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AL-KARĪMĪYAH MOSQUE IN ALEPPO, SYRIA: AN ARCHITECTURAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The paper presents a study of the mosque of *al-Karīmīyah*, which is considered one of the oldest mosques in Aleppo city. Despite the importance of this mosque, no study has been allocated to it, which gives a special significance of this paper especially that the monuments of the city subject to severe ruin because of the current events in Syria in general. The paper examines the names of the mosque and its historical importance as demonstrated through its various functions. All renewal works at the building are considered and an architectural description is provided, which includes a new dating for some elements, in addition to an analytical study shows the origin of the mosque's elements and compares them to parallel examples. The paper included also a reading for all remaining inscriptions with facsimile figures made by the author and published for the first time. The study also elucidates the endowments that were allocated to the mosque during the Mamluk and the Ottoman periods, demonstrating the significance of its *waqf*. All plates have been taken by the author in 2010.

KEY WORDS:

Aleppo; *al-Karīmīyah* mosque; foundation date; Islamic architecture; Islamic inscriptions; minaret; endowments.

الملخص

حُصص ذلك البحث لدراسة جامع الكريمة الذي يُعد واحداً من أقدم الجوامع الباقية بمدينة حلب، والذي لم تخصص له دراسة مستقلة - برغم أهميته - حتى الآن، وهو ما يعطي هذه الدراسة أهميتها خاصة في ظل ما تتعرض له آثار المدينة من تدمير نتيجة الأحداث الجارية بسوريا بشكل عام. ويظهر البحث الأهمية التاريخية لذلك الجامع بإلقاء الضوء على الوظائف المتعددة التي قام بها على مدار العصور التاريخية المختلفة، بالإضافة إلى حصر التسميات المتعددة التي اشتهر بها في المصادر التاريخية. وقد تتبع البحث جميع أعمال التجديد التي مر بها بداية من إنشائه وانتهاء بالعصر العثماني، كما تضمن البحث دراسة وصفية اشتملت على تأريخ جديد لبعض عناصره المعمارية، بالإضافة إلى دراسة تحليلية تضمنت تأصيل لتلك العناصر ومقارنتها بالأمثلة الموازية بمدينة حلب. وقد تضمن البحث أيضاً قراءة لكافة النقوش الكتابية الباقية مع تفرغ بعضها للمرة الأولى من جانب الباحث. وأكد البحث على أهمية الوقف الخاص بالجامع وحصر مشتملاته خلال العصرين المملوكي والعثماني مع بيان مصارفه الشرعية في ضوء شروط الواقف من واقع المصادر التاريخية. اللوحات الفوتوغرافية التي صورت جميعها من جانب الباحث أثناء زيارته الميدانية للجامع في 2010م.

الكلمات الدالة:

حلب، جامع الكريمة، تاريخ الإنشاء، العمارة الإسلامية، النقوش الإسلامية، المئذنة، حجج الوقف.

INTRODUCTION

The city of Aleppo is Syria's second city, located on the river Qūwīq in north-west Syria. It is often regarded as the oldest inhabited city in the world because of its continuous history from at least the twentieth century BCE¹. It played a significant historical role during the pre-Islamic periods because of its location on the shortest and most convenient route between the Middle East and the Mediterranean², which made it an important center of civilization. The importance of the city declined during the first three centuries of Islam³, but it flourished again from the reign of Hamdanids 332-356 A.H/ 944-967 A.D⁴ to become a base for rule in northern Syria⁵. It remained a place of interest for the rulers of the later Islamic periods, especially under the reign of the Mamluks 658-922 A.H/ 1260-1516 A.D, when it was regarded as a border city⁶.

The city's rulers constructed many monuments across the different Islamic eras to commemorate their memories or as charitable acts. Therefore, the artistic treasures of Aleppo are innumerable. They include the citadel, which is probably the best example extant of medieval military architecture⁷, the fortified city walls and ancient gates, which served as an external shield to protect the city⁸. Many mosques were constructed and spread widely across the city⁹, in addition to madrassas, souks, khans, private homes, and thousands of other architectural elements that represent all periods of Islamic history¹⁰.

Among the many monumental treasures of the city is the mosque of *al-Karīmīyah*. It is considered one of the oldest mosques in the city, constructed not long after the Islamic conquest, although its exact foundation date is unknown¹¹. It is located within the city's borders and its architectural elements still remain in good condition. It is characterized by architectural elements that belong to three successive periods: the Ayyubid, Mamluk, and the Ottoman.

The renewal works undertaken during each of these periods left clear signatures and still remain as a witness to the architectural styles of the time in which they were added. This article demonstrates the archaeological importance of the mosque of *al-Karīmīyah* through a description and analytical study of its elements, including their dating. The importance of this study is enhanced by the current unrest in Syrian cities generally, and especially in Aleppo, which threatens various archaeological sites of

¹ Petersen, *Dictionary of Islamic architecture*, p. 10.

² Chehade, "Aleppo: Its structure and problems", p. 102.

³ Petersen, *Dictionary of Islamic architecture*, pp. 10-11.

⁴ David & Hiritani, *Halab*, p. 59.

⁵ Sauvaget, *Alep*, p. 84.

⁶ Sauvaget, Tyrwhitt, "Aleppo", p. 407; Gaube, wirth, *Aleppo*, p. 51; Burns, *Aleppo*, p. 168.

⁷ Saouaf, Miller, *Aleppo*, p. 8.

⁸ Tabaa, "Circle of power", p. 181.

⁹ Warren, "Key monuments of Islamic architecture", p. 231.

¹⁰ Roded, "Great Mosques", p. 32.

¹¹ al-Asadī, *Aḥyā' ḥalab*, p.107.

different ages. Several sites, including the mosque under study, have been damaged during these events¹².

AL-KARĪMĪYAH MOSQUE, HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Among the monuments of the old city of Aleppo, the mosque of *al-Karīmīyah* is considered one of the oldest archaeological buildings surviving¹³. Unfortunately, we cannot accurately determine the date of the mosque because it does not include any inscriptions giving its first foundation date, and nor is this mentioned in historical sources. The latter do indicate, however, that it was built in an early period after the Islamic conquest¹⁴, in either the reign of the Caliph *ʿUmar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb* or Caliph *ʿUmar Ibn Abd al-Azīz*¹⁵. Caliph *ʿUmar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb* ruled between 13-23 AH/ 634-644 AD and Caliph *ʿUmar Ibn Abd al-Azīz* reigned between 99-101 AH/ 717-719 AD. Therefore, we can determine the first foundation date of the mosque as between 16 AH/ 637 AD, in which the Arab Muslim armies entered the city of Aleppo, and the year 101 AH/ 719 AD in which the Caliphate of *ʿUmar Ibn Abd al-Azīz* ended noting that this supposition is based on what mentioned in the historical sources about this regard but, as aforementioned, no archaeological evidences. Thus, using the historical sources, we can suppose an approximate foundation date for the mosque during the 1st century AH until the first year of the 2nd century AH.

As for the mosque's names, *al-Karīmīyah* is the current, popular name¹⁶, although its original name was *al-Muḥṣab*, which was mentioned in the historical sources of the Ayyubid period¹⁷. Unfortunately, the historical sources did not present any explanation for this name, some references referred that it has no origin¹⁸ and the other mentioned it with no comment¹⁹. This name may have owned to the supervisor *al-mutawali* of the mosque in this period that many mosques in the same city were called by the names of their supervisors such as the mosque of al- Amir *Ashiqtumur* 773 A.H/ 1371 A.D which was famous by *al-Sakakini* as relate to its supervisor²⁰. The name *al-Karīmīyah* is related to *al-Shaykh Abd al-Karīm al-Khāfi*, who renewed the mosque in the Mamluk period²¹. In addition to its original and current names, it

¹² Shady, Bashar, "Syrian Archaeological Heritage", p. 7.

¹³ Ṭalas, *Al-Athār al-Islāmīyah*, p. 93; Nutfajī, *fan al-ʿimarah*, p. 53.

¹⁴ al-Ghuzzī, *Nahr al-dhahab*, vol. 2, p. 98.

¹⁵ Ibn Shaddād, *Al-Aʿlāq al-Khaṭīrah*, vol. 1, p. 63.

¹⁶ Many historical sources and references attested that this name correlated with the mosque since the Mamluk period after the renewal works of *al-Shaykh Abd al-Karīm al-Khāfi*. Ibn al-ʿAjamī, *Kunūz al-dhahab*, vol.1, p. 256.; Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, *Durr al-ḥabab*, vol. 1, p. 839.; al-Ghuzzī, *Nahr al-dhahab*, vol. 2, p. 98.; al-Ṭabbākh, *Aʿlām al-nublāʾ*, vol. 5, p. 287.; Herzfeld, *Inscriptions et monuments d'Alep*, vol. 2, p. 315.; Gaube, *Arabische inschriften aus Syrien*, p. 42.; Miencke, *Die Mamlukische architektur*, p. 372. At the same time, some references referred that the mosque has been famous with this name since the beginning of the 20th century. al-Jāsir, *Dūr al-mutaṣawīfah*, p. 229.

¹⁷ Ibn Shaddād, *Al-Aʿlāq al-Khaṭīrah*, vol. 1, p. 63.

¹⁸ Herzfeld, *Inscriptions et monuments d'Alep*, vol. 2, p. 315.

¹⁹ al-Jāsir, *Dūr al-mutaṣawīfah*, p. 229.

²⁰ Ṭalas, *Al-ʿAthār al-Islāmīyah*, p. 157; al-Jabbūri, *al-mushaidāt al-waqfiyah*, p. 126.

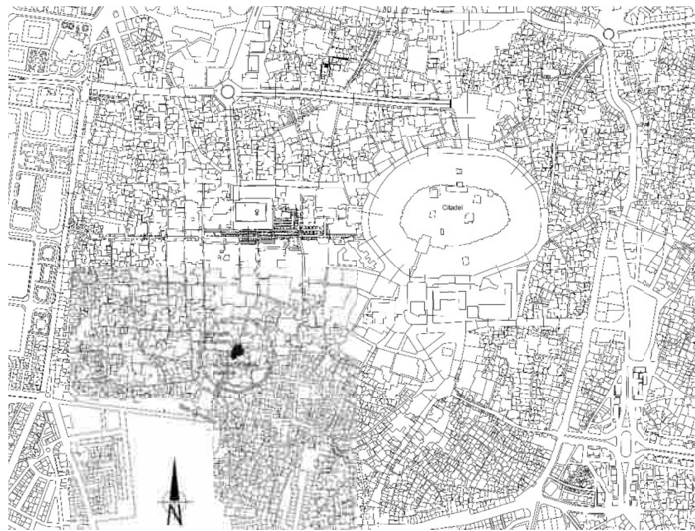
²¹ Miencke, *Die Mamlukische architektur*, p. 372.

known by the name *Masjid al-Qadam*, or footprint mosque, as it includes a footprint attributed to the prophet *Muhammad*²².

LOCATION OF THE MOSQUE

The mosque is situated in a district inside *Bāb Qinnasrin*²³. The quarters which are located inside the city's gates are often named after these gates, such as the quarter of *Bāb al-Naṣr*, the quarter of *Bāb Qinnasrin*, and the quarter of *Bāb al-Nāyirab*²⁴. The district of *Bāb Qinnasrin* is considered one of the oldest districts in Aleppo; this is evidenced by the plans in which the ancient districts of the city were built (Fig. 1).

There are many monumental buildings around the mosque, such as *Bāb Qinnasrin*, so named because it leads to the city of Qinnasrin²⁵. Other monuments situated in this district include the mosque of *al-Ṭarsūsī*²⁶ and *Ḥammām al-Juharī*.²⁷



◀ fig.no.1: The map of the old city of Aleppo shows the location of the mosque. After, the center of planning and archaeological studies in Aleppo.

THE RENEWAL WORKS

The mosque of *al-Karīmīyah* was renewed many times after its first construction. According to historical sources and inscriptions within the mosque itself, the current building attributed to three principal periods: the Ayyubid, the Mamluk, and the Ottoman period.

The mosque was renewed for the first time in the Ayyubid period²⁸ during the reign of al-Sultan *al-Nāṣir Yūsuf II* under the supervisor of his slave *Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn Abd*

²² 'Uthmān, *Al-'Athār wa-l-awābīd al-tārikhiyah*, p. 123.

²³ al-Ḥimṣī, *Ḥalab al-qadīmah*, p. 36.

²⁴ Hivernel, "Bāb al-Nayrab", p. 216.

²⁵ *Bāb Qinnasrin* may have been built by *Saīf al-Dawlah al-Ḥamadānī*, the ruler of Aleppo between 333-356 AH/ 945-967 AD and was later renewed by *al-Malik al-Nāṣir Yūsuf II* in 654 AH/ 1256 AD. Ibn Shaddād, , *Al-A'lāq al-Khaṭīrah*, vol. 1, p. 19; Qal'ajī, *Ḥalab al-qadīmah*, p. 105.

²⁶ the mosque of *al-Ṭarsūsī* is attributed to the Zangī period and renewed by *Aḥmad Ibn al-Tājir* in 708 AH/ 1308 AD. al-Ghuzzī, *Nahr al-dhahab*, vol. 2, p. 101.

²⁷ *Ḥammām al-Juharī* is attributed to al-Amir *Aqbugha al-Juharī* in 786 AH/ 1383 AD. Abd al-Rāzīk, *Al-Ḥammāmāt al-'āmmah*, p. 335.

*al-Rihīm Ibn al-‘Ajamī al- Shāfi‘ī*²⁹ in 654 AH/ 1256 AD³⁰. These renewal works are attested in an inscription written by Thuluth, located in the northern entrance³¹. Some researchers consider this date as that of the first construction³² but the inscription begins with *al-Basmalah*, followed by the phrase “*this building was renewed...*”, clearly indicating that these works were renovations after the first construction, as also confirmed by the historical sources.

The mosque was renewed again in the Mamluk period by *al-Qādī Bahā’ al-Dīn Alī Muḥammad Ibn Abī Sawādah*³³, who renewed the minaret in 771 AH/ 1369 AD. These works were proven in an inscription mentioned by Ibn al-‘Ajamī (*Kunūz*, I, p. 256) and was engraved on the minaret shaft but it has faded and no longer exists.

The main renewal works, however, were undertaken by *al-Shaykh Abd al-Karīm Ibn Abd Allāh al-Khāfi al- Ḥanafī* in 855 AH/ 1451 AD³⁴. He was a student of *al-Shaykh Zaīn al-Dīn al-Khāfi*, to whom he belonged, and he was one of the dignitaries of Aleppo. He died in 884 AH/ 1479 AD and was buried in a tomb inside the mosque³⁵.

The renewal works of *al-Shaykh Abd al-Karīm* are considered the most important in the history of the mosque, and so the building itself was attributed to him. He decided to renew the mosque after adopting it as his place of residence. He demolished the shops adjacent to the mosque on its western side and added their spaces to it, then he expanded its eastern iwan and ordered that Friday prayers should be held at the mosque. These renewal works also included the construction of another entrance beside the old one, new windows in its western side, and toilets for the ablution services³⁶. His works were not limited to renewals of the building itself, but also he appointed an Imam for the prayers and Friday sermon and a reader of the Quran³⁷. He proclaimed his works in a monumental inscription located above the window of his tomb inside the mosque.

Following this, the mosque was renewed again by al-Amir *jānī Bik al-Tājī*, the ruler of Aleppo city, in 866 AH/ 1461 AD, who renewed many parts of the building and

²⁸ Unfortunately, there is no available information for the several centuries between the foundation of the mosque and its first renewal in the Ayyubid period in 654 AH/ 1256 AD. The historical sources provide no notes on the mosque during this period and the building itself does not include any inscriptions before those relating to the Ayyubid renovations in 654 AH/ 1256 AD.

²⁹ He was captured by the Mongols and murdered in 658 A.H/ 1259 A.D. al-Dhahabī, *siyar a’lām*, vol. 1, p. 522.

³⁰ The same date - 654 AH - was engraved in *Bāb Qinnasrin* beside the mosque as a renewal date during the reign of al-Sultan *al-Nāṣir Yūsuf*, indicating that the renovation of the mosque and of *Bāb Qinnasrin* were undertaken at the same time.

³¹ Herzfeld, *Inscriptions et monuments d’Alep*, vol. 2, p. 315.

³² ‘Uthmān, *Al-Handasah al-‘insh’īyah*, p. 206.

³³ *al-Qādī Bahā’ al-Dīn* belonged to *Banī Sawādah*, a famous family who lived in Aleppo, in a district specially allocated to them. They held many prestigious positions in the city; *al-Qādī Bahā’ al-Dīn* was a judge for the city and appointed as a head of *Dīwān al-‘Inshā’*. Ibn al-‘Ajamī, *Kunūz al-dhahab*, vol. 1, p. 462; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkarit*, vol. 1, p. 248; Ibn al-Wardī, *Tārīkh ibn al-wardī*, vol. 2, p. 374; al-‘Asqalanī, *al-Durar*, vol. 3, p. 259.

³⁴ al-Ghuzzī, *Nahr al-dhahab*, vol. 2, p. 98.

³⁵ Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, *Durr al- ḥabab*, vol. 1, p. 839.

³⁶ Ibn al-‘Ajamī, *Kunūz al-dhahab*, vol. 1, p. 256.

³⁷ al- Ṭabbākh, *A’lām al-nublā’*, vol. 5, p. 287.

added a new minbar³⁸. We can thus be certain that the mosque was renewed three times during the Mamluk period. These works are proven by inscriptions, some of which still remain and others of which are now lost but were mentioned in historical sources.

After a period of time, the mosque then fell into ruins and was deserted by worshipers, remaining in that state until it was renewed in 1302 AH/ 1885 AD by *Jamīl* Pasha, the ruler of Aleppo in the reign of al-Sultan *Abd al- Ḥamīd* II. These works included many improvements inside the mosque. They are attested in two monumental inscriptions, the first one located above the southern entrance and the second located above the façade of the main iwan. In mentioning the works of *Jamīl* Pasha, we should refer also to Gaube's (1978, p. 42) note that there was once a shop located 150 m north of the mosque, the façade of which included a monumental inscription with two lines referring to the mosque.

1- وقف جامع

2- الكريمة سنة 1302

1- *This waqf was endowed on the mosque of*

2- *al-Karīmīyah in 1302*

The shop no longer exists, but it was recorded, with its inscription, by Gaube (1978, p. 42)³⁹. The inscription measured 40 x 20 cm and indicated that the shop was among the endowments of the mosque and that it was built in 1302 AH/ 1885 AD. This date is the same as the works of *Jamīl* Pasha. So, the conclusion can be drawn that the renewal works of *Jamīl* Pasha were not limited to the mosque alone, but also included endowments that were built and allocated to the mosque.

THE FUNCTIONS OF THE MOSQUE

Although the mosque has four inscriptions, their content is limited to mentions of the names and nicknames of those responsible for renewal works and the dates of these events. None mentions the functions of the mosque, referring to it as a building in general.

The first inscription, for example, belongs to the Ayyubid period. It began with *al-Basmalah*, followed with the phrase "...*this blessed building was renewed....*" "*...جددت هذه البنية المباركة...*" It is clear that the inscription did not mention a specific function for the building, whether before the renewal works or after their completion⁴⁰.

³⁸ Miencke, *Die Mamlukische architektur*, p. 372.

³⁹ This inscription was also photographed and facsimiled by 'Uthmān (2010, p. 149), look at (Fig.12) at this study.

⁴⁰ The same phrase was used in the same city in an inscription commemorating the renewal works of *Nūr al-Dīn* Zanki in *al- Ḥallawīyah* madrasa, but the phrase in this case was more specific in that it was complimented by explicit reference to the function of the building: "... *this blessed building was renewed and constructed as a madrasa for jurists ...*" "*...جدد هذه البنية السعيدة وأنشأها مدرسة للفقهاء...*". The inscription indicated that *Nūr al-Dīn* renewed the building in general without any specification

The second of the *al-Karīmīyah* mosque inscriptions is a Mamluk inscription. It is situated in the mausoleum's window and again does not mention the function of the mosque. It begins with a similar phrase: "this blessed place was constructed..." "أُنشأ" "هذا المكان المبارك..."; the phrase may refer only to the mausoleum or perhaps to the building in general. The third inscription dated to the Ottoman period and also has no mention of the mosque's functions. The only note regarding the function of the building occurs in the fourth inscription, which belongs also to the Ottoman period. It is located in the façade of *al-Qiblīyah* and in its last verse refers to the building as a mosque. "بمحرم قد جدَّ هذا المسجد".

From the preceding discussion, it is clear that the four inscriptions in the building, which belong to three different historical periods, do not provide us with any notes about its function. It is necessary instead to identify the functions of the building from what is mentioned in the historical sources, which indicate that it held a range of roles since its first construction. It was initially limited to holding the five prayers, until it was expanded and renewed in the Mamluk period by *al-Shaykh Abd al-Karīm*⁴¹. From that time, it became a congregational mosque⁴² and the Friday prayer was held inside it⁴³. In discussing its function, Herzfeld (1955, p. 372) referred to it as al-madrassa *al-Karīmīyah*, but the historical sources do not mention any notes about this function. Some historical sources do refer to it as a *Zāwīyah*, such as Ibn al-Ḥanbalī (*Durr*, I, p. 839), who said in the biography of al-Shayḥ Abd al-Karīm "Abd al-Karīm Ibn Abd Allāh al-Khāfī al-Ḥanaḫī the owner of the famous *Zāwīyah* inside *bāb Qinsarin*..."

Herzfeld also added a new function. He assumed that the mosque played the role of *al-Khanqāh*, and was known as *al-khanqāh al-Shamsīyah*⁴⁴. Although the historical sources do not comment that the mosque played this role⁴⁵, this assumption may be logical, especially after it was renewed under the patronage of *al-Shaykh Abd al-Karīm al-Khāfī*, who was famous for his Sufis activity. This is further supported by

regarding its function, but showed also that the building after these renewal works became a madrasa for jurists, noting that the building was used as a mosque before the works of *Nūr al-Dīn*. Ibn Shaddād, *Al-A'laq al-khaḫīrah*, vol. 1, p. 111.; al-Jirmānī, *Tuḫaf al-'anba'*, p. 200.; Herzfeld, *Inscriptions et monuments d'Alep*, vol. 2, p. 315.; al-Jāsir, *Madāris ḫalab*, p. 109.

⁴¹ Ibn al-Ajamī, *Kunūz al-dhahab*, vol. 1, p. 256.

⁴² The mosque was mentioned among the lists of the congregational mosques that were mentioned in the contemporary sources of the Mamluk period. Ibn al-Ajamī, *Kunūz al-dhahab*, vol. 1, p. 256; Ibn al-Shuḫnah, *Al-Durr al-muntakhab*, p.72; Gaube, Wirth, *Aleppo*, p. 235.

⁴³ Meincke, *Die Mamlukische architektur*, p. 372.

⁴⁴ Herzfeld, *Inscriptions et monuments d'Alep*, vol. 2, p. 315.

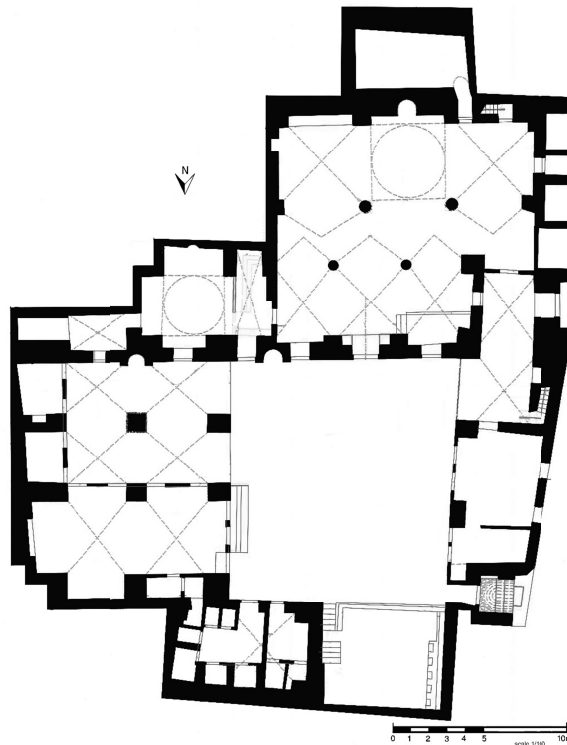
⁴⁵ Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalanī referred in his book (*inba'*, vol. 3, pp. 138-141) during his translation of al-Shaykh Muḫamad Ibn Bahadır Ibn Abdullah al-Zarkashī that he assumed the position of Shaykh in al-Khanqah al-Karīmīyah. Al-'Asqalanī did not determined if he mean the mosque of al-Karīmīyah in Aleppo or al-Khanqah al-Karīmīyah in Cairo as al-Shaykh al-Zarkahī frequented to Aleppo and Cairo during his life. The same historian translated to al-Shaykh al-Zarkahī in his book (*al-Durar*, vol. 3, pp. 397-398) and stated that al-Zarkahī appointed as Shaykh in khanqat Karim al-din. It is proved that al-'Asqalanī intended al-Khanqah al-Karīmīyah in Cairo which was situated in al-Qarafah al-Sughra and constructed by al-Amir Karim al-din Ibn al-Sadid in 722 A.H/ 1322 A.D. al-'Asqalanī, *inba'*, vol. 1, p. 447; al-'Asqalanī, *al-Durar*, vol. 3, p. 398; Said, "Kahnqahat misr", p. 1455.

the fact that this man was one of the students of *al-Shaykh Zaīn al-Dīn al-Khāfi*, who was a famous Sufi man. *al-Shaykh Abd al-Karīm* was a close student of his and took his name *-al-Khāfi-* as a nickname⁴⁶. Therefore, it is likely that *al-Shaykh Abd al-Karīm* made the mosque a refuge for the Sufis after he renewed it.

In addition to these functions, the mosque includes a mausoleum added by *al-Shaykh Abd al-Karīm* as his own tomb⁴⁷. It was also used as a shrine because it includes a footprint on a marble slab incorrectly attributed to the prophet *Muhammad*. From the preceding, it is clear that the mosque of *al-Karīmīyah* played various functions and had great importance among the mosques of Aleppo city.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND ANALYTICAL STUDY

The mosque occupies an irregular area with a total 1350 sq m. It has only one free façade, which overlooks the adjacent street. The façade has two entrances and only one minaret, surmounting the southern entrance. Inside the mosque, there are many architectural units, such as the main iwan, a side portico, a mausoleum, and other extensions. All the architectural units inside the mosque share one open courtyard (Fig. 2).



◀ fig.no.2: The plan of the mosque. After, The center of planning and archaeological studies in Aleppo.

1. The façade:

The mosque has only one façade overlooks the *Bāb Qinnasrin* street. Its length is 30.15 m, and it is 5.60 m high from the level of the outside street, which is now at a level 80 cm above the base of the façade. At the top of the façade there is a renewed

⁴⁶ al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Daw' allāmi'*, vol. 9, p. 260.

⁴⁷ Meincke, *Die Mamlukische architektur*, p. 372.

surmounting wall measuring 1.80 m high, which means that the overall height of the façade today is 8.20 m (Fig. 3). The façade is characterized by its simplicity and is devoid of decorations except a projecting stone cornice at its top (Pl. 1).

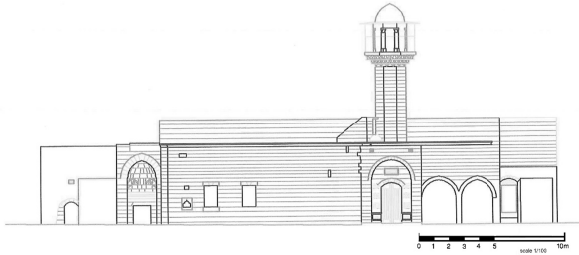


fig.no.3: The façade of the mosque, the two entrances, and the minaret. After, the center of planning and archaeological studies in Aleppo.



Pl.no.1 The façade of the mosque. By the author in July 2010.

The southern section of the façade is occupied by three shops. These were probably among the endowments allocated to the mosque during the works of *al-Shaykh Abd al-Karīm* in 855 AH/ 1451 AD, since the historical sources mention that his expansions were in the western side⁴⁸, where the three shops are located. The first and the second shop overlook the outside street via a pointed arch; they are adjacent to the southern entrance from the south side. The third shop overlooks the outside street through a flat arch and is separated by a small window (Fig. 3). This window connects the main iwan and the external façade through a short corridor roofed by a pointed vault 2.30 m long. The window rises over the street level by 70 cm and reaches 2.30 m high. It is topped by a curved arch, and covered by a veil of iron grill.

In the north side of the façade, there are other two windows. They were added during the works of *al-Shaykh Abd al-Karīm*⁴⁹. They have the same height of 1.40 m, and same width of 90 cm, and they are covered by iron grilles. Beside the two windows on the south side, there is a *Qasṭal* for drinking water comprised of a deep recess topped by a pointed arch (Pl. 1). It represents the common style found in many monumental buildings of the city, most of which have a small recess with a pottery pipe which provides them with water. The *Qasṭal* appeared in many building's facades, such as the mosque of *al-Shu ṭybiyah*, which is considered the first mosque constructed in the city (Raby 2004, 289). The *Qasṭal* also occurs in many facades during the Mamluk period, such as the façade of *Mihmindār* mosque 8th AH/ 14th AD which includes a *Qasṭal* in its western side. It appears as well in the facades of many Ottoman buildings, such as that of *Bahrām* pasha mosque in *al-Jallūwm* district 991 AH/ 1583 AD⁵⁰.

⁴⁸ Ibn al-Ajamī, *Kunūz al-dhahab*, vol. 1, p. 256.

⁴⁹ Ibn al-Ajamī, *Kunūz al-dhahab*, vol. 1, p. 256.

⁵⁰ Abd al-Rāzīk, "Mosque of Bahram Basha", p. 4.

The current mosque includes only one façade, we cannot state if it included side-façades as there is no available information about its first construction. By any way, single façades, as found at the *al-Karīmīyah* mosque, are a common feature in many mosques of the city in the Mamluk period as well as earlier and later periods. Among the mosques that include only one façade are: the mosque of *Abū Yaḥiā al-Kawākibī* in *al-Jallūwm* district dating to 628 AH/ 1220 AD; *al-Zakī* mosque in *Bāb al-Naṣr* street dating to 700 AH/ 1300 AD; *al-Şirawī* mosque in *al-Bayāḍah* district dating to 780 AH/ 1378 AD; and *al-Sakākīnī* in *al-A'jām* district dating to 773 AH/ 1371 AD. The façade of the *al-Karīmīyah* mosque is very simple, as in the majority of facades of the city's mosques, except for the inscriptions and the color rotation around the entrance. The same simplicity is seen elsewhere, such as the façade of *al-Atrūsh* mosque behind the justice palace, built in 812 AH/ 1409 AD, and *al-Daraj* mosque in *khān al-Sabīl* district dating to 9th AH/ 15th AD⁵¹.

2. The entrances:

The mosque has two entrances located in its façade. The first, located in the north side, is the oldest one; it was added during the renewal works of the Ayyubid period in 654 AH/ 1256 AD. It comprises a huge recess measuring 5.10 m high from its base, and 2 m in width. It is surmounted by a semi-dome with a pointed sector based on three squinches in each of the two inner corners. Inside the recess, there is the door that leads inside. It measures 2.10 m high from its base, and is 1.15 m wide. A flat marble lintel surmounts it, and it is closed by two wooden shutters (Pl. 2). In the southern side of the recess, there is a small door *khwkhah* surmounted by a curved arch and led to the adjacent room but it is closed now and no longer used. This small door added in a later period and did not back to the original entrance, it made from the northern entrance a rare style that no previous example in the city includes a small door in both sides of its recess.⁵²



◀Pl.no.2 The northern entrance and the Ayyubid inscription. By the author in July 2010..

⁵¹ 'Uthmān, *Al-Handasah al-'insh'īyah*, p. 214.

⁵² al-Qusir, *Al-madakhil*, p. 64.

The entrance includes an inscription⁵³ composed of two lines, wrapping around the three sides of the recess. It rises over the entrance level by 2.85 m; its length is 1.56 m at the right side, 2.06 m in the middle, and 1.56 m at the left side; and it has a width of 28 cm along all three sides⁵⁴ (Fig. 4).

”(1) بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ جددت هذه البنية المباركة في دولة مولانا السلطان الأعظم والملك المعظم مالك رقاب الأمم سيد ملوك العرب والعجم العالم المجاهد المرابط المؤيد المظفر المنصور الملك الناصر صلاح الدنيا والدين حافظ (2) بلاد الله ناصر عباد الله معين خليفة الله أبي المظفر يوسف بن محمد بن يوسف خليل أمير المؤمنين خلد الله ملكه وأعز الله أنصاره بمحمد وآله بتولي مملوكة العبد الفقير إلى رحمة الله عبد الرحيم بن عبد الرحيم⁵⁵ بن العجمي الشافعي في شهور سنة أربعة وخمسين وستماية من الهجرة النبوية“

“(1) *Al-Basmalah, this blessed building was renewed in the reign of al-sultān al-A‘zam wa-l-Malik al-Mu‘azzam Mālik Riqāb al-‘Umam Saīd Mulūwk al-‘Arab wa-l-‘Ajam al-‘Ālim al-Mujāhid al-Murābiṭ al-Mu‘āyad al-Muẓaffar al-Manṣūr al-Malik al-Nāṣir Ṣalāḥ al-Dunyā wa-l-Dīn protector (2) the countries of Allāh helper the slaves of Allāh helper of the caliphate of Allāh Abī al-Muẓaffar Yūsuf Ibn Muḥammad Ibn Yūsuf Khalīl Amīr al-Mu‘minīn Allāh immortalized his kingdom and blessed his supporters by the prophet Muḥammad and his family under the supervisor of his poor slave Abd al- Raḥīm Ibn Abd al-Raḥīm Ibn al-Ajamī al- Shāfi‘ī in 654 from the migration of the Prophet”*



Fig. 4: The Ayyubid inscription in the northern entrance. Facsimiled by the author.

The inscription belongs to the Ayyubid period and is written with Thuluth script, although the majority of the Ayyubid inscriptions were written with Naskhi script. Thuluth script was occasionally used in this period, beginning to appear in the 4th AH century/ 10th AD⁵⁶. The Naskhi script was the official script for registration in monumental buildings in this period, however, with the first example recorded in the city's monuments dated to 543 AH/ 1148 AD, located above the entrance of *al-Hallawīyah* madrasa. All previous inscriptions were written with Kufic script⁵⁷.

⁵³ This inscription was read in the historical sources such as: Ibn al-Agami (*kunūz*, vol. 1, p. 256); al-Ghuzzi (*nahr*, vol. 2, p. 99) and previously published by Herzfeld (1956, p. 315) but it is facsimiled for the first time at this study (Fig. 4).

⁵⁴ Herzfeld, *Inscriptions et monuments d'Alep*, vol. 2, p. 315.

⁵⁵ This phrase was read by Herzfeld as “...إلى رحمة الله عبد الرحيم بن العجمي...” but it is more correct to read as found in the inscription as “...إلى رحمة الله عبد الرحيم بن عبد الرحيم العجمي...”. Herzfeld, *Inscriptions et monuments d'Alep*, vol. 2, p. 315.

⁵⁶ al- Jabbūrī, *Al-Khaṭ wa-l-kītābah*, p. 130.

⁵⁷ ‘Uthmān, *Al-Athār wa-l-awābīd al-tārīkhīyah*, p. 203.

The second entrance is located in the south side of the façade; it was added during the renewal works of *al-Shaykh Abd al-Karīm* in 855 AH/ 1451 AD. It comprises a huge recess surmounted by a pointed arch, which reaches 4.35 m from the street level and is 2.70 m wide. In both the right and left sides of the recess, there is a terrace 74 cm high and a 63 cm wide. Inside the recess is the entrance that leads inside the mosque. It is surmounted by a curved arch composed of engaged voussoirs, measuring 2.76 m high and 1.40 m wide. It is closed by two wooden shutters. The façade of this entrance is characterized by its simplicity. It has no decoration except the color rotation of the stones between black and yellow, according to the *al-Ablaq* style (Pl. 3).

The entrance has an inscription located above its curved arch (Fig. 5), the text added during the renewal works of *Jamīl* Pasha in 1302 AH/ 1885 AD. It comprises three lines written in Turkish language, referring to the renewal works in the reign of al-Sultan *Abd al-Ḥamīd II* under the supervisor of *Jamīl* Pasha, the ruler of Aleppo city. The date of these renewal works has been engraved under the three lines by numbers 1302 AH.

1- خليفة إسلام بناه وشهنشاه شوكت أكتناه شوكتاؤ

2- الغازي عبد الحميد خان ثاني أفندمز حضر تلرينك عهد همايونلرنده

3- حلب ولايتي واليسي جميل باشانك دلالت مكملا تعمير أولنمشدر

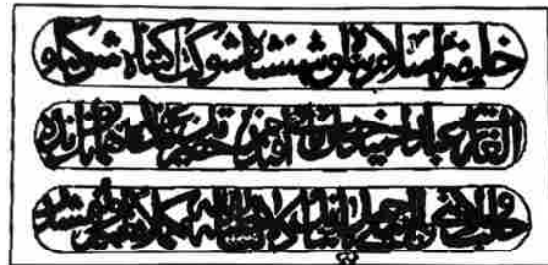
سنة 1302

1- *The caliph of Islam, the lord of the kings, and the possessor of greatness*

2- *In the blessed reign of the conqueror abd al-ḥamīd II*

3- *the ruler of Aleppo Jamīl pasha renovated at the best way*

In 1302



Pl.no.3: The southern entrance and the Turkish inscription of the renewal works of *Jamīl* pasha. By the author in July 2010..

fig.no.5: The Turkish inscription which located above the southern entrance. After, 'Uṭhmān, *Dirasat naq'ish*, p. 148.

The mosque therefore includes two entrances in its façade, as found in many other mosques of different periods in the city of Aleppo. The two entrances are located in the same side in *al-Karīmīyah* mosque, but this was rare among the city's mosques. For example, the great Omayyad mosque has two entrances, the first located in the western side and the second is in the northern side. In *al-Ṭunbūgha* mosque, dating to 718 AH/ 1318 AD, the first is located in the eastern side and the second is in the western side. In *al-Atrūsh* mosque of 812 AH/ 1409 AD, the first is located in the western side and the second is in the northern side. In *al-Ṭawāshī* mosque built in 774 AH/ 1372 AD, the first entrance is in the eastern side and the second is located in the western side⁵⁸.

The two entrances of the mosque have two different styles. The older one is comprised of a recess surmounted by a half-dome based on stalactites (Pl. 2). The same shape appears in the entrance of the *Mihmindār* mosque, which features a huge recess surmounted by a half-dome with a pointed sector based on stone stalactites⁵⁹. The second entrance comprises a recess surmounted by a pointed arch (Pl. 3). This shape appears in many other examples, such as the entrance of Ogelbek mosque in *al-Bāb al-Aḥmar* district, built in 885 AH/ 1480 AD⁶⁰.

3. The minaret

The mosque has only one minaret, located above the southern entrance. It was said to have been renewed in the Mamluk period by *al-Qādī Bahā' al-Dīn* in 771 AH/ 1369 AD according to an inscription mentioned by Ibn al-Ajamī (*Kunūz*, I, p. 256) who read it as follows:

” جدد هذه المأذنة القاضي بهاء الدين على بن محمد بن أبي سواده موقع الدست بطلب وناظر المكان في سنة احدى وسبعين وسبعمائة“

“This minaret was renewed by *al-Qādī Bahā' al-Dīn Alī Muḥammad Ibn Abī Sawādah Mūwaqqi' al-Dist*⁶¹ in Aleppo and the supervisor of the place in 771 AH”

It is illogical, however, that the current minaret is of this date, because it is constructed above the southern entrance, which was only added to the mosque during the renewal works of al-Shaykh *Abd al-Karīm* in 855 AH/ 1451 AD. The entrance forms the base of the minaret itself (Fig. 3). Therefore, I suggest that the minaret was completely renewed again during the works of al-Shaykh *Abd al-Karīm* in 855 AH/ 1451 AD or those of al-Amir *Jānī Bik al-Tājī* in 866 AH/ 1462 AD. This is supported by the inscription mentioned by Ibn al-Ajamī (*Kunūz*, I, p.256), which is eroded and no longer exists, but refers to the minaret being renewed in a later period. The current minaret was also constructed according to the Mamluk style, which proves that it was

⁵⁸ Uthmān, *Al-Handasah al-'insh'īyah*, p. 211.

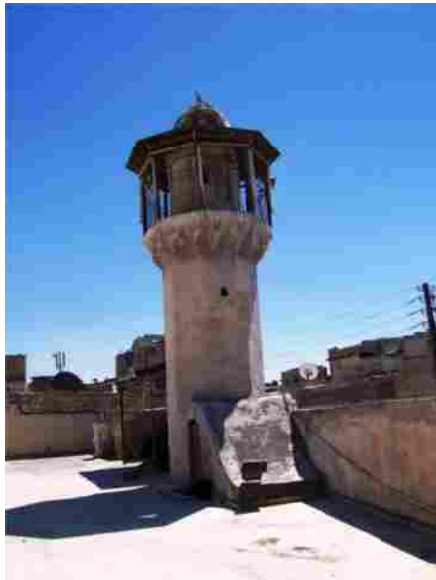
⁵⁹ Abd al-Rāzīk, “Architectural archaeological study”, p. 147.

⁶⁰ Uthmān, *Al-Handasah al-'insh'īyah*, p. 220.

⁶¹ *Mūwaqqi' al-Dist* means: the Sultan's writer or *Kātib al-Dist al-sultānī*, he was a first-class employee in *Diwān al-insha'*. Also, he was sitting with *Kātib al-sir* during the Sultan's meetings, he read the orders, decisions to the Sultan and signed it. Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, *Durr*, vol. 1, p. 616.

renewed during the aforementioned works, as they were the only renovations in the Mamluk period after the date 771 AH.

In stylistic terms, the current minaret is very simple and devoid of decoration and inscriptions. It resembles other minarets constructed in the city in the Mamluk period. It begins over the roof, at 9.45 m high. It has one octagonal shaft of 5.20 m height, and ends at its top with a projecting balcony of octagonal shape, based on stone stalactites. At the top, there is a cupola with a pointed sector (Pl. 4).



◀Pl.no.4: The minaret of the mosque. By the author in July 2010.

It was a common rule among the religious buildings in the city of Aleppo that no mosque should have more than one minaret. The minaret of the *al-Karīmīyah* mosque belongs to the Mamluk style, which often utilized the octagonal shape. Square minarets were common in previous times, during the Seljuk, Zanki, and Ayyubid periods, such as the minaret of the great Omayyad mosque of the Seljuk period built in 483 AH/ 1090 AD, which is considered the oldest surviving minaret in the city of Aleppo⁶². It is thought that the square minaret first appeared in Syria and after that spread across the western and eastern Islamic world⁶³.

The style of the minaret of *al-Karīmīyah* appeared in many other examples during the Mamluk period. These include the minaret of *al-Aṣfar* mosque in *al-Jallūwm* district, which was renewed during the Mamluk period; the minaret of *al-Ḥaīyyāt* mosque in *al-Faraḫrah* district of 727 AH/ 1326 AD; the minaret of *al-Ḥaddādīn* mosque in *Banqūsa* district dating to 743 AH/ 1342 AD; and the minaret of *al-'Umarī* mosque in *Baḥṣītā* district of 8th AH/ 14th AD⁶⁴. All these examples including the minaret of *al-Karīmīyah* have only one balcony that no minaret in Aleppo in general features more than one balcony except the minaret of *al-Aṭrūsh* which include two octagonal shafts

⁶² Fares, *The Great Umayyad mosque*, p. 32.

⁶³ Creswell, "The Evolution of the minaret", p. 134.

⁶⁴ Abd al-Rāzīk, "Al-Ṭuruz al-mi 'māriyah", pp. 316-318.

each one surmounted by balcony⁶⁵. Also, there is no one example of the minaret of Aleppo covered entirely with tiles except the minaret of *al-Khusrawiyah* which includes a single row of tiles rings its lower part⁶⁶.

4. Inside the mosque

There are two entrances leading to the inside. The first one is located in the northern side of the façade and leads directly to the open courtyard through a short corridor roofed with a pointed vault, but it is now closed and no longer used. The second one is located in the southern side of the façade. It leads to a transversal corridor 8.39 m long and 2.88 m wide, and roofed with two cross vaults. Inside the corridor, there is a window located in the right side and open to the main iwan. There is also a small door facing the outer entrance which leads directly to the main iwan, while the left side of the corridor leads to the open courtyard. On the northwestern side, there is the entrance that leads to the roof and the minaret through a stone staircase. It is 1.90 m high and 70 cm wide, and a curved arch surmounts it (Fig. 2).

4.1. The open courtyard

All the architectural units inside the mosque share one courtyard, which has a semi-square shape measuring 13.55 m long and 12.47 wide (Fig. 2). The old courtyard was open and not roofed but is now covered by a modern roof. Its floor is paved with slab stones and has no decoration or fountain as usual. There are four facades overlooking it: the first in the south side is the façade of the main iwan, the second in the east side of the façade of the eastern iwan, and the third and the fourth in the northern and western sides of the facades of the mosque's extensions.

4.2. The main iwan, al-Qiblīyah:

The main iwan is situated in the south side of the courtyard and overlooks its interior with a stone façade 6.70 high and finished at its top by a projecting stone cornice. In the middle of the façade lies the entrance of the main iwan or *al-Qiblīyah*, with a height of 2.65 m and width of 1.40 m. The entrance is surmounted by a curved arch, and two wooden shutters close it. The façade has three windows, two of which open onto the main iwan, while the third overlooks the ablution room that separates the main iwan and the mausoleum. The three windows have the same dimensions, with a height of 2.10 m and width of 1.10 m, and each is surmounted by a curved arch and covered by an iron grille. The façade also includes a mihrab overlooking the inside of the courtyard, which seems to have been added in a later period as resembles a new extension and its color differs from the façade's wall. It comprises a niche surmounted by a pointed arch measuring 2.60 m high and 1.12 wide (Fig. 6; Pl. 5).

65 Abd al-Rāzīk, "Al-Ṭuruz al-mi 'mārīyah", p.330.

66 Wantenpaugh, *The image of an Ottoman city*, p. 226.

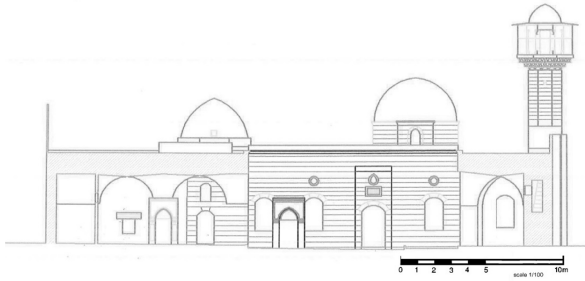


fig.no.6: Sector shows the faade of al-Qiblīyah, inside the eastern portico, and the two domes of the main iwan and the mausoleum. After, the center of planning and archaeological studies in Aleppo.



pl.no.5 The faade of al- Qiblīyah and the Ottoman inscription of the renewal works of Jamīl pasha. By the author in July 2010.

The faade of the main iwan includes also a monumental inscription⁶⁷ located above the entrance. It refers to the renewal works that occurred at the mosque in the Ottoman period in 1302 AH/ 1885 AD⁶⁸, comprising five poetry verses written in Thuluth script carved prominently on stone (Fig. 7).

<p>وعدت نضارة حسنه تتوقد عبد الحميد له الثنا والسؤدد فينا جميل صنائع لا تنفد نولي المكارم والمفاخر أحمد بمحرم قد جدّ هذا المسجد</p>	<p>بعد الدثور له أتيج تجددا بخلافة المنصور سلطان الورى وبسعي والينا جميل من له ونضارة النذب الهمام العادلي مذ صبح بعد الوهن أرخ مدحه</p>
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1302

“After the demolition, it was renewed and became in a good condition in the reign of al-sultan Abd al- Ḥamīd II who deserves the praise and under the supervisor of his deputy Jamīl pasha who is credited with many good deeds, the renovation of this mosque was in Muharram 1302 AH”

The date of this renewal works was recorded by numbers at the bottom, as well it was recorded by letters in the last verse “مدحه بمحرم قد جدّ هذا المسجد” according to *Hisāb al-jumal* (table 1).

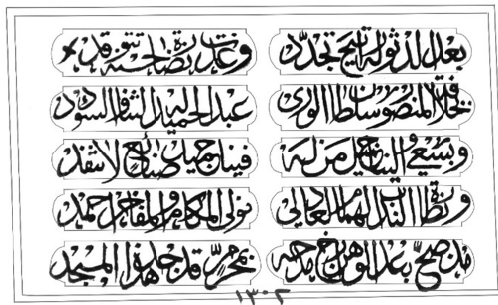


Fig.no.7: The Ottoman inscription of the renewal works of Jamil pasha. Facsimiled by the author.

⁶⁷ This inscription was read by al-Ghuzzi (*nahr*, vol. 2, p.99) and previously published by Gaube (1978, p. 42).

⁶⁸ Gaube, *Arabische inschriften aus Syrien*, p. 42.

Letter	Value	Letter	Value	Letter	Value	Letter	Value
م	40	ح	8	د	4	م	40
د	4	ر	200	هـ	5	س	60
ح	8	م	40	ذ	700	ج	3
هـ	5	ق	100	أ	1	د	4
ب	2	د	4	أ	1	Total values	1302
م	40	ج	3	ل	30		

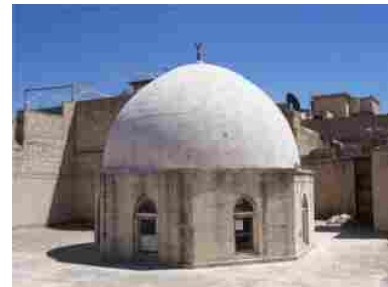
Tab.no.1: Shows the date of the renewal works of *Jamīl* pasha 1302 AH according to *Hisāb al-jumal* in the last verse of the inscription.

The main iwan is composed of an irregular area, running 14.20 m along its southern wall is 14.20 m, 10.95 m along its northern wall, and 12.47 m along its longitudinal axis from the entrance to the mihrab. This area is divided by two arcades, each with two columns (Pl. 6); the arcades divide the iwan into three aisles. The first and the third aisle is divided into square areas roofed by cross vaults, while the middle aisle is roofed by semi-cross vaults (Fig. 2). The square area in front of the mihrab is roofed by a dome with pointed sector which rises over an octagonal drum. The drum composes of eight ribs, each of which includes a window surmounted by a pointed arch and based on transition zones from spherical triangle pendentives (Fig. 6; Pl. 7).



◀ Pl.no.6: Inside the main iwan al-Qibliyah. By the author in July 2010.

▶ Pl.no.7: The dome over the mihrab of the main iwan. By the author in July 2010..



Regarding the mosque ceiling, it is founded on the cross vaults used to roof all areas inside the mosque except the square of the mihrab, which was roofed by a dome (Fig. 2). The cross vault is an architectural element that was used in widely since the pre-Islamic period, especially in Roman architecture. It was then used in Islamic architecture and appeared for the first time in the early Syrian architecture in *Quseir 'Amrā* in Jordon of 86-96 AH/ 705- 715 AD⁶⁹. It appeared for the first time in Egyptian architecture in the Fatimid period in the mosque of *al-Juyūshī* of 478 AH/ 1085 AD. The cross vault was an essential element for the ceiling in the city of Aleppo, being in widespread use since its first appearance early in the Islamic period. The most famous example of this element appears in the great Omayyad mosque, which has been completely roofed in this way.

⁶⁹ Shāfi'ī, *Al-'Imārah al-'arabīyah*, p. 198.

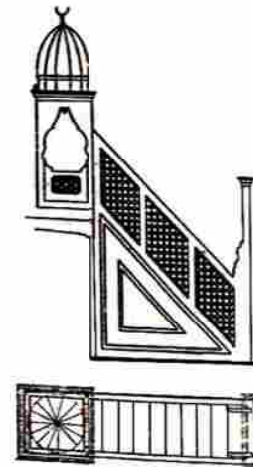
Beside the cross vaults, the architect used the dome over the square of the mihrab (Fig. 6; Pl. 7). The first example of this feature appeared in the great Omayyad mosque in Damascus founded in 97 AH/ 705 AD⁷⁰. It spread after that to be used in many buildings, such as: *al-Aqsa* mosque in Jerusalem after the construction of the Abbasid caliph *al-Mahdī* in 163 AH/ 780 AD; the dome of al-Kairouan mosque in Tunis which was added by *Abū Ibrāhīm Aḥmad Ibn al-Aghlab* in 248 AH/ 862 AD; and the dome of the grand mosque in Cordoba which was added by *al-Ḥakam II* in 354 AH/ 965 AD⁷¹. It also appeared in an early period in Egyptian architecture during the Fatimid dynasty in *al-Azhar* in 359-361 AH/ 790-792 AD and *al-Ḥākīm* mosque of 380-403 AH/ 990-1013 AD⁷². It is a customary style for ceilings in Aleppo city. It appears in many buildings of various dates, such as: *al-Asadīyah al-Jūwanīyah* madrasa beside *Bāb Qinnasrin*, which belong to the Zanki period⁷³; *al-Shādhbakhīyah* and *al-ʿAdīmīyah* madrasa, of the Ayyubid period⁷⁴; and *Mihmindār* mosque, which belongs to the Mamluk period⁷⁵.

In the middle of the southern wall of the main iwan, there is the main mihrab. It measures 2.50 m in height, its width is 1.10 m, and its depth is 88 cm. It consists of a niche surmounted by a pointed arch decorated with prominent ribs emanating from the center to form a radiological shape (Pl. 8). The mentioned ribs are prominent and each ends with a stalactite tail⁷⁶. Beside the mihrab to the right side is a wooden minbar⁷⁷, devoid of decoration and inscriptions except simple geometrical frames around the orator's seat (Fig. 8). It also painted with new paint that distorts its archaeological features.



◀ Pl.no.8: The mihrab of the main iwan. By the author in July 2010.

▶ Fig.no.8: a side view and a plan of the minbar. Al-Jāsir, *Dūr al-mutaṣawifah*, p. 235.



⁷⁰ Lam'ī, *Al-QiBāb fi al-ʿimarah al-islāmīyah*, p. 19.

⁷¹ Creswell, *Early Muslim architecture*, p. 121.

⁷² Sāmiḥ, "Taṭwor al-qūbbah", p. 10.

⁷³ al-Jāsir, *Madāris ḥalab*, p. 127.

⁷⁴ al-Jāsir, *Madāris ḥalab*, pp. 165, 224.

⁷⁵ Abd al-Rāzīk, "Architectural archaeological study", p. 151.

⁷⁶ al-Jāsir, *Dūr al-mutaṣawifah*, p. 234.

⁷⁷ The minbar consists of two parts; the first one is the orator's seat which is fixed in the wall and is surmounted by a small ribbed copula. The second part includes the ladder, the two sides, and the front door. This part is movable to be in its location only during the Friday sermon, then it is moved in a side corner inside the iwan. al-Jāsir, *Dūr al-mutaṣawifah*, p. 234.

In the western side of the southern wall, there are two small doors measuring 1.60 high and 1 m wide, both of which are surmounted by curved arches (Fig. 2). The first door leads to a two-story room with an irregular area located behind the mihrab. It is used as a residence for the mosque's Imam. Its width along the western side is 3 m and from the eastern side is 3.50, while its length is 6.40 m. The second door leads to the second floor of this same room, via a stone staircase (Figs. 2, 9).

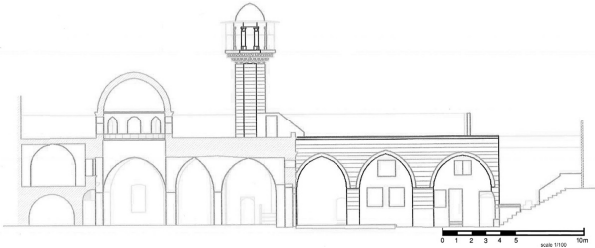


fig.no.9: Sector inside the main iwan, the imam's room, and the minaret. After, the center of planning and archaeological studies in Aleppo..

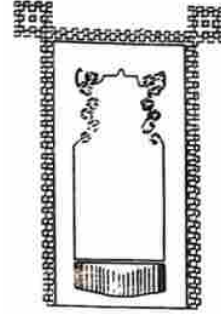


fig.no.10: The original decorations around the footprint. Al-Jāsir, *Dūr al-mutaṣawifāh*, p. 235.

The southern wall of the main iwan includes also a footprint on a yellow marble slab, it was surrounded by a simple stone frame (Fig. 10) which is replaced now by marble decorations surmounted with an inscription includes al-Basmalah and verse 56 *Surat al-aḥzāb*⁷⁸ (Pl. 9).

"بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ / إن الله وملائكته يصلون على النبي يا أيها الذين آمنوا صلوا عليه وسلموا تسليماً/ صدق الله العظيم"

The footprint attributed to the prophet *Muḥammad*. It is located on the eastern side of the southern wall, and is shown on this side of the mosque to allow people to ask blessings from it (Pl. 9). It was associated with a story mentioned in historical sources which refer to the slab being brought to the mosque by *al-Shaykh Abd al-Karīm*, who saw in his dream a man coming from *Hijāz* riding a camel and hiding a footprint attributed to the prophet *Muḥammad* in his possessions. As the man passed in front of the mosque, *al-Shaykh Abd al-Karīm* blocked his way, extracted the footprint and put it inside the mosque⁷⁹.

Some historical sources mention the story of this footprint, such as al- Ṭabbākh (*A' lām*, V, pp. 288, 289), who noted that it was illogical to attribute it to the prophet *Muḥammad* for many reasons. Firstly, its yellow stone, known as *al-Hirqalī*, originates from quarries located near the city of Aleppo itself, not in *al-Hijāz*. He also pointed out that if it was really attributed to the prophet *Muḥammad*, it would not have been ignored by previous historical authors such as *Ibn al-Shuḥnah* and *Ibn al-Hanbalī*, who presented biographies of *al-Shaykh Abd al-Karīm* and narrated complete chapters about the blessed places and monuments in Aleppo but make no mention of the slab. He assumed also that this stone was not a blessed prophetic monument because if it were, the Ottoman sultans would likely have transmitted it to Istanbul as they did with many other blessed monuments in Syria, such as the footprint founded inside the citadel of *Buṣrā*.

⁷⁸ al-Jāsir, *Dūr al-mutaṣawifāh*, p. 234.

⁷⁹ al-Ṭabbākh, *A' lām al-nublā'*, vol. 5, p. 288.

In any case, we cannot be absolutely certain whether this footprint is attributed to the prophet *Muḥammad* or not, as there are many examples around the Islamic world and most of them are similar with no distinguishing marks from each other⁸⁰. The most important example is located inside the dome of the rock in Jerusalem, but others are preserved in *al-Ṭā'if* in Saudi Arabia, on Mount *Abū Zubaīdah*. It is found also in Cairo in the mausoleum of *Qāūbāy* in *al-Qarāfah*⁸¹ and *masjid athar al-nabi*⁸². The city of Aleppo included other examples, such as the footprint of the mosque of *Baqūsā*.

4.3. The eastern portico

The eastern portico is located in the eastern side of the courtyard, which it overlooks through a triple arcade composed of three pointed arches based on two pillars. The arcade is now closed, however, with a new barrier. It was renewed in the Mamluk period during the works of al-Shaykh Abd *al-Karīm* in 855 AH/ 1451 AD⁸³. The portico comprises a rectangular area of 12.05 m length and 9.23 m width. It was divided into two aisles through a middle arcade composed of three pointed arches, built on two pillars; the two aisles were divided into six square areas roofed by cross vaults (Fig. 2).



Pl.no.9: A footprint in a yellow stone slab inside the main iwan attributed to the prophet Muḥammad. By the author in July 2010.



Pl.no.10: The southern wall of the eastern portico, the entrance of the mausoleum, and the inscription above the mausoleum's window. By the author in July 2010.



Fig.no. 11: The Mamluk inscription of al-Shaykh *Abd al-Karīm al-Khāfī* above the mausoleum's window inside the eastern portico. Facsimiled by the author.

⁸⁰ For more information about this regard look: Tymūr, *al-Athār al-nabawiyah*, pp. 45-59.

⁸¹ Coeli, Walker, *Muhammad in History*, p. 519.

⁸² Tymūr, *al-Athār al-nabawiyah*, pp. 45-47.

⁸³ Ibn al-Ajamī, *Kunūz al-dhahab*, vol. 1, p. 256.

In the middle of the southern wall, there is a mihrab composed of a rectangular frame. The niche inside is 2.30 high, 65 cm deep and 95 cm wide. It is very simple and devoid of decoration and inscriptions. In the right side of the mihrab, there is a door leading to the mausoleum, 2.15 m high and 1.10 m wide, surmounted by a curved arch. Above the door, there is a window 1.12 m height and 70 cm wide, which is surmounted by a curved arch and covered by an iron grille (Pl. 10). In the left side of the mihrab there is another window overlooking the mausoleum, measuring 95 cm high and 80 cm wide. Above the window is a monumental inscription⁸⁴ that includes three *Thuluth* lines carved prominently in the stone (Fig. 11). The inscription commemorates the renewal works of al-Shaykh Abd al-Karīm in 855 AH/ 1451 AD.

“(1) أنشأ هذا المكان المبارك بعون الله وحسن توفيقه العبد الفقير إلى الله تعالى الراجي عفو ربه الله ثلوث (2) فضله العميم السالك المنهج القويم الفضل والخير الشيخ عبد الكريم ابن عبد العزيز ابن عبد الله (3) الحنفي مذهباً الخوافي مقتداً متعناً الله ببركته ونفعنا والمسلمين بصالح أديته وذلك في سنة خمس وخمسين وثمانمائة”

“(1) With the helping of Allāh, this blessed place was constructed by the poor slave to Allāh who wishes the pardon of his God (2) who follows the correct way al-Shaykh Abd al-Karīm Ibn Abd al-‘Azīz Ibn Abdullāh (3) al-Ḥanafī al-Khawāfī Allāh enjoy us with his blessing and benefit us and the Muslims with his good prayers in 855”

The eastern side of the iwan includes three recesses roofed by pointed vaults which overlook the inside of the iwan via pointed arches, although these are closed now with new barriers, and connected with the iwan by doors and windows. The northern side of the iwan includes one recess roofed by pointed vaults which also overlooks the iwan through a pointed arch.

4.4. The extensions of the mosque

The mosque includes many extensions, some of which date back to the Mamluk period during the renewal works of al-Shaykh Abd al-Karīm in 855 AH/ 1451 AD; others have been recently added. The mausoleum is considered the most important extension. It was added by al-Shaykh Abd al-Karīm as his own tomb⁸⁵ and he was actually buried here after his death in 884 AH/ 1479 AD⁸⁶.



Pl. no.11: The mihrab of the mausoleum. By the author in July 2010.

⁸⁴ This inscription was previously published by Herzfeld (1955, p. 315).

⁸⁵ Miencke, *Die Mamlukische architektur*, p. 372.

⁸⁶ Ibn al-Ḥanbalī, *Durr al-ḥabab*, vol. 1, p. 839.

The mausoleum is located in the eastern side of the main iwan and is separated from it by a small room with an irregular area roofed by cross vaults, used for ablutions. The mausoleum comprises of a square area surmounted by four recesses, the square area measured 3.50 sq m. It is roofed by a dome with a pointed sector rising on an octagonal drum and based on transition zones from spherical triangle pendentives (Fig. 6). Around the square area, there are four recesses with different areas roofed by pointed vaults. The southern recess includes the mihrab, composed of a small niche surmounted by a pointed arch (Pl. 11). This mihrab is the fourth one inside the mosque, the others previously mentioned in the south wall of the courtyard, and inside the main iwan and the eastern portico.

The multiplicity of the mihrabs is a phenomenon that appeared in religious building in many parts of the Islamic world from early on. It appeared in Egypt from the Fatimid period in *Mashhad al-Saīydaḥ Kolthom* 516 AD/ 1122 AD and *Mashhad al-Saīydaḥ Ruqāyāḥ* 527 AH/ 1133 AD⁸⁷. The repetition of mihrabs inside the same building was probably due to the multiplicity of religious doctrines or because the renewal works undertaken at each building used the mihrabs as a memorials of each renewal phase, such as the mihrabs of *Ibn Ṭūlūn* mosque in Cairo⁸⁸. The renewal works that added many extensions to the mosque of *al-Karīmīyah* may be a suitable reason for the multiplicity of the mihrabs inside it. A multiplicity of mihrabs is common in Syria generally, appearing in the great Omayyad mosque in Damascus and then spreading to many buildings in the same city. In Aleppo, there are also many building that include more than one mihrab, such as: *al-Ḥallawīyah* madrasa of 543 AH/ 1148 AD, which includes three mihrabs⁸⁹; *Minkalī Bugha* mosque of 769 AH/ 1367 AD, which includes three mihrabs⁹⁰; and *Mihmindār* mosque dating to 8th AH/ 14th AD, which includes five mihrabs⁹¹.

The northern recess includes a small door that connects the mausoleum and the eastern portico. The eastern recess includes an open arch that connects the mausoleum and another rectangular room, of 3.30 m length and 2.10 m width and roofed by cross vaults. The eastern side of the rectangular room includes a recess 2.95 m long and 1.35 m wide, roofed by a flat wooden roof, while its northern side includes a window overlooking the eastern portico, in which the inscription has been engraved. (Fig. 2).

The phenomenon of the attached mausoleum within religious buildings is a customary idea in Islamic architecture in general. The mausoleum of the prophet Mohammed is considered the first example of this phenomenon, becoming incorporated inside the borders of the mosque after the renewal works of al-Amir 'Umar Ibn Abd al-Azīz in 88-91 AH/ 707-710 AD during the reign of the Omayyad Caliph *al-Walīd Ibn Abd al-Malik*⁹². The attached mausoleum appeared in Egypt for the first time during the

⁸⁷ Lam'ī, *Al-Tūrāth al-mi'mārī*, p. 44.

⁸⁸ Māhir, *Masājid misr*, p. 149.

⁸⁹ al-Jāsir, *Madāris ḥalab*, p. 108.

⁹⁰ Abd al-Rāzīk, "Al-Rumi "Menkali Bogha" mosque", p. 143.

⁹¹ Abd al-Rāzīk, "Architectural archaeological study", pp. 151-153.

⁹² al-Ḥaddād, *Al-Qībāb fī al-imārah al-misrīya*, p. 31.

Fatimid period in *Mashhad al- Juyūshī* 478 AH/ 1085 AD⁹³, the second example appeared during the Ayyubid period in *al-Madāris al-Ṣālīḥīyah* 647-648 AH/ 1249-1250 AD, and then it became widespread in Mamluk architecture⁹⁴.

The mausoleum was attached to religious buildings in Syrian architecture since an early period. The first example occurred when *Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd* constructed his school in Damascus in 567 AH/ 1172 AD and attached a mausoleum for himself⁹⁵. After this, it spread widely in the Syrian cities especially in Damascus and Aleppo. In Aleppo, it appeared in many examples, such as the mosque of *al-Ṭunbughā* 718 AH/ 1318 AD and the mosque of *al-Aṭrūsh* 812 AH/ 1409 AD⁹⁶.

Among the extensions of the mosque are the toilets, which are located in the northeastern side of the courtyard. These were added during the renewal works of *al-Shaykh Abd al-Karīm*⁹⁷. They can be reached through one door in the northwestern side of the eastern portico and another in the northeastern side of the courtyard. Beside the toilets from the western side, there is a square hall recently added to the mosque, which can be reached through a staircase in the same side and it is currently used in memorizing the holy Quran and teaching jurisprudence sciences.

In the western side of the courtyard, there is an irregular room⁹⁸ measuring 7.50 m long from north to south, 4.95 m wide along its southern side and 4.30 m along its northern side. It is isolated from the courtyard through a new barrier and can be reached now through one door in its southern side. It also includes two windows in its western side overlooking the façade of the mosque.

Regarding the general plan of *al-Karīmīyah* mosque, including all architectural elements previously described, it is very similar to the Mamluk mosques in Aleppo city, as the principal renewal works at the mosque occurred during the Mamluk period. Therefore, the majority of the architectural units and the decorative details inside the mosque are homogenous with a style attributed to the same period.

The Mamluk mosques in the city of Aleppo are characterized by simplicity and a small size. The majority of them have the principal iwan in the south side of the courtyard called *al-Qiblīyah* and another portico or iwan in the eastern side, in addition to the extensions that comprise a mausoleum, *Qaṣṭal*, toilets and service rooms⁹⁹. In terms of the general plan of *al-Karīmīyah* mosque, it has the same characteristics, that include an iwans in the southern side, a portico in the eastern side and extensions in the other sides, all of which share one courtyard in the center (Fig. 2). This plan is repeated in many other mosques in the same city, such as the mosque

⁹³ Shāfi'ī, "The Mashhad al-Juyushi", p. 237.

⁹⁴ Lam'ī, *Al-QiBāb fi al-'imarah al-islāmīyah*, p. 27.

⁹⁵ Kessler, "Funerary architecture", p. 259.

⁹⁶ Ibn al-Shuḥnah, *Al-Durr al-muntakhab*, pp.72, 73.

⁹⁷ Ibn al-AJamī, *Kunūz al-dhahab*, vol. 1, p. 256.

⁹⁸ The historical sources mentioned that this room was used as a *kuttāb* to teach children. Al-Ghuzzi, nahr, p. 98; Some references referred that a part of its area was reduced from the northern side to be a kitchen. al-Jāsir, *Dūr al-mutaṣawwifāh*, p. 237.

⁹⁹ 'Uthmān, *Al-Handasah al-'insh'īyah*, p. 214.

of *al-Mihmindār* in *al-Bandarāh* district 8th AH/ 14th AD, although this has an external aisle in the northern side¹⁰⁰. The same basic plan also appears in the mosque of *Ughilbik* in *al-Bāb al-aḥmar* district dating to 885 AH/ 1485 AD, which has an *iwan* in both south and eastern sides in addition to the courtyard.

THE ENDOWMENTS OF THE MOSQUE

Many endowments were allocated to the *al-Karīmīyah* mosque inside and outside Aleppo. The *waqf* book was lost but it was mentioned by al-Ghuzzī (*Nahr*, II, pp.100-101) who presented an abbreviated narration of the endowments allocated to the mosque. They included many endowments inside Aleppo city and other districts outside it (table 2). All these endowments have now disappeared and have been replaced by other buildings constructed during later periods. The *waqf* book is attributed to al-Shaykh *Abd al-Karīm* and dates to 862 AH/ 1458 AD.

The abbreviated Arabic transcription of the *waqf* as mentioned by al- Ghuzzī (*Nahr*, vol. 2, pp.100-101):

” خلاصة وقف جامع الكريمة الذي وقفه الشيخ عبد الكريم بن زين الدين بن عبد العزيز بن جمال الدين بن عبد الله الخوافي الحنفي وقف ثلاث دكاكين داخل باب قنسرين بحضرة باب الأسدية واثني عشر فدانا وثلاثي الفدان من أربعين من قرية نعوم في قضاء سرمين ونصف خان الجشارية في ظاهر باب أنطاكية ونصف أربعة اصطبلات متصلات ببعضهما في محلة باب قنسرين بالصرف الشرقي الجارية بقبتها بوقف جامع الخليل ظاهر حلب وأربع دكاكين داخل باب أنطاكية ودارين بمحلة باب قنسرين ودارا تجاه جامع دارا بالبندرة“

No.	The endowments	Its location	Notes
1.	Three shops.	inside <i>Bāb</i> Qinnasrin, beside <i>al-Asadīyah</i> school, Aleppo.	—
2.	Twelve acres and one third.	<i>Ta 'wum</i> village which follows <i>Sarmīn</i>	Beside the city of <i>Idlib</i> in current time.
3.	Half of <i>al-Jishārīyah</i> Khan.	Outside <i>Bāb</i> Antakya, Aleppo.	—
4.	Half of four adjacent stables.	Inside the district of <i>Bāb</i> Qinnasrin, Aleppo.	the other half of these four stables was allocated to <i>al-Khalīl</i> mosque outside Aleppo.
5.	Four shops.	Inside <i>Bāb</i> Antakya, Aleppo.	—
6.	Two houses.	Inside the district of <i>Bāb</i> Qinnasrin, Aleppo.	—
7.	One house.	Beside <i>al-Karīmīyah</i> mosque, Aleppo.	—
8.	One house.	Inside the district of <i>al-Bandarāh</i> .	Beside <i>al-Qādī</i> mosque which still survived in its location.

Table 2. Shows the endowments of al-Shaykh *Abd al-Karīm al-Khāfī* on his mosque according to (al-Ghuzzī, *Nahr* vol. 2, pp. 100-101).

As usual, the *waqf* book includes the founder's stipulations for spending the yield of the *waqf*, that proceeds *riy'* should be spent first and foremost on the current upkeep of the *waqf* property, and on its development, construction, renovation and

¹⁰⁰ Abd al-Rāzīk, “Architectural archaeological study”, p. 146.

restoration¹⁰¹. Fortunately, the founder's stipulations were mentioned in al- Ghuzzī (*Nahr*, II, pp.100-101) (table 3).

The Arabic transcription of the founder's stipulations as mentioned by al- Ghuzzī (*Nahr*, 2: 100-101):

”شروط وقفه على نفسه ثم على مصالح مسجده وأن يصرف في كل شهر من الدراهم الفضية الخالصة الجديدة معاملات حلب ثلاثون للخطيب ومائة وخمسون لمدرس البخاري في رجب وشعبان ورمضان وتسعون للإمام ومائة وعشرون لأربعة حفظة يقرأ كل واحد منهم جزءاً في كل يوم ويجاورون في جامعهم ومائتان وخمسون لأربعة مؤذنين لكل اثنين منهم نوبة وثلاثون لمؤذنين يوم الجمعة ومائة وثلاثون لفراش الجامع وخدامه وقيمة خمسة أرتال زيت في كل شهر للجامع وعشرة لفقوي الجامع وأربعون للجابي وتسعون للناظر وشروط التولية بعده لأرشد أولاده وأعقابهم وبنقر اضهم فعلى أرشد واحد من المنتسبين إليه بالتربية والتسليك ثم على نائب القلعة إلى آخره في غرة رمضان سنة 862“

No.	Value	Duration	Beneficiary	Notes
1.	30 silver pure dirhams, traded in Aleppo	Every month	The orator	Who delivers the Friday sermon
2.	150 dirhams	During the three months <i>Rajab</i> , <i>Sha 'bān</i> , and <i>Ramadān</i>	The teacher of <i>al-Būkhāry</i>	Who teaches the Hadiths of the prophet <i>al- Ḥadīṭ al-Nabawī</i>
3.	90 dirhams	Every month	The mosque's imam	Who leads people in prayers
4.	120 dirhams	Every month	Four memorizers of Quran	Each one of them read every day inside the mosque one part of the 30 th parts of the Quran
5.	250 dirhams	Every month	Four muezzins	Every two, responsible of a shift work
6.	30 dirhams	Every Friday	Muezzins of Friday	Who call for prayer in Friday
7.	130 dirhams	Every month	The servant	Who guard and serve the mosque
8.	Value of 5 pounds of oil	Every month	The mosque	Used in lighting the lamps
9.	10 dirhams	Every month	<i>Al-Qanawātī</i>	Who cleans the source of the water
10.	40 dirhams	Every month	<i>Al-Jābī</i>	Who collects the yield of the <i>waqf</i>
11.	90 dirhams	Every month	<i>Al-Nāzīr</i>	Who supervises on the <i>waqf</i> , the founder stipulated that the supervision should pass after this person to his older son <i>al-arshad fa-l-arshad</i>
Total	790 dirhams were the total proceeds spent in one month of the year plus 150 dirhams spent during the three months <i>Rajab</i> , <i>Sha 'bān</i> , and <i>Ramadān</i> in addition to the value of 5 pounds of oil every month.			

Table 3. Shows the stipulation of the *Waqf* book of *al-Karīmīyah* mosque.

¹⁰¹ Raymond, “Les grand waqfs”, p. 114; Raymond, *La ville arabe, Alep*, p. 170; Layish, “Waqfs of Awlad al-Nas”, p. 318.

It is apparent that the *waqf* of *al-Karīmīyah* was extensive during the Mamluk period, for huge proceeds were spent on the mosque. These proceeds can be estimated each year at 9480 dirhams (790 every month×12) plus 450 dirhams spent in *Rajab*, *Sha‘bān*, and *Ramaḍān* for the teacher of *al-Būkhārī*, in addition to the value of 60 pounds of oil (5 pounds every month). The total proceeds spent each year were therefore estimated at 9930 dirhams plus the value of 60 pounds of oil.

In addition to the *waqf* of *al-Shaykh Abd al-Karīm*, there were likely other endowments for the mosque by *Jamīl* Pasha in the Ottoman period, although no record of these survives. The historical sources do not mention any notes about allocating new endowments to the mosque during the works of *Jamīl* Pasha. The two inscriptions that commemorate his works are also limited to mentioning the renovations only, without any notes on endowments. Despite this, it can be assumed that the works of *Jamīl* Pasha were not confined to renovating the mosque, but also included allocating endowments. This supposition is based on the inscription mentioned by Gaube (1978, p. 42) – previously mentioned in discussing the renewal works – which was located in a shop beside the mosque, and referred to the shop itself being endowed on the mosque in 1302 AH/ 1885 AD (Fig. 12).



Fig .no.12. The inscription of the endowments of *Jamīl* pasha on *al-Karīmīyah* mosque. After, ‘Uṭhmān, *Dirasat naq’ish*, p. 149.

As noted, this date is the same as that of the renewal works of *Jamīl* Pasha at the mosque itself and the historical sources do not refer to any works around this date except those attributed to him. Although Gaube (1978, p. 42) referred only to the shop that included the mentioned inscription, this does not mean that this *waqf* was confined to it. The *waqf* may have been large and included many endowments that had a great role in developing the mosque.

CONCLUSION

This case study concerns a significant archaeological building in its own right. The *al-Karīmīyah* mosque is considered one of the oldest mosques of the city of Aleppo. It is suggested that an approximate date for its first construction can be pinpointed during the 1st century AH until the first year of the 2nd century AH. After this, various renewal works developed its architecture during the Ayyubid, Mamluk, and Ottoman periods. The study corrected what was assumed by some previous studies that the date 654 AH is the date of construction and proved that this is the date of the first renewal works. The renewal works that occurred at the mosque in 1302 AH in the Ottoman period by *Jamīl* pasha were not limited to renovation works but also included building

construction as a *waqf*. The study determined the significant roles that the mosque played in the city during the various historical periods, as it performed a range of functions including that of *Madrasa*, *Khanqāh*, *Zāwīyah*, mausoleum, and shrine. The study proved that there is no relation between the current minaret and the minaret of *Ibn Abi Sawāda*, which was added to the mosque in 771 AH, and proposes that the current minaret was completely rebuilt during either the renewal works of *al-Shaykh Abd al-Karīm* in 855 AH or in 866 AH during the works of al-Amir *Jānī Bik al-Tājī*. Finally, the mosque had many endowments allocated to it by *al-Shaykh Abd al-Karīm* in the Mamluk period, with proceeds spent on the mosque each year estimated at more than 9930 dirhams.

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