



AN ARTISTIC AND ARCHEOLOGICAL STUDY OF LAKMAH MOSQUE IN THE VILLAGE OF AL-ḤĀQL, YĀMAN, RĪMAH GOVERNORATE - YEMEN

Received February 20th, 2022 | Accepted November 28th, 2022 | Available online December 20th, 2022 | DOI <http://dx.doi.org/10.18860/jia.v7i2.15456> |

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ABSTRACT

Lakmah Mosque, which is known as Aḥmad Hādī Al-Yāmani Mosque, is considered one of the distinctive Yemeni mosques that reflects the shape of small cubical mosques in the Yemeni villages. This mosque is distinguished by its distinctive decorations and inscriptions. The research aims to shed light on the personality of the founder of the mosque, as he was one of the important individuals in the history of Rimah governorate. In addition, the research sheds light on the mosque's style and design. The importance of the research lies in documenting this mosque, its artistic decorations, and its distinctive inscriptions recorded in the magnificent Ṭuluṭ script with its historical information and important cultural content. It also represents the publication for the first time of this mosque, which no one has studied before. The researcher followed the descriptive, analytical and inductive approach through several historical documents and endowment papers. The researcher reached several results, including knowledge of the date of the building of the mosque and knowing the founder's name, and his cultural and historical status, as he is considered one of the prominent political persons in the history of Rimah governorate during the Ottoman era. The study also focused on the architectural style of the mosque and knowing its architectural origins. The researcher studied the wonderful inscriptions that decorate the ceiling of the mosque. These inscriptions provided us with much important historical information

KEYWORDS:

Rimah, Kūsmah, Aḥmad Hādī, Yāman, Yāsin Al-Hattāri, lakmah

INTRODUCTION

Yemen is considered one of the first Islamic countries that witnessed the establishment of the first mosques in the early days of Islam. It was characterized by a large number of mosques. The planning of these mosques has been retained for a long time, the traditional architectural system leading to the central courtyard, surrounded by four porticos. But many small mosques appeared in different parts of Yemen, especially in Yemeni villages. Some researchers have known Cubical mosques characterized by their small size and simplicity of planning. But they were distinguished by their decorative and artistic richness, especially in their flat wooden ceilings. In addition, they were characterized by their archaeological inscriptions and various floral and geometric motifs in an exquisite artistic style. Lakmah Mosque is considered one of the examples of these small mosques. This paper publishes this mosque for the first time and publishes documents related to its endowments and founder, and analyzes its inscriptions and decorations in an attempt to document it for fear of being destroyed due to its great historical and cultural value.

The importance of this study is that it sheds light on one of the forms of mosque styles that are spread throughout Yemen and reflects the shape and decoration of mosques in Yemeni villages. Therefore, its importance lies in documenting the architecture and decoration of these mosques. In addition, it also reflects the Waqf role and its importance in the continuity of the building function through studying the waqfiyya of the mosque.

The research aims to document the mosque exposed to threats of demolition and ruin due to the current war and conflict in Yemen, shed light on its distinctive architectural and artistic style, and analyze its architectural and decorative elements. It also studies the historical and cultural dimensions of this mosque. Finally, it sheds light on the personality of the founder of the mosque, Sheikh Aḥmad Hādī, his life and works through documents

METHODS

The research relies on several methods to achieve its objectives:

- The documentary and historical approach by relying on some documents that talk about Sheikh

Aḥmad Hādī, his works, and his endowment on the mosque. Also exposing the historical references that have dealt with the history and the architecture of Rīmah Governorate.

- The descriptive approach to discover the architectural and artistic features of the mosque.
- The comparative and analytical approach by analyzing the style of the mosque and knowing its architectural origins. And trace its emergence, development, and rooting.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

SITE OF THE MOSQUE

Lakmah Mosque is located in the village of Al ḥāql belonging to Yāman district, affiliated to Kūsmah District in Rīmah Governorate in Yemen. Yaman district is considered one of the oldest Yemeni regions. It was mentioned by the famous Yemeni historian Al-Hamadānī and referred that Yāman was mentioned in the ancient Musnad inscriptions within the famous us archaeological areas, and he said, "...And among the mountains that form the Al-šām mountains from the side of this space; ġabl šabr. And, from Gūblān, is situated Yaman Mountain, which is located on the northern šatt of Rīm" [1]. The kings of the state of Saba' and Ḥimyar were nicknamed (Yāman) or (Yāhaman). Yāman is considered a famous fertile province of Rīma Gūblān in the Kūsma District. Gūblān is one of the most fertile mountains in Yemen. It is located 70 km southeast of Hodeidah, one of the divisions of Sana'a [2]. Yāman is characterized by agricultural activity, fertile areas rich in crops, fresh water sources, and ancient archaeological buildings [3]. The German traveler Carsten Niebuhr mentioned it in his book "From Copenhagen to Sana'" among the regions and villages he passed through on his journey, mentioning that its weather is moderate, its land is fertile, and it has many plants [4] (Figure 1).

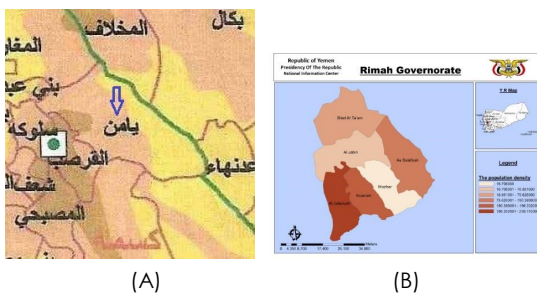


Figure 1. (A) The administrative division of Rīmah Governorate (B) The location of Yāman of the Kūsmah District [5].

THE FOUNDER OF THE MOSQUE

The founder of the mosque, as indicated by one of the inscriptions on the ceiling of the mosque, is Sheikh Aḥmad Hādī Hussein Al-Yāmani. He is considered one of the most famous people in the history of the Kūsma district. He was born approximately in 1235AH/1819AD in the village of Al ḥāql, Kūsmah District, Rīmah Governorate in Yemen. He took over the sheikhdom of Yāman district in 1280AH/1863AD during the reign of his father, Sheikh

Hādī Hussein, during the rule of the Zaydi imams and the second Ottoman presence in Yemen (1289-1336AH/1872-1918AD) [6] (Figure 2).



Figure 2. An inscription on the mosque's ceiling shows the founder's name (Author)

The Ottoman governors appointed him over Yāman in 1289AH/1872AD. Among the tasks entrusted to Sheikh Aḥmad Hādī are settling people's issues, resolving disputes, collecting al-Zakah's money, and then supplying it to the state treasury in the judiciary center at Rīmah Governorate [7]. Sheikh Aḥmad Hādī was characterized by science, knowledge, asceticism, piety, and the neighboring sheikhs of other districts. They also seek help from him to solve their complicated problems because of their knowledge of his justice, integrity, and expertise in adjudicating cases. He died in Šafar in 1338AH/1919AD, and his children are Sheikh Ahmed bin Aḥmad Hādī, Sheikh Haider, Sheikh Muhammad, Sheikh Ali, Nasser, and Mahmoud.



Figure 3. Various pictures of the silver ring of Sheikh Aḥmad Hādī.

Sheikh Aḥmad Hādī has many architectural works. Among the most important is his famous Bayt in the Yāman district. It is known as Dār lakmah or Bayt lakmah. It dates back to the end of 1299AH, the beginning of 1300AH/1882AD. Its privileged location distinguishes it on a high plateau and its unique architectural style, where it resembles a castle or fortress. It consists of several floors that contains the private Diwān of Sheikh Aḥmad Hādī. Various religious and public ceremonies are held in it, and there are large stores carved at the bottom of this Dār dedicated to storing water and food. The Bayt is characterized by its exquisite decoration and engravings, antiques, and excellent woodwork. Because of the importance of

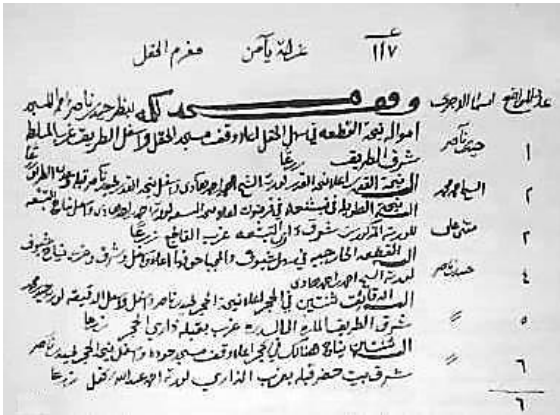


Figure 8. Waqf of Sheikh Ahmad Hādi at Lakmah mosque

Architectural and decorative description of the mosque; the mosque is considered one of the models of small mosques spread throughout various villages and cities of Yemen. It was built on a high plateau. It is reached by a stone ladder consisting of several steps (Figure 10). There is a pool of water located in the northern part of the mosque (Figure 11). It was built of stones and has been removed and expanded due to population increase. The mosque is simple and consists of a rectangular space, its length is 8 m, and its width is approximately 6 m. The mosque was built with horizontal courses of stones and coated with a layer of white mortar. Its outer walls are free of any decorations. Only some small and simple windows open on these exterior walls (Figure 9). The Mihrāb niche protrudes from the azimuth of the northern wall by 40 cm. The main entrance is located on the southern wall of the mosque on the same axis as the Mihrāb; its width is 1.50 m, and its height is 2.50 m. It has two wooden shutters (Figure 14). The entrance leads to the sanctuary; it is simple. It is a rectangular area.

The interior walls are painted with Yemeni stucco, distinguished by its pure white color. The upper ends of the interior walls are decorated with patterns of prominent successive arches resembling the shapes of Mihrābs. The Mihrāb of the mosque is a smooth, hollow niche and is devoid of any decoration; it is about 1.5m wide, 80cm deep, and 2.50m high. It is a niche arched by a semi-circular arch; it is retracted into three levels; the third level from the inside is arched with a pointed arch (Figure 13). There is a concave recess arched with a pointed arch; it was used as a Minbar, where the mosque was later used as a Great mosque in which the collective prayers, Friday prayers, and the two Eids are held, despite its small size. Several windows and recesses open in the inner walls of the mosque. There is a rectangular window with two wooden shutters from the inside and metal grilles from the outside (Figure 12).

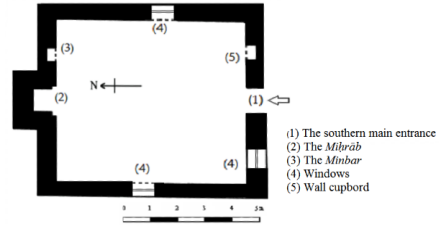


Figure 9. Plan of the original mosque (Author)



Figure 10. General view of the mosque from the western side.



Figure 11. General view of the mosque; on the north side is a water pool and Dār Lakmah in the south side.



Figure 12. One of the mosque's windows with two wooden shutters.



Figure 13. The Mihrāb of the mosque and next to it the recess of the Minbar.



Figure 14. The main entrance of the mosque is on the south side.

There are also two hollow recesses, one to the left of the main entrance. It is used as a wall cupboard in which the Holy Qur'an and ancient books are kept. Sheikh Aḥmad Hādī endowed on the mosque several gilded and decorated Qur'ans executed in the handwriting of the most skilled calligraphers of the famous Bani Al-Hattāri family. It was kept in a wooden box; He endowed it to read and learn the Qūr'an and authorized its transfer to read the Qūr'an over the dead, as explained in his endowment dated 1299AH/1881-1882AD (Figure 15).



Figure 15. The Holy Qur'an is preserved in the mosque (Author).

THE ADDITIONS AND RENOVATIONS WERE MADE TO THE MOSQUE

The mosque was subjected to several multiple additions and renovations to accommodate the increase in the village's population. The additions were represented in the gains on the eastern and southern sides; the eastern growth is a rectangular area (about 5x6 m). It is covered by a flat wooden roof. It was used for men's prayers on Friday and designated as a prayer room for women on the others' prayers. There are two bathrooms and a new water tank next to this eastern addition. The other addition is located on the southern side, connected to the western corner of the back of the original mosque. It dates back to approximately 1435AH/2013AD. It is a rectangular area (about 5x6 m). It is also covered by a flat wooden roof and has the

main entrance to the mosque. It was used as mūslla for men in the case of the increase in the number of worshipers in Friday prayers and the two Eids. It was also used as me'īlama to teach and memorize the Holy Qūr'an (Figure 16).

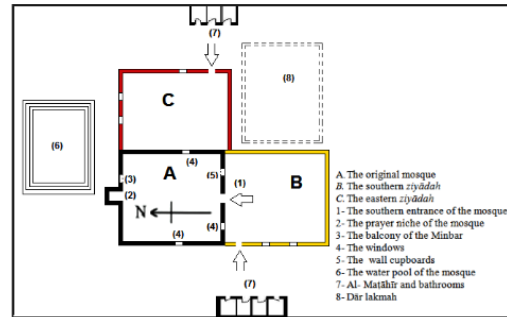


Figure 16. An illustration of the mosque showing the additions (Author)

The original mosque also witnessed many modern paintings for the exterior and interior walls by benefactors. Also, the water pool attached to the mosque was expanded (Figures 17, 18, 19).



Figure 17. General view of the mosque from the Northern side.



Figure 18. General view of the mosque before the recent additions on the southern side.



Figure 19. General view of the mosque after the recent additions on the southern side.

THE CEILING OF THE MOSQUE

the ceiling of the mosque is considered a wonderful masterpiece of high artistic taste [10]. It is a wooden ceiling consisting of rectangular wooden panels stacked next to each other, forming decorative areas. Each area is separated by a rectangular wooden beam extending along the ceiling from east to west. This ceiling is based directly on the mosque's walls and has no columns. This ceiling resembles the wooden boxes called *al-mūṣandqāt* that were famous in Yemen from the third century until the ninth century AH. Yemen has known this unique type of wooden ceiling, characterized by a great wealth of delicate carved, colored and gilded decorations. This type of roof was particularly associated with the small mosques that spread in Yemeni villages [11]. The roof of the mosque is divided into five rectangular areas. Each area is divided into square, rectangular, and rhombus areas. It is decorated with various floral, geometric, and calligraphic motifs, which reflect many aesthetic and artistic values. The decorations of the mosque's ceiling are characterized by the successful combination of geometric motifs, various plant motifs, and inscriptions in wonderful and innovative formations that reflect the ingenuity of the artist who executed these various decorations [12], [13] (Figure 20, 21).

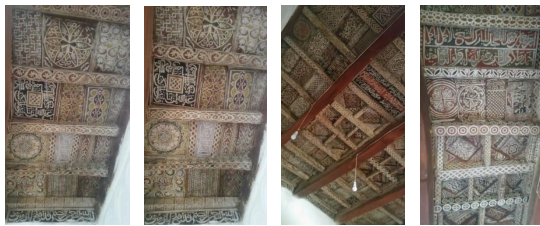


Figure 20. A general view of the mosque's ceiling shows the various decorations and divisions of the ceiling.

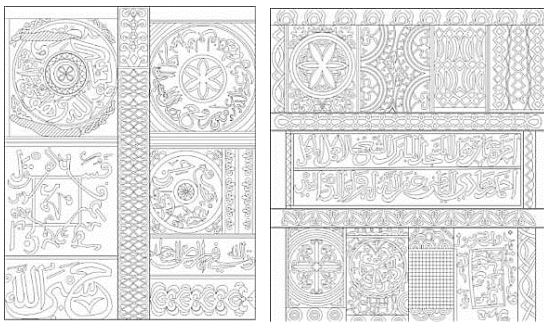


Figure 21. Various decorations on the ceiling (Author)

The calligrapher and painter Yassin Al-Hattari was the executor of the mosque's ceiling decorations and writings. He executed the various decorations on the mosque's ceiling with watercolors in the fresco style. He excelled in the use of colors in executing these decorations in a wonderful manner that showed his ability, good choice of colors, and compatibility between these colors. The artist executed the decorations in red, orange, white, and black colors. He used color variations that achieved harmony in terms

of form and content between the decorative elements. The motifs used in decorating the mosque's ceiling varied between floral, geometric, and calligraphic motifs. They resemble the decorations of buildings in the era of the Rasūlid state in the diversity and consistency of colors. These decorations were miniature models of the decorations of the Rasūlid buildings [14].

One of the inscriptions on the mosque's ceiling indicated that these decorations were executed by one of the most famous Yemeni calligraphers, Sheikh Yāsīn Al-Hattāri. He was a poet, jurist, writer, and calligrapher. He is considered one of the jurists and scholars and one of the most prominent calligraphers in Rīmah in his time. He was distinguished by his unique talent for blending colors in harmony. His lineage goes back to the famous family Banī Al-Hattāri [15]. Yāsīn Al-Hattāri gained wide fame in Rīmah in writing and decorating manuscripts, including the Qūr'ānic copies that fill mosques in Rīmah and elsewhere. These copies are characterized by their wonderful lines, colors, decorations, and margins. In addition to the Qūr'ānic and manuscripts were written and decorated by Sheikh Yāsīn Al-Hattāri, he was also famous for his inscriptions and writings that decorated a number of the roofs of mosques and ancient Yemeni houses in Rīmah. The decorations of the Lakmah Mosque are considered one of his most important artistic works, in which he combined calligraphy, floral and geometric ornaments in distinctive colors:

1. Floral motifs.

The artist relied on the various elements of the floral motifs and implemented them repeatedly in exquisite geometric shapes. He excelled in its artistic and aesthetic use; He used it to fill the geometric spaces formed by the intersection of the structural lines of the different geometric patterns. Examples of the floral motifs in the mosque are arabesque patterns, the shapes of palmate, and half-palmette executed in a pivot style. The forms of the sepals are the multi-pealed rosettes, whether four, six, or eight, and the almond and spear-shaped leaves.

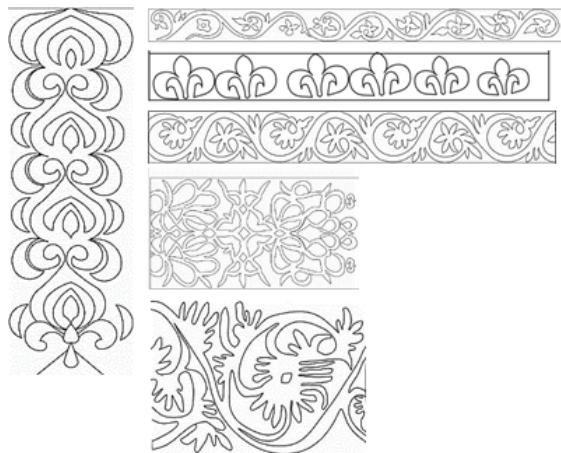


Figure 22. Examples of the floral decorations on the mosque's ceiling (Author).

2. Geometric motifs.

The artist used various geometrical decorations and formations. He divided the spaces into various geometric areas decorated with multiple geometric elements. This style has been prevalent in Islamic art since the Abbasid era. He used Geometric motifs such as overlapping circles and repeating medallions with alternating geometric designs confined within modified floral motifs and arabesques. He also shapes squares, overlapping rectangles, hexagons, interlocking lines resembling basket shapes, some star polygons shapes, and repeating zigzag shapes. Some areas were decorated with lobed elements, some four-lobed and some six-lobed. In addition to the decorative elements that derive their origins from the architectural elements to perform a decorative purpose, such as forms of repeated small arches that resemble *Mihrābs* or niches stacked horizontally next to each other. Some of these decorations may have symbolic, religious, and mystical significance, such as the circular shapes associated with the decorations of domes in the architecture of the Rasūlid state period in Yemen [16] (Figure 23).

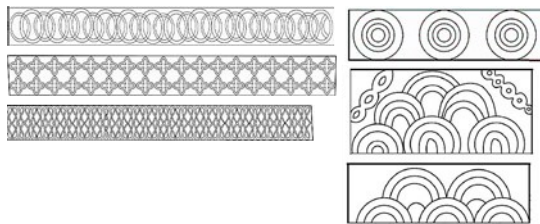


Figure 23. Examples of the geometric decorations on the mosque's ceiling (Author).

3. The calligraphy decorations

Inscriptions are considered one of the most important decorations executed on the mosque's ceiling. These Inscriptions are executed in *Ṭuluṭ* script in white on a red background. The Inscriptions of these writings varied between Qūr'ānic texts, non-Qūran texts, foundational texts, and poetic verses. Among the most important of these texts are the following;

A. Qur'anic texts.

There is an inscription band under the roof of the mosque's structure. It is executed in *Ṭuluṭ* script in white color on a dark red background. The content of this text is Sūrat Al-Mū'minun. The calligrapher began with *albasmla*, then the beginning of Sūrat Al-Mū'minun under the mosque's ceiling in all directions. The calligrapher also recorded in one of the ceiling areas a Qūr'ānic quotation from Sūrat Yūsuf from verses 91-92 recorded in *Ṭuluṭ* script in three lines and ended with the completion date of the mosque, its content "*lāh taṭrīb 'alīkūm al-yawm yağfr Allah lakm qad atark Allah 'alīnā sanah 1313AH*" (Figures 24, 25).



Figure 24



Figure 25

Figures 24 & 25. Examples of Quranic writings on the ceiling of the mosque

The calligrapher Yāsīn Al-Hattāri has masterfully executed some Qūr'ānic texts in circular shapes, such as Figure (8), Plate No. (19). its content is a Qūr'ānic quotation from Sūrat Al-Baqarah, verse No. 137, "*Fasikfikahm Allah wa-hwa al-Sami' Al-'alim*" (Figures 26, 27). It was executed in *Ṭuluṭ* script in white on a red background in a circular motion around two inner circles; the small one has a four-petal rosette, and the large one has a band of interlaced scrolls. This text is also surrounded from the outside by a circular band of interlaced scrolls. Among the Qūr'ānic texts recorded in a circular motion is a text containing a Qūr'ānic quotation from Sūrat Al-Isr', verse No. 84 "*Ql kl y'ml ala šakīlāth*" (Figures 26, 27). The calligrapher excelled in executing it in a circular motion in white *Ṭuluṭ* script on a red ground, and the ends of the words came in a wonderfully artistic way.



Figure 26



Figure 27



Figure 28



Figure 29

Figures 26, 27, 28, 29. Examples of Quranic writings on the ceiling of the mosque with illustrations of its texts by the researcher.

B. Non-Qur'anic writings.

The mosque's ceiling contains many non-Qūr'an texts that carry important historical information.

1. Foundation texts and inscriptions.

The Foundation inscriptions are considered an important text that decorates the mosque's ceiling. It indicates the mosque's founder's name, the date of its foundation, and the name of the artists and craftsmen who participated in the building and decoration of the mosque, including the calligrapher Sheikh Yāsīn Al-Hattāri, the executor of the mosque's decoration. Among these texts is the foundational inscription of the mosque, which was previously mentioned (Figure 2). Also, another Foundation text dates the mosque's construction by Hisāb algūmal in poetic verses organized in three lines executed in white color on alternating red and black color ground. This inscription is considered one of the finest mosque inscriptions (Table 1, Figure 30, 31).



Figure 30. The Foundation text that dates the construction of the mosque by Hisāb algūmal



Figure 31. Illustration of figure 30 (Author)

Table 1. Foundation text that dates the construction of the mosque by Hisāb algūmal

<i>Bad't bi'sm Allāh WA alšūkr maḡnm</i>	<i>ṭm al-Šalā 'alā al-nabī al'akram</i>
<i>'mart baytā lil- llāh mūtmm</i>	<i>'ar ḡū bih yawm al-Qiāmah 'akram</i>
<i>Tāriḡūh fī kalām yūnzam min</i>	<i>Ni'm Allāh Tawālt Ni'm sanah 1313</i>

However, by applying Hisāb algūmal in the phrase (*min Ni'm Allāh Tawālt Ni'm*) as in the following table, the calligrapher Sheikh Yāsīn Al-Hattāri (the executor of inscriptions of the mosque) turns out to be correct in writing the date of construction by Hisāb algūmal, which came inconsistent with the date of the mosque in numbers at the end of the text, which is 1313 AH.

2. Signatures of artists and craftsmen.

Some Foundation texts clarify the names of calligraphers and artists involved in building and decorating the mosque. Among these texts is a text that shows the name of the calligrapher Yāsīn Al-Hattāri which is executed in Tuluṭ script in a circular shape; "*Raf' haḡā al-Masḡid al-mūbārک Yāsīn ibn abū Al-Qāsīm Al-Hattāri 'afā Allāh 'anh āmin*" (Figure 32, 33). This text revolves around a circle with a six-petal rosette. Calligrapher Yāsīn Al-Hattāri excelled in writing his name in a distinctive way. He recorded it in radiant black in white color on a red ground.

Another text shows the name of one of the participants in the construction and decoration. It is also executed in Tuluṭ script in the form of two rectangles in white color on a red ground; the inner rectangle contains the name of the person who executed and his name, Amal al-Ḥasan ibn 'Uṭmān bin Ibrāhīm. The outer rectangle revolves around the inner rectangle, and its text is a supplication for this person in the form "*Allāhūm iḡfr limn katb/wa limn haḡr/ WA limn naḡar/ WA limn qarā' WA li/ 'mrā āmin*" (Figure 32). This person recorded his name in another place and came with the phrase "*hāḡihi naḡr WA Raf' Ḥasan ibn 'Uṭmān ibn Ibrāhīm alḡabūb [17]*" (Figure 33). The word "*naḡr*" is the abbreviation for carpenter, and the word "*Raf'*" means to put it. This text revolves around a circle with an eight-petal rosette. We conclude from this text that Ḥasan ibn 'Uṭmān ibn Ibrāhīm is one of the participants in the carpentry work of the roof of the mosque.

3. Various supplications and poetic phrases.

Among the inscriptions on the ceiling of the mosque are various supplications, Aḡādīt, and poetic phrases. Including a text executed on the ceiling of the mosque. It is a square in which the inscriptions are recorded in the Tuluṭ script in white color on a black background, and this script revolves in a circular shape at the edges of this square. It revolves around a double square with geometric decorations. It takes the form of a rhombus which is intersected by two lines. The content of this script is; "*ḡafr Allāh limn bnā/ WA limn d'ā WA limn katb/ Kamūl al-Raf' WA inḡaḡā/ WA fa'lnā al-laḡī waḡāb*" (Figures 34, 35).

Table 2. The date of the establishment of the mosque by Hisāb algūmal

M	N	N		M	A	L	A	H	T	W	Ā	L	T	N	M	Total	
40	50	50	70	40	1	30	1	5	400	6	1	30	400	50	70	40	1284AH



Figure 32. Calligraphy Script shows the name of the calligrapher of the mosque's inscriptions.



Figure 33. The illustration of figure 32 shows the name of the calligrapher of the inscriptions (Author)



Figure 34. The script shows the name of one of the participants in the construction and decoration of the mosque.



Figure 35. Another Script shows the exact name of the participants in the construction and decoration of the mosque.



Figure 36. A script shows one of the supplication phrases on the mosque's ceiling.



Figure 37. Illustration of figure 36 Script shows one of the supplication phrases in the mosque's ceiling. The researcher

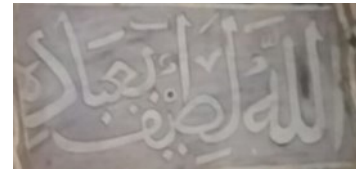


Figure 38



Figure 39



Figure 40

Figures 38, 39, 40. Various supplications phrases extracted from the Holy Qur'an and non-Qur'an inscriptions in Figure 38

In one of the ceiling areas, there is a text extracted from the Holy Qur'an from Sūrat Ash-Shūrā verse No. 19, "Allāh Laṭīf bi 'ibādih"(Figure 38). One Example of non-Qur'an inscriptions is "Buyūt Allāh fi al-ard" (Figure 36). The artist excelled in diversifying and mixing colors, so the text came in Tuluṭ script in black color and had a radiant white frame on a gilded background. Another inscription contains the phrase "Ḥasbī Allāh" (Figure 38); it is executed in Tuluṭ script in white color on a black background.

Among the inscriptions of the mosque are some poetic verses. Such as a text consisting of intertwined and interconnected poetic verses from a poem of Ḥassān ibn Tābit in praise of the Prophet Muḥammad - peace be upon him- its content "fšqa lahū min ismhī lyūḡlhū faḏū al'arš Maḥmūd wa ḥadā Muḥamma"[18], [19] (Figures 41, 42).



Figure 41. A script shows some poetic verses in praise of the Prophet Muḥammad.



Figure 42. The illustration of the figure Script shows some poetic verses praising the Prophet Muḥammad (Author)

THE ANALYTICAL STUDY

This part deals with the factors affecting the mosque's shape and the architectural dimension of the layout of the mosque. It analyses the architectural style and knows its origin. Affecting Factors on the design of the mosque; several factors influenced the shape and design of the mosque. It applies to most of the small mosques distributed in the villages of the various governorates of Yemen. Among these factors are the environmental, geographic, and historical factors. The environmental aspect is considered one of the most important of these factors. It includes climatic factors and topographical site conditions, where the mountainous nature that characterizes the country of Yemen is reflected; the presence of tribal gatherings and several Yemeni families and people on the tops of the mountains that surround the various parts of Yemen on the need for a mosque to serve these residential gatherings. The people of these villages were keen when building their homes to build a mosque that would serve the people of this area, in which the five daily prayers, Friday prayers, and the two Eids are held. Also be a Madrasa, an educational center, a Me'ilāma, and a cupboard for rare books and Qūr'ānic manuscripts. The location of the mosque in the mountainous areas affected the shape and layout of this type of small mosque. Also, due to the distance between the Yemeni villages, and the small number of houses and people in these villages, these mosques became very simple, and their area was small. Climatic factors impacted the mosque, as Rīmah is considered the rainiest region in Yemen, where rainfall ranges between 400-800 mm annually and may increase. It is reflected in the design of its mosques to protect from rain. Also, it gave them the character of complete closure depending on climatic conditions. It prompted some foreign historians to describe them as cubical mosques [20], [21].

It was also reflected in the simplicity and decoration of these mosques. The architects neglected the interior walls' decorations, focused only on the decoration of the ceiling, and were concerned with the geometric abstract decorations and inscriptions of some Qūr'ānic verses, wisdom, supplications, foundational and documentary texts. The personality of the founder and his great political and social position were reflected in the richness of the mosque's ceiling decorations. The genius and fame of the Calligrapher Yāsīn Al-Hattāri, who is famous for the art of calligraphy and decoration, was reflected in the decoration of the mosque's ceiling, which came as a wonderful painting that its decoration resembles the decorations of the domes of the Rasūlid Madrasas, with their harmonious colors and rich decorations. Some compare its decorations representing a rustic type of Rasūlid decoration that was a symbol of Yemeni architecture. The artist wanted to imitate these Rasūlid decorations to express the architectural strength and this golden period in the history of Yemeni civilization [22].

The ancient Yemeni architecture greatly

influenced the Islamic architecture in Yemen, influenced by the prevailing traditions and architectural and decorative styles in ancient Yemen with its distinct characteristics and local character. Also, this influence appeared in reusing the same old structures in the Islamic era to perform the same previous function in most Yemeni regions [23]. What confirms this is the similarity between the conditions and emergence of these small mosques with the ancient Yemeni temples, which prompts the opinion of the transformation of many of these ancient temples into mosques in the Islamic era. The nature of the emergence and development of the ancient Yemeni city known as "*alhūḡr*", and the impact of the social aspect based on the tribal basis and the tribal structure in the formation of the state had a role in building temples outside the cities. Each tribe lived in a place known by its name and was keen to develop its own temple near its places of residence. Most of these temples were built in high areas on the slopes of valleys outside the cities in sites that supervise and control the towns and villages that follow them, as in the case of Haḍramoūt temples, such as the temple of ḡi halsm located in the region of bāqtfaḥ in Wadī Haḍramoūt. The appropriate site was chosen outside the city to be easy to reach, close to the town, and in high places. It gives it sanctity [21].

THE ARCHITECTURAL DIMENSION OF THE MOSQUE.

The mosque design in its simple form and architecture came in response to the local needs of the various villages of Yemen that are distributed over the mountains and highlands of Yemen. Such mosques became a distinctive feature of Yemen in particular and the Arabian Peninsula in general; this is due to the desert nature, heights, and mountains that characterize the countries of the Arabian Peninsula. Therefore, these mosques were constructed to facilitate the people of these distant mountainous areas. These mosques had a small area in proportion to the small number of people in these areas. Later on, Friday days and Eids prayers were held in some of these mosques, such as Lakmah mosque. Also, the architectural shape of these mosques affected in that they performed the role of a Madrasa or a Me'ilāma, especially in rural or mountainous areas of Yemen.

It was also due to the desire of the founder and other people of Yemen for reward, as it was known about the virtue of building mosques and the honor of their reconstruction. The hadith of the Prophet on the virtue of building them and their physical and moral architecture was a motive to build these mosques despite their small size.

THE ARCHITECTURAL STYLE OF THE MOSQUE.

The mosque follows the simple and small mosques, consisting of a sanctuary and a small square or rectangular hall. It has only one entrance on the south side. Small windows in their walls allow light and air to enter. These mosques are distinguished by their simplicity of construction and are devoid of decoration.

It is abundant in small villages and on the roads of travelers [24]. These mosques were used as special places of prayer for people of neighboring houses, or perhaps they were memorial mosques, or they were designated as shrines for a clergyman or cells for one of the famous sheikhs and saints and mystics, especially since Yemen was famous for the spread of Sufism and the plurality of Sufi paths in it [22].

In the old models built in Yemen during the 3-9AH/9-15AD, the ceilings of these mosques consisted of wooden boxes called (al-mušandqāt) with various decorations. The ceiling was based directly on the walls without columns or on two columns or one column, depending on the size of the prayer hall. Arches were not used in the early time. Then they became prevalent starting from the eighth century AH/fourteenth century AD [25].

Architectural historians classify this type of mosque as one of the obligatory mosques. It means the five obligatory prayers are performed in these mosques without the Friday prayer. These mosques have existed since the days of the Prophet Muḥammad. Each of the city's neighborhoods had its own mosque [26], and these mosques spread into different types according to the circumstances of their establishment. It is dominated by a small area, so some call it the zawiyya [27]. These small mosques spread throughout the various parts of the Arabian Peninsula in Oman, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and others [27].

These small mosques have also spread in various parts of Yemen and have maintained their presence in the mountains and highlands of Yemen. Some foreign references have mistakenly defined them as cubic mosques, although they are rectangular in shape. The reason for this name is probably because it is very similar to the cube shape, and it was similar to a large extent to the shape and plan of the Holy Ka'ba [28]. Throughout its history, the Ka'ba took a cubic shape. In its beginning, the Ka'ba was a square area with a flat roof and did not include any columns or pillars from the inside. Then, when the Qūrīš built it before the mission of the Prophet, peace be upon him, its roof became based on six pillars in two rows in each row three pillars (Figures 43, 44, 45). After the building of 'Abdullah ibn Al-Zūbair in 64AH/683AD (Figure 47), its roof became based on three pillars. In addition, there is a door opening on the eastern side. Another door was opened in the western wall of the Ka'ba from the addition of 'Abdullah ibn Al-Zūbair, which was blocked by al-Ḥaḡāḡ ibn Yusūf Al-ṭaqafī when he rebuilt the Ka'ba in 74AH/693AD [29](Figure 46).

These small mosques have maintained their shape and importance without interruption since ancient times, and their general shape is rectangular or square. It faces south with two rows of three pillars or columns bearing a flat roof. Its area is mostly (8.50x10.50m) or (9x10.50 m) and the ceiling height is about 5 m. rarely There were no windows except for a few small openings, and the walls were devoid of any decoration except a decorative frieze under the mosque's ceiling [20].

Tamūr Mosque is considered the oldest remaining example of these small mosques in Yemen. It dates back to what was stated in the foundational text in 430AH/1038AD. It is located in a high mountainous area in the desert, in the middle of the village of Tamūr, which belongs to the 'ūzlat Ammar. It belongs to the Al-Nādrah District, one of the districts of the 'Ibb Governorate [30]. It is a rectangular area (8.50 x 10.50 m), and it still preserves its decorations executed with its ceiling with wooden panels (al-mušandqāt), and it was restored in 1089AH/1678AD [31] (Figures 46, 47).

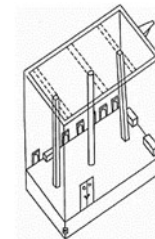


Figure 43. vertical section of Ka'ba [31].



Figure 44. The perspective of Ka'ba.

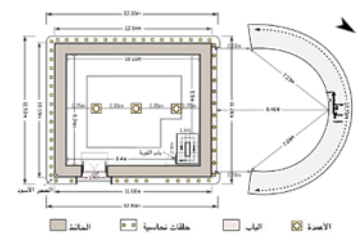


Figure 45. Plan of Ka'ba

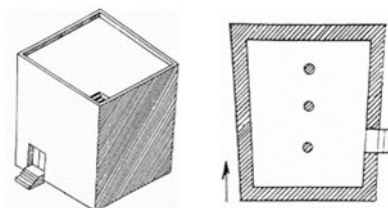


Figure 46. Plan and visual perspective of Ka'ba after rebuilding of Al-Ḥaḡāḡ ibn Yusūf Al-ṭaqafī [32]

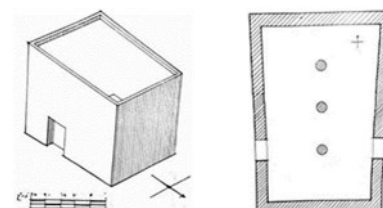


Figure 47. Plan and visual perspective of Ka'ba after rebuilt of 'Abdullah ibn Al-Zūbair[32].



Figure 48. General view of *Tamūr Mosque*[20].

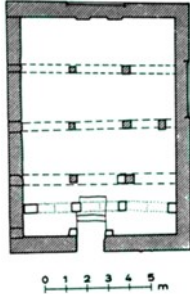


Figure 49. Plan of *Tamūr Mosque* [20].

Among the most prominent ancient examples of these small mosques; is Al-Abbās Mosque near the village of Asnāf; it is a village in the Lower Yamānīh of the high district of Ḥaūlān. It is located to the east of the city of Sana'a and the west of the city of Ḥaḡana [33]. It dates back to the beginning of the 6 AH / 12 AD, specifically to the Sūlihiāh state and the date of its establishment, 519 AH / 1125 AD. The mosque is distinguished by the splendor of its ceiling, which is made up of rich wooden boxes (*al-mūṣandqāt*) in carved and drawn geometrical and plant motifs. The mosque is also distinguished by the beauty and splendor of the inscription bands that frame the sanctuary's walls. The decorations of the Lakmah Mosque are very similar to the decorations of the Al-Abbās Mosque [34] (Figures 50, 51, 52).

Among the oldest examples of the types of these mosques, Ṣarha Mosque is located in the village of Ṣarha. It is one of the villages of 'ūzlat Bani Muslim located on the western side of the city of Yarīm [33]. It dates back to the sixth century AH / twelfth century AD. It is a rectangular area (8.5 x 7.5 m) with three rows of columns, each row having two wooden columns. It is decorated with various geometric and floral motifs (Figures 53, 54, 55)[35].



Figure 50. General view of *muṣandqāt* of the Al-Abbās Mosque. Source:[34]



Figure 51. General view of the Al-Abbās Mosque [34].Source;

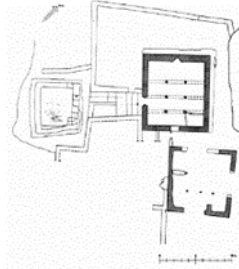


Figure 52. Plan of the Al-Abbās Mosque [36].



Figure 53. General view of *Ṣarha mosque* [35].

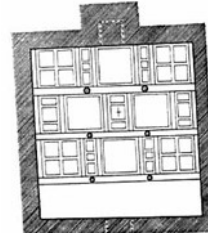


Figure 54. The shape of *muṣandqāt* of *Ṣarha mosque*[20].

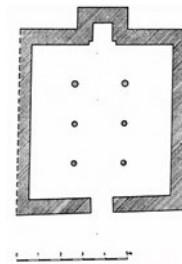


Figure 55. Plan of *Ṣarha mosque*[20].



Figure 56. General view of Dī Hamīd mosque. Source: photo of 'abdū Sa'd Al-Bīhīri



Figure 57. General view of 'aṭalha mosque. Source: photo of 'abdū Sa'd Al-Bīhīri



Figure 58 General view of Al-'amwqī mosque. Source: photo of 'abdū Sa'd Al-Bīhīri

It was a typical style for small mosques in Rīmah in their different 'ūzlat. They are generally similar in shape and converge in size with the Lakmah mosque. These mosques were tiny and simple in size, and their decorations were limited to ceilings. However, they all included several annexes such as a water pool, bathrooms, and a Me'ilāma for teaching the holy Qur'an. One of the most famous examples of the small mosques of Rīmah, Al-'amwqī Mosque (Figure 58), is located in the village of Al-'amwqī, one of the villages of Maḡram Banī Al-Qarṣab, 'ūzlat Banī Al-ṭūlīlī in Kūsmah district. It dates back to the seventh century AH/thirteenth century AD. And the mosque of the village of Al-Marāwah in the Directorate of Bīlād Al-Ta'am, which dates back to the eleventh century AH/seventeenth century AD, specifically in 1089 AH / 1678 AD. Also, Qarḏwn Mosque, which is located in the village of Qarḏwn, southwest of Maḡram Banī Ḥasan, Yāman in Kūsmah district. It dates back to 1284 AH / 1867 AD. And the mosque of 'aṭalha, which is located in the village of 'aṭalha, Maḡram Banī Ḥasan, Yāman in Kūsmah district (Figure 57). It dates back to 1299 AH /

1882 AD. Also, Mašra'ah Mosque, which is located in the village of Mašra'ah Maḡram Banī Ḥasan in the east of Yāman in the Kūsmah district. It dates back to 1307 AH/1889 AD. Mosque of Dī Hamīd (Figure 56) is located in the village of Dī Hamīd and Al-Zīhẓāh, in the east of Yāman in the Kūsmah district. It dates back to 1311 AH/1893 AD and many other examples of Rīmah mosques[37].

As previously said, this type of mosque has spread in most parts of Yemen. It has become one of the inherited common styles in the Arabian Peninsula in general and Yemen in particular until late times. One of the most famous Yemeni cities characterized by this type of mosque is the city of Wuṣāb which is located in the northeast of the city of Zabīd [38]. Its mosques are very similar to the Lakmah mosque due to the geographical and spatial proximity between Wuṣāb and Rīmah. In addition, both of them have the same geographical nature and mountainous heights. The Wuṣāb region is considered one of the most rugged regions in Yemen in its surface and terrain. Most of its mosques date back to 8AH/14AD [39]. These mosques are square or rectangular areas covered with a flat roof based on two rows of columns. They are devoid of any windows and have only one entrance. Among the most famous examples are the two mosques of Hārūrah (Figure 59) and Al-Maḡdarah (Figure 60) [22].

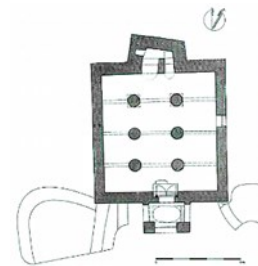


Figure 59. Plan of Al-Maḡdarah mosque [22].

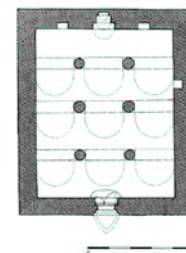


Figure 60. Plan of Hārūrah mosque [22].

Origin of the small mosques in Yemen; Many archeologists return the idea of these small mosques to being before Islam. These mosques resembled the ancient Yemeni temples in the Arabian Peninsula, which were almost square in shape. This plan has spread in one way or another in the Arabian Peninsula in several ancient temples. This suggestion is also attributed to the presence of ancient artifacts reused in these mosques and belong to Sheba's state [30]. Archeologists believe that a number of these mosques were originally ancient temples [40]. Then they were converted into mosques in the Islamic era. The reason

for this opinion is the similarity between the models of these mosques, and the ancient pre-Islamic structures, whether in location, general shape, layout, or in decorations [41].

The kingdoms of Sheba and Ḥaḍramoūt are the two kingdoms that provided more information about the primitive religious architecture in ancient Yemen [42]. The kingdom of Ḥaḍramoūt is one of the kingdoms that occupied a great and prominent place in the ancient history of Yemen. It was characterized by the presence of more than one building for one temple, and it mostly consists of a central rectangular building that represents the nucleus of the religious structure. It was a large cubic hall covered with a rectangular horizontal plan and divided by six columns in most cases. Most famous examples of these temples are found in Ma'in al-Madīna, Ribūn, al-Hiğra, and Bāqtfaḥ. It seems that this style was mainly spread in the region of the Kingdom of Sheba, and it can be called the Shebaan temple style [43].

Among the most famous examples of ancient Yemeni temples designed according to this style is the temple of the goddess Nakrah, which was built inside the city of Barāqīš, the capital of the kingdom of Ma'in (330 BC-100 BC). It is a rectangular area and the temple of the god Sīn dī Mīf'an Ribūn. It is located on one of the sides of the Dū'an valley, in the west of Ribūn. This temple is considered an ideal model for the temples of the Kingdom of Ḥaḍramoūt. Main temples are built outside the cities. It is shared by all the ancient Yemeni kingdoms on the neighboring mountains, such as temples of Sūnah, Mašğah, Hiğra, Hišn alkīs, and Bāqtfaḥ [44]. Also, the temple of the god Sīn (dī mīzāb) in the Al-Haridah region (Figure 63) and the temple of Bāqtfaḥ at Ḥaḍramoūt [36]. Addition to a side building attached to the Temple of Hišn alkīs in Ḥaḍramoūt (Figure 62) and the temple of Makinūn in Ḥaḍramoūt; it is a rectangular building (29 x 21 m), consisting of a rectangular hall with two rows of columns on either side of it, three columns in each row. Also, for example, the temple of 'aṭṭr inside the city of Qārṇū in the Kingdom of Ma'in [21] (Figure 64, 65).

The axial planning of elements of the temple and the presence of columns distributed inside the building also affected the temples built outside Yemen, especially in Abyssinia. Such as Yahā temple, which belongs to the Kingdom of Āksūm. This temple is located in the northeast of the region of (Adūā). It is a rectangular area. The similarity is evident due to the dependence and influence of the Kingdom of Āksūm on the Kingdom of Sheba (Figure 64, 65).

Many archeologists believe that many of these ancient temples were employed and reused as mosques, among the architectural and artistic influences of the ancient Yemeni civilization on Islamic civilization. Among the most prominent mosques, which are likely to have been ancient temples and turned into mosques, Tamūr Mosque dates back to before Islam in the sixth century AD and then was converted into a mosque. As well as the Ala'ūr Mosque (Figure 66, 67), located in the village of Ala'ūr, belongs

to the sheikh of the village nicknamed Ala'ūr. This village is located in Banī Alğūbībi in the Alğūbīn district at Rīmah Governorate [33]. This mosque is distinguished by its various inscriptions and inscriptions. It is likely that it was built in the sixth century AH / twelfth century AD due to the similarity between it and the writings and decorations of some mosques built in the 5-6 AH / 11-12 AD. Therefore, it was likely an old temple that turned into a mosque, confirmed by the presence of inscriptions inscribed with the Himyaritic Mūsnaḍ script in the mosque [37].

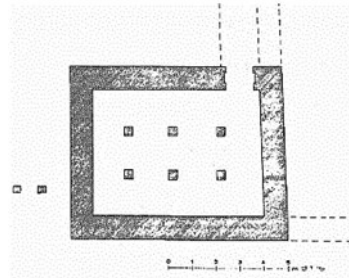


Figure 61. Temple of 'aṭṭr inside the city of Qārṇū in the Kingdom of Ma'in [21].

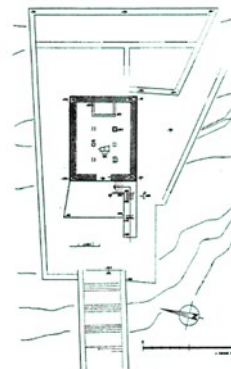


Figure 62. Temple of Hišn alkīs, Ḥaḍramoūt [20].

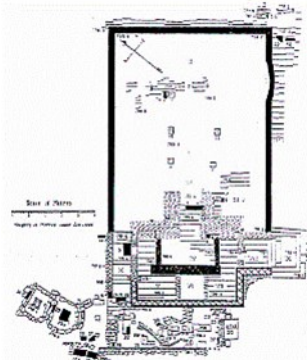


Figure 63. Temple of the god Sīn (dī mīzāb) in the Al-Haridah region [21].

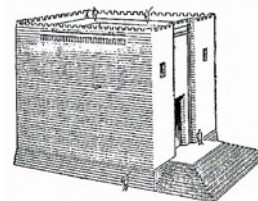


Figure 64. Perspective of Yahā temple, Āksūm, Abyssinia [21].

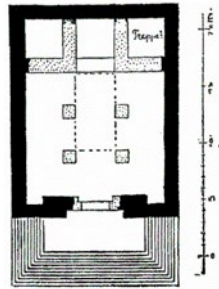


Figure 65. Plan of Yahā temple, Āksūm, Abyssinia [21].



Figure 66. Ala'ūr mosque from inside. Source: photo of 'abdū Sa'd Al-Bihiri



Figure 67. General view of Ala'ūr mosque. Source: photo of 'abdū Sa'd Al-Bihiri

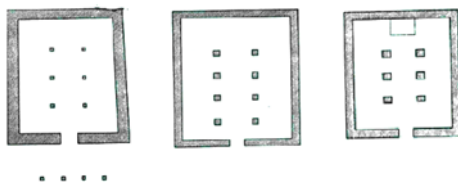


Figure 68. Different models of ancient Yemeni temples [20].

There was also a rectangular building in the Kingdom of Sheba, which is believed to have been an ancient Sheba temple. It is called the temple of Šarāwh. It was visited by several travelers, including Glaser. The rest of its ruins show that it contains a courtyard and columns distributed in the form of rows. But there is no confirmation that it is a temple, and it may be a mosque. The modern archaeological survey has proven that this building is an old mosque built on the ruins of an architectural structure dating back to before Islam and its function is unknown [21].

CONCLUSION

The research dealt with a study of one of the small mosques that characterize the various cities of Yemen. Despite its small size and simplicity, this mosque reflects many historical, aesthetic, and artistic values. The study documented and studied the mosque and analyzed its architectural style, decorations, and writings for the first time. The researcher reached

several findings:

1. The mosque reflects one of the important architectural styles of one of the forms of mosques in the Arabian Peninsula. This mosque came on the same model as the small mosques in the Arabian Peninsula in the general shape and only focused on ceiling decorations.
2. The research sheds light on the shape of these mosques during the fourteenth century AH/the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century AD.
3. Dating the history of the mosque based on the foundational texts on the mosque's roof, which referred to the mosque to 1313 AH / 1896 AD.
4. The mosque, despite its small size, includes a wealth of various local decorations on the ceiling, which came in the style of the decorations that were prevalent in the era of the Rasūlid state and distinguished by its bright colors.
5. This study focused on these decorations that distinguished the mosques of villages in Yemen and attempted artists to imitate the decorations of the Rasūlid state as the ideal model that distinguishes the Yemeni decorations.
6. The mosque, with its rich decorations, reflects the builder's personality, his great position, and his great role in the political and social life in the province of Rimah. The study provided a complete translation of Sheikh Aḥmad Hādī, his life, and his works through documents. The waqfiyya of the mosque indicated the extent of Sheikh Aḥmad Hādī's interest in the mosque and his keenness to continue performing its functions.
7. The inscriptions on the mosque's ceiling provided us with historical information about the names of the Participant artists in the construction and implementation of decorations, led by Sheikh Yāsīn Al-Hattāri.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the events and political differences in Yemen, the Yemeni archaeological facilities are subjected to partial or total demolition and destruction. The author recommends the need to preserve these mosques and put them under the supervision of the Yemeni General Authority for Antiquities and Museums, to be responsible for the restoration of them to preserve their cultural and artistic value, as they reflect an important local heritage that reflects the shape of mosques in Yemeni villages and the local decorations in them.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to the Yemeni historian 'Adil al'bdīlī alḡabī al'yāmny, the grandson of Sheikh Aḥmad Hādī, the founder of the mosque, who helped me and provided me with many special historical documents and important information about Sheikh Aḥmad Hādī's

life and works. I also extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to the dear Yemeni brother, the historian of Yemeni heritage, Mr. Ḥaydar 'Alī al-'īzi and Mr. 'abdū Sa'd Mahdī Al-Bihiri. They gave me a lot of historical information and provided me with many important pictures of the mosques of Rīmah.

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