The changing pattern of urban form: Example of Tripoli, Libya

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Abstract. *This paper will start with a short historical background of Tripoli, and identify the periods of growth by using an evidence of maps, photos, sketches, to illustrate and the schematic of changes, then will identify the problems for the historic city in the particular era. The paper will focuses in impact of Modernism, nature, scale and speed of change – physical environment (streets, plots, buildings, land uses) and social change (uses, occupiers).*

Keywords: Historic Tripoli city, urban form, urban change, problems

Introduction

Several studies of urban planning and architecture have explored how the physical form of Tripoli has altered over time. While this work is informative, relatively work has explored how the traditional city of Tripoli has changed over time. This paper will concentrate on explaining the historical characteristics of urban form of the 'old' city. In particular, the paper discusses the changes made to the city because of Ottoman, Italian, British influences, before briefly exploring, the impact of modernism t hat occurred during the post-colonial era. The paper finishes by discussing the political influence of law in the Gaddafi era and how this has affected the historical city.

Tripoli Location in Libya

The old city of Tripoli is a Libyan North African city, it's the nucleus that has evolved from it the whole city, which founded by the Phoenicians between fifth century and seventh century until the mid-nineteenth century (the city of 2700 years old) when spread urban development outside the city walls under Ottoman rule.

From the Arab era in 643 to the Spanish and Maltese era 1510-1551 AD

After the collapse of the Byzantine Empire, the conquest of Constantinople and the arrival of the First Ottoman era, from 1551 to 1711 AD, we can observe some key physical elements which are landmarks in Tripoli's old city , such as the western wall, Darghout mosque, and Darghout baths, built in 1604. In general, the First Ottoman era is considered important with regards to rebuilding and strengthening the city. A new tower was built (tower of Darghout) to the north (port entry); another tower was established right in the middle of North West wall and was named Tower of turab (earth). This is illustrated in a map from 1675 (Figure1) and several other drawings dating to the 17th century (Code of the old Tripoli city, 2010). The following a sketch is from 1675 belonging to Sir John Siller of the city of Tripoli following the Ottomans' rebuilding and organizing, three mosques with three circular minarets: the great mosque (close proximity to the current site of Ahmed Pasha mosque), Darghout mosque and Sidi Salem mosque. Contrary to the 1559 map, this map shows a network of streets in a vertical shape, it also shows that the west wall has changed to become straight between the gate

of Zenata and the tower of Sidi Al-Haddar.A sketch from 1686 shows the defense wall of the city. From the right to the left, we can see the tower Sidi Al-Haddar, Turab tower, Darghout tower and Mendrik tower in its circular shape. One can also observe the minaret to the right of the picture (more likely belonging to the Sidi Salem mosque) and minarets of some mosques in the middle.

The Alqurmanli era of 1711 - 1835 AD

The Qaramanli era started in 1711 with the dynasty founder Ahmed Pasha (ruled between 1714 and 1745). One main achievement is the building of a mosque bearing his name between 1736 and 1738. The Qargi mosque was built between 1833 and 1834 and is considered the last landmark built in theQaramanli era.A drawing of the prayer hall inside the great mosque in Tripoli, signed by the explorer Domingo Badia, also known as Ali BehAbbasi, from 1806. In 1783, the population of Tripoli was 14000 people including Muslims, Christians and Jews, locals and foreigners (Code of the old Tripoli city, 2010).

The Second Ottoman period 1835-1911 AD

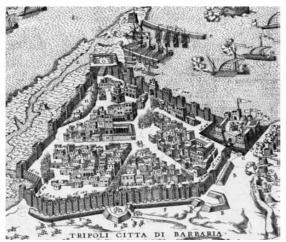The Qaramanli era ended in 1835 and the city reverted to Ottoman rule. This time their rule

Figure 1.
A drawing of Tripoli dated 1559 shows a European military attack. (code of the old Tripoli city, 2010)

lasted until 1911. According to documents dated 1882-1883, there were 25000 residents, 4000 of them were Jews and 3000 foreigners, in the wilaya (region) of Tripoli. The west city had the highest population density and was the biggest in the wilaya (Code of the old Tripoli city, 2010).The city was surrounded with walls. There were three gates: khandaq gate and manshiya gate (double gate) to the south, the new gate to the west, and sea front gate to the north. During that time, Tripoli had six neighbourhoods (Code of the old Tripoli city, 2010).

European influences, 1830-1911

The regency of Tripoli, as a province of the Ottoman Empire, was influenced by the European economic penetration of the Empire in general and that was the first influenced and by its own domestic conditions in the second half of the nineteenth century.

European states pressured the Ottoman imperial authority to give European traders concessions to trade freely in the empire. By the late seventeenth century, major European countries such as England and France established commercial consulates in Tripoli (Dyer, 1984).

In 1887, strong European capitalist states began to divide the world into spheres of influence.

In the 1860s and 1870s Tripoli's major trading partners were England, France, the Ottoman Empire, Egypt, Tunisia, Austria, the United States and Germany. During most of the second half of the nineteenth century, England was the regency's leading trading partner.

However, by the end of the nineteenth century, Italy became Libya's second major trading partner. The Italian policy of cultural and economic penetration was organized through the Italian consulate and Bank Roma (the Banco di Roma). Between 1876 and 1911 the Italians built 12 schools in Libya, including a high school. An Italian-sponsored press was founded in 1909 (Ahmida, 1953). The bank began to penetrate the economy of the Regency first by opening branches in most major cities and towns. Second, it invested in real estate

by buying 400,000 acres of land. Third, the bank loaned money at low interest rates at 9percent compared to the 20-60 percent charged by some local Jewish moneylenders. Fourth, it sponsored olive-oil and esparto processing factories, flour mills, an ice-cream factory, and a printing house. (DMT, Malaf al-'A'ilat1913). At the start of the twentieth century,
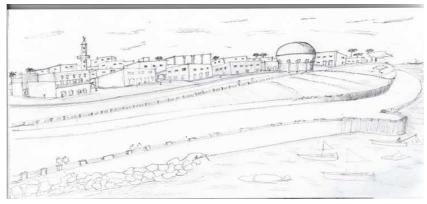

Figure 2.
Illustration of SidiHadar Street, after demolition of the soldiers of Italians monument at the western waterfront and replaced by water tank in (1957). ''Sketched the author'' (derived from photo taken in 1957).

the old social structure began to change, a consequence of the development of capitalism. The decline of the Sahara trade pushed this process further, and four classes emerged in Tripolitania. At the top of the hierarchy was merchant's class, which tied to British and Italian capitals and a salaried class which owned land and was linked to the Ottoman state administration. At the bottom other class formations were laborers, which are tribesmen, or the wages laborers in towns (Le Gall, 1986).

Tripoli city, the capital of the Ottoman administration, grew as a major economic market of the Regency. The Ottoman state expanded into the hinterland and ensured security and trade more than it had the previous century. European business ventures and investments began to become known by 1885; Tripoli city began to develop modern business institutions. The city had 20 bakeries, 22 mills, 1,019 shops, 40 wholesale stores, and 9 British and 11 Maltese firms.

Economic and political ties between the city of Tripoli and the hinterland also strengthened. The city provided political and economic services to people of the hinterland.

The public buildings and markets became important to vicinity people. These new urban institutions began to replace tribal institutions, the result of military defeats and the extension of the Ottoman administration. The economic and political importance of Tripoli was have led to decline of the hinterland trade, which forced tribes to migrate to north Libyan towns. Migration was in the service of finding new

jobs especially in British and Italian businesses in Tripoli city (new Italian town outside the historical city wall) (Ahmida, 1953).

The Twentieth century

After France took control of Tunisia in 1881, and the British colonization of Egypt in 1882, the Italians started their invasion of Libya in October 1911 and continued for 32 years until 1943 (Ahmida, 1953). At the time of the Italian invasion, the old city of Tripoli was still surrounded by walls, but the "ottoman city" has already expanded outside these walls in the south and east directions. The Italians demolished the remaining walls on the north side and sea front side, the east side along avenue of SidiImran, for harbour extension, with sections of city wall pulled down to provide hard-core for the development - A railway is built to access the harbour, also a road was made laid out south-east of the Saraya Al- Hamra . May 1943, the end of the Italian occupation, from 1943 to 1951Tripoli was under British administration. (Code of the old Tripoli city, 2010). In December 1951, independence of Libya and economic stability was assured by grants in aid from Britain, United States and several European countries. (Carol, 2001).

After the discovery of oil in 1958 and increasing growth ratio, which occurred in the second half of previous century in Libya, which in general influenced the urban fabric

and traditional architectural form of Libyan cities, starting from capital city to majority of other Libyan cities, where the modern buildings which established after 1950 have been lost the local traditional identity, and became more modernism, and have become a strange in the existing urban architectural and form, especially the buildings located within the historical cities. This is happened in most all oil-producing Arab traditional states city, which mentioned by Ben Salah in 1980. (Cited in Al-Gabbani, 1984, p.275). We must recognition that, there are large influences of Western life-style on Libyan a traditional life-style. Also, incomplete and unclear building regulations, which maybe gave to local architects, wide range in their products, which produced negative changes (Code of the old Tripoli city, 2010).

September 1/1969
(starting Gudaffiera regime).

March 2/1977

Tripoli city became as a political and administrative centre and the main economic and academic in Libya. In 1978, a new law came out, which is law No. 4 of 1978: ''Law No. (4) For the year 1978 on the determination of some provisions concerning real estate ownership. Article (4) ''A citizen cannot be own more than one property, even if he is married to more than one wife''. (Law No.4, Socialist Real Estate Registry, 1978)

In that year, Muammar Qaddafi decreed that no Libyan could own more than one property. All rental houses were subsequently reallocated to tenants or confiscated by the state. In 1986, he abolished land ownership all together. (Mary Fitzgerald and Tarek Megerisi, 2015). However, in the recent time where local newspaper in Tripoli, (Libya's Al-Shat newspaper reported in November 2010, just 3 months before Libyan revolution 2011) published an article entitled "The right to housing between the compensation of those affected by Law No. 4 of 1978 and the damage to beneficiaries?" written by lawyer Faiza Al-

Basha. Al-Basha talked about the successive complaints of citizens who were assigned the homes of citizens who owned by other citizen in accordance with the provisions Law No. 4 of 1978, where the report talked about some general provisions of real estate ownership and its amendments. Where Most of them settled for more than three decades in houses allocated to them under legal procedure of that law" (Libyan press 17/11/2010, as seen on 09/06/2017)

February 2011
(Libyan Revolution)

''It's been trying to attempts to reform Libyan property laws after the 2011 uprising In the immediate aftermath of the revolution, property rights were considered a high priority. But without a wider reconciliation framework, a fully functioning judiciary, and state monopoly of force, Libya's neophyte lawmakers failed to make any progress (Fitzgerald and Megerisi, 2015). We should not forget the Islamic principle of ensuring social harmony could be a useful one for any resolution process. Also, hastily crafted legal remedies could trigger new violence due to the overlapping layers of grievances (Fitzgerald and Megerisi, 2015).

Problems for Tripoli historic city and Impact of Modernism

The long and rich history of Tripoli has generated a significant number and variety of heritage buildings. Many structures have seen use, re-use and modification over the time, and it is mixture of multi period, built heritage that gives Tripoli a unique character in Libya. In general the Medina (old Tripoli city) is protected under the Libyan law, specially the heritage buildings and structures that are listed historic monuments. Starting by arch of Marcus which is the oldest of these landmark buildings in the city is the Roman arch of Marcus Aurelius. Also, others include sections of the city walls of the Umayyad and Abbasid periods; mosques dating from the 14th century; the turrets of the Saraya Al-Hamra dating from the early 16th

century and mosques, madrassa and hammams dating from the later 16th century onwards. The more recent landmark monuments date from the Karamanli and second Othman periods and include a similar range of significant buildings. (Code of the old Tripoli city, 2010) Also, there are a great number of buildings are not so well protected, are poorly maintained and are visibly deteriorating. Although the topographical development of the Medina is as yet imperfectly understood, the ancient street network, with elements of a Byzantine or earlier Roman grid still forming a recognisable part, has evolved through time and is a precious survival. Also, the history of the city is reflected in the street network and it is important that the ancient alignments are preserved. Moreover, it is this very combination of ancient street alignments, the line of the city walls (even where the walls no longer survive), the gates, the landmark and listed structures. the more recent buildings of character, the mixture of public and private space, the suqs, mosques, Madrassa (schools), churches, hammam (public baths), funduqs (Hotels) and workshops; the sheer variety of architectural forms and of decoration, reflecting both Arabic and European traditions and influences, that makes the Tripoli Medina such a unique and special place. There is much to discover about the development of the old city and of its stock of historic buildings. If the redevelopment and revitalisation process is to be successful, careful planning, study and analysis will be required to pave the way for future interventions (Code of the old Tripoli city, 2010).

Photos (Figure 4) show no respect to building regulations (buildings height, building materials ,etc.) within old city. Also, establishment some of buildings and facilities that contribute to change urban fabric of the historical city, also, the establishment of strange walkway to protect pedestrians from vehicle (negative change).

The following figures (Figure 5 and 6) show the changing in the existing urban fabric by opening and linked the narrow streets to each other or demolishing old properties in secret and without seeking legally advice, which will causea major problem in the structure of the old city in the future.

Figure 3.
City physical dynamic (changing in the urban form)
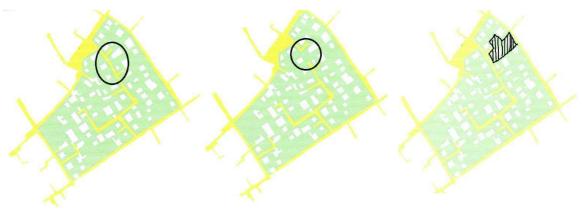**1930 - 2001 - 2009**

Figure 4.

Figure 5.

Conclusion

Clearly, this law is a major significant recent political influence, but the question is here, does this law affect the condition of the properties and the state of the traditional city of Tripoli or no? If yes, then many questions and investigation must be act based open that. Also opening debate about property rights could even become part of Libya's recovery. Also, it could give Libya best chance, to development in to economic, political social which it will reflect in to urban morphology.   Finally the Code of the old Tripoli city, project in 2010 did not mention any suspension related to this law or the negative influences from it. Up to present time there is no study have been made related this law in term to influence it to urban form and current state of the properties and streets condition within the historical city of Tripoli. It's significant to broaden study in this field, to improve the social environment in Libya.

Figure 6.

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