contemporary mosque with the conventional approach”, while mosque represents the same expression of historical style but with the usage of the modern materials can be defined as a contemporary mosque with the innovative

approach". They might be similar in their appearance while their approach is deferred

Tradition to Modernity mosque in Turkey

Through observing the changes that occurs on the mosque architectural elements from traditional to the modern days, such as Mosques domes, layout, and minaret. To have a clear classification for the contemporary mosque's expression and approach in turkey. The dome as a dominant feature to abstract, Although the dome is not considered as a ritual requirement, but it is one of the most dominant and basic symbols in the architecture of the Ottoman mosques (if not all mosques). The large lead-covered dome form of mosque is a strong cognitive image for the users. It has a significant meaning of power and a focal point of assembly. During the Ottoman era, the traditional mosques were using the domes seeking for a strong structural element to support the space. The presentation of dome (complete dome or half dome) were connected with the layout topology. and for the innovative layout it remains associated with the layout shape, but the employment was different. It shows more abstraction and escapes from its fundamental function to become a symbol for the innovation. Minaret is the distinctive architectural feature of the mosque, which is principally used for the call to prayer (adhan) (Creswell 1926). A modification occurred in the function and the form of the minaret. Although it is originally designed for the call for prayer, the minaret is not maintained its functionally today due to the developer in the amplifier's technology. Previously, the Adhan used to called by the muezzin from a small balcony surrounding the minaret shaft. while recently, it is called inside the mosque and transferred to amplifiers in the minaret. For the minaret form for the conventional mosque, were at least one pointed minaret attached to the mosque. Ability to erect more than one minaret is eligible only for the sultans. The contemporary mosque is preserving this mosque element for aesthetic and spiritual presentation. Therefore, many forms of the minaret emerged to the contemporary mosques.

Contemporary mosques in Turkey and innovative approach

The contemporary mosque architecture in turkey can be expressed after the 19th century until this day. Although the stereotype still appears in the some of the contemporary examples in main time, the innovation produced can be observed for various architectural forms immerge to mosque design. Creating innovative mosque styles that are new interpretation or abstraction of the traditional and historical mosque architectural elements. Moreover, the traditional imitated mosques are presents, they are special for using different constructional technologies and building materials that separated them from the classification of the traditional

mosques and either the innovative ones. This appearance of expression and approach results after a several of ideological changes and effects on the (social-cultural and politics) of the region. The most appeared styles of expression in the contemporary mosques in turkey are (Historicism and modern expression) the other two type can rarely be founded. A study was conducted by (Celik and Kalayci, 2014) on the "Public's Judgment on Contemporary Mosque Design Approaches" determined that the young Turkish users preferred the contemporary mosques which use modern and innovative approaches that show a "modern expression" rather than that those mosques that are imitating the historical form and figures "historicism".

Contemporary mosques in Turkey:

Based on the revision of the scholars' classification for the contemporary stylistic expressions, some of the notable examples in turkey were presented in the Table 1 which are classified either innovative approach or conventional approach based on the previous review of the scholars' classification. First example is Küçük Çamlıca Mescidi represent the vernacular architecture, through the used materials and the way its been approached is a conventional approach. Second example is Mimar sinan mosque in Istanbul, the international style expression is historicisms, the mosque is monumental, and it is a way of reviving the ottoman architecture by imitating it. It uses an innovative approach and new building technologies in order to revive the historical style. Similar method has been applied to third example Kocatepe mosque in Ankara. Fourth example is Etimesgut h.i.b.k. mosque in Ankara which represent the regionalism as a modern approach to creation. In fact, the international style expression is regionalism the innovative approach for the construction shared the third classification (regionalism) for it style and the fourth classification (modern approach) for its constructing method. Fifth example is Yeşilvadi mosque in Istanbul which is the case analyzed in the next part, and it is demonstrating the modern stylistic expression and uses an innovative approach. The sixth example is the Grand National Assembly mosque in Ankara, and it is classified under the modern expression while it is interpreting some tradition and regional elements in modern expression by using an innovative approach. Last sample in the table is Sancaklar mosque, reflecting the modern expression and implements the innovative approach.





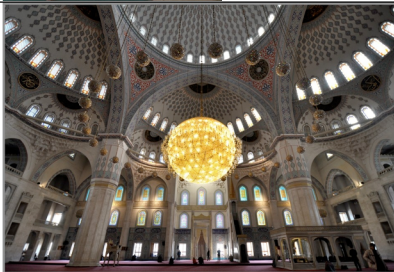





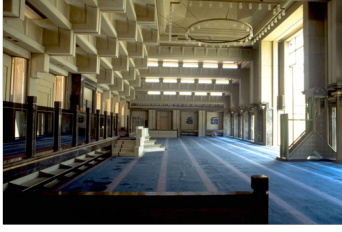


| International Stylistic Expressions | The mosque | Exterior | Interior | Approach |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| Vernacular architecture (Indigenous) | Küçük Çamlıca Mescidi, Istanbul |  | - | Conventional approach |
| Historicisms (Monumental-Ottoman Revival – Imitational) | Mimar sinan mosque, Istanbul |  |  | Innovative approach (historical revival) |
| | Kocatepe mosque, Ankara |  |  | Innovative approach (historical revival) |
| Regionalism as a modern approach to creation | Etimesgut h.i.b.k. mosque, Ankara |  |  | Innovative approach (Regionalism) |
| Modern expression | Yeşilvadi mosque, Istanbul |  |  | Innovative approach (modern expression) |
| | Grand national assembly mosque, Ankara |  |  | Innovative approach (modern interpretation for regionalism and historicism) |
| | Sancaklar mosque |  |  | Innovative approach (modern expression) |



Figure 6. on the left The Minaret. source: <http://istanbul.for91days.com/> marble Subdivisions at the entrance source :Sahir Ugur Eren

Case study for modern expression mosque using innovative approach:

Yeşilvadi mosque is an interpretation of the traditional domed mosque. The main prayer hall has a semi-circle shape in the plan and have two intersect domes different in size. Spatially, this arrangement increases the spatial quality, creates a feeling of infinite space and forms a strong experience of centralized space. Moreover, the quality of the space increased by the direct daylight coming from between the two domes intersection. Although semi-circular layout shows a new composition that is not used in the traditional approach and the historical expression, the volumetric spatial is a clear interpretation that represents the dome in the traditional mosque. The mezzanine floor which is planned over the entrance and can be reached by two spiral staircases is considered as the "women's Mahfil" in the traditional mosque had the same criteria of being at the top. Interpretation and innovation in the minaret by using the galvanized Metal pipes represent an abstraction of the "muqarnas" which were used to decorate the minaret balcony, the galvanized metal pipes have an additional function to hide the light sources and the loudspeakers inside it.

The interpretation of mihrab is the dominant feature in the mosque because it determines its location from outside and inside by its prominence projection outside the Qibla wall as identifying the mihrab mass in the qibla wall. Moreover, the mihrab is defined also by the entered light from the sides allows illuminating all the mihrab sides. The interior space is efficiently lightened by the big opening between the semi-domes and the small windows around the prayer hall, moreover, the circle windows above the windows provide more scattered daylight to the mosque. The inner space is less decorated and

ornamented to expose the main structure and not to hide any element.

Conclusion:

This paper provides a classification for the contemporary mosque design upon both perspectives the style expression and the used approach. The classification of the style expression is a consequence of both dimensions of the tradition and modernity, writers who were concerned in the categorization of the mosque were moving around these two terminologies consist to have mainly four divisions (vernacular, historical, regionalism and modern expression), the second concern was looking for the categorization by the used approach in the constructions (the materials and construction methods). In turkey these variations in the contemporary mosques are obvious. And somehow some expression is apparently more than others. A brief classification of some well-known contemporary mosques can show the trendy expressions and approaches utilized in contemporary mosques in turkey. this classification can provide a further taxonomy for contemporary mosques for researchers.

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Figure References:

Figure 2: Roland Unger

Figure 3: (Salam, 1990) and <http://middleeast-business.com>

Figure 4: Getty images

Figure 5: arsitekumahidaman.com

Figure 6: Left and middle

<http://istanbul.for91days.com/> Right: Sahir Ugur Eren