

Original article

AL-RUMI "MENKALI BOGHA" MOSQUE IN ALEPPO: ARCHITECTURAL
ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDY

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Abstract

This paper aims to study an important survival mosque in Aleppo from Mamluk period. The importance of this mosque relates to the surviving of its architectural units and elements, and it is considered to be a true image to the congregational mosques in the city of Aleppo during this period. The paper includes a descriptive and analytical study to the architectural units and elements of the mosque; also it sheds the light on the original units which are still surviving from the construction era including the facades, main entrance, monumental inscriptions, decorations and stalactites. The original units represents also in the minaret which characterized by a unique style in Aleppo city, also the majority of the internal parts are still surviving from the construction era. In addition to the original parts, the paper also studies the renewal works which occurred to the mosque in the same and later periods depending on the monumental inscriptions which are still surviving in the mosque, and what mentioned in the historical sources about these renewal works. The paper also sheds the light on the destruction that occurred to the mosque, especially in the minaret during the current events in the city, and this increases the importance of this paper as a documentation study to the mosque. The paper includes a number of figures and plates which are published for the first time in this study, noting that all the plates have been photographed by author.

Keywords: Mosque, Foundation date, Inscriptions, Main portal, Renewal works.

1. Introduction

Mamluk sultanate is considered to be the most important period in the history of Aleppo city, in this period Syria in general comprised from a number of provinces, but there were always two major provinces, Damascus and Aleppo [1]. The Mamluk sultans donated Aleppo a particular attention because of its geographical location as a border site in the north of Syria [2], this site made the city a scene for many military events that the city was attacked many times because of the strained relations between Mamluk sultans and their neighbors [3], therefore Mamluk

sultans were greatly caring of choosing the city's governor *al-na'ib* because this person was responsible for protecting the northern gate of the Mamluk state. Aleppo city flourished in many aspects during the Mamluk reign, that the city greatly expanded and many quarters were added in both inside and outside the city's walls [4]. Also during the Mamluk period there were a large numbers of deputies were appointed as a governors in the city, and many of them left magnificent monuments which commemorated their names till now [5], so the city of Aleppo characterized by a

huge numbers of historical and archaeological monuments which were constructed by its governors and its wealthy notables during this period [6]. The monumental buildings which were constructed in Aleppo during Mamluk period were varying to include military, religious, and civil purposes. The governors of the city and its wealthy notables cared about building the religious buildings, especially the congregational mosques which spread in the quarters of old city [7]. The first great mosques which were added to the city during Mamluk period, the mosque of al-Tonbogha^(a) which was constructed in 723 A.H / 1323 A.D by al-Tobogha al-Salhy the governor of the city [8], and this mosque was followed by a large number of mosques which spread in all parts of the city. By any way the mosques which were constructed under the patronage of Mamluk rulers reflected the features of this period, that there were many architectural and decorative elements appeared in these mosques, noting that the majority of these elements were found in the previous period, but the Mamluk architect developed it and

presented it by a new feature, such as floral and geometrical decorations which were developed in many aspects and used in a large scale in both inside and outside the buildings, also the calligraphic decorations were greatly developed and almost limited on Mamluk *naskhi* line. The mosques of the Mamluk period characterized also by the style of *al-Ablaq* which depending on rotating colors to decorate its facades and its main portals. The development in Mamluk mosques did not limit on the decorative elements, but also it included the architectural elements such as the minarets which limited on the square shaft in Ayyubid period and characterized by simplicity and including no decorations except the minaret of the great Umayyad mosque, but the minarets in Mamluk mosques were presented with a new feature that the square shaft limited to the base of the minaret and the main shaft has an octagonal shape, also the cylindrical shaft appeared in some examples such as the minaret of Mehmendar mosque and the minaret of al-Rumi or Menkali Bogha mosque [9] which the paper is allocated to study it.

2. Overview on Menkali Bogha Mosque

The mosque of Menkali Bogha occupies a square area, and it characterized by a huge space. It has only two facades overlooks to outside. The original plan included two entrances, but now it has only one entrance mediates the main façade, fig. (1-a, b). The mosque has only one minaret characterized by a unique style in Aleppo city. Inside the

mosque includes a huge open courtyard occupies an irregular area, around the open courtyard there are three porticos in addition to the mosque's extensions. The majority of the architectural elements are surviving from the construction era, but there are some parts added to the mosque during the renewal works which occurred in the later periods.

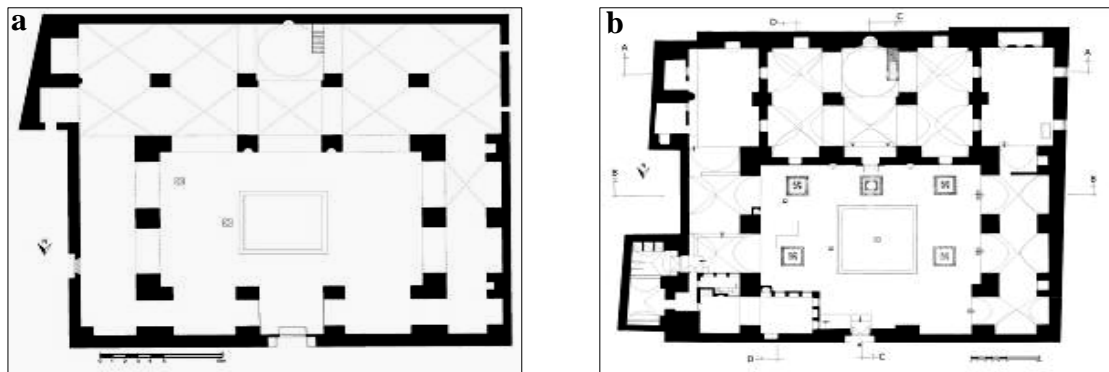


Figure (1) Shows **a**. original plan of the mosque before the renewal works (Meinecke, M., 1992), **b**. Plan of the mosque after the renewal works (Circle of Aleppo endowments).

2.1. Names of the mosque

The mosque is called Menkali Bogha as mentioned in the inscriptions which are still surviving on the façade of the mosque, but this name is not the only name to the mosque, that the specialists only who calling it by this name, there is another popular name the mosque is called by it 'al-Rumi', this name is the most famous one for the mosque, although there is no relation between it and the mosque, also the mosque was mentioned only by the name of its constructor 'Menkali Bogha' in the historical sources which were contemporary with Mamluk period such as *Ibn al-Agamy* who died in 884 A.H / 1479 A.D [10], and *Ibn al-Shohna* who died in 890 A.H / 1485 A.D [8]. So we can suggest that there is no relation between the name of al-Rumi and the construction era or Mamluk period. The name al-Rumi began to appear in the historical sources which were contemporary with the late Ottoman period, such as *al-Ghozzi* who died in 1352 A.H / 1933

2.2. Location of the mosque

The mosque is located inside Qinnasrin gate^(b) in a quarter called by "mahllet sahet bezza" which is considered to be one of the most important quarters in the old city of Aleppo, fig. (2), the quarter called by this name because it is a center for sale the fabric *al-bezz* [11]. The site which the mosque was constructed on it used to exhibit and

A.D [11], and *al-Tabbakh* who died in 1370 A.H / 1951 A.D [12]. So we can suggest that this name combined with the mosque in the late Ottoman period. As for the relation between the name of *al-Rumi* and the mosque, *al-Tabbakh* mentioned in his book *a'lam al-nobla'* that he did not know why the mosque called by this name? [12]. But we can suggest a reason for the relation between the mosque and this name, that the people in Aleppo city used to calling the strange things by *Rumi*, so when they saw the Ottoman congregational mosques and noting their lead-covered dome and their minarets built in Ottoman manner, they called it *Rumi* mosques because it were unfamiliar for them [13], as for Menkali Bogha there is a mutual thing, that the mosque has a minaret with an unfamiliar style for the people in Aleppo, so it is supportable that they called it *al-Rumi* because of its strange minaret.

sale the wines, but when the founder of the mosque ruled the city, he gave his orders to remove the wine shops and constructed the mosque in their site [10]. In addition to Menkali Bogha mosque the location includes many monuments which date back to various historical eras.

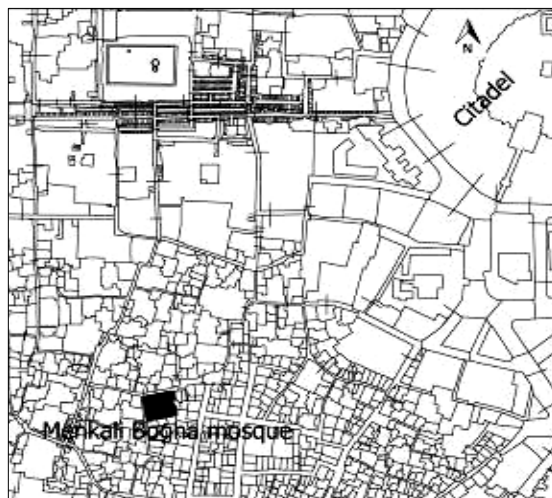


Figure (2) Shows location of the mosque

2.3. Founder of the mosque

As mentioned in the inscriptions which are still surviving at the top of the main entrance and the base of the minaret, the founder of the mosque is al-Amir saif al-din Menkali Bogha al-Shamsy who played a great role in the history of Aleppo city. He began his life as a slave in the reign of al-sultan al-Nasser Hassan, his name refers to his origin which may be Mughal [14]. Menkali Bogha assumed many positions under the patronage of al-sultan Hassan and al-sultan al-Mansour Mohammed, such as Amir *Tablakhanah*^(c) in 758 A.H / 1357 A.D, and *muqaddem ma'ah*^(d) in 759 A.H / 1358 A.D [15], then he promoted to be a ruler in Safad and Tripoli [14]. The historical role of Menkali Bogha increased when he appointed as a governor in Aleppo city instead of al-Amir Qatlo-Bogha al-Ahmady in 763 A.H / 1362 A.D [16],

2.4. Foundation date

The foundation date of the mosque of Menkali Bogha was clearly recorded in an inscription located at the top of the main entrance; the inscription includes the name of the founder and foundation date in 769 A.H / 1367 A.D, and this date was combined in the inscription with a historical event represents in the victory which the founder achieved on the crusaders in Iyas in the same year, as he wanted to commemorate his victory by founding this mosque pl. (1) & fig. (3). Although the foundation date was clearly recorded in the mentioned inscription, the historical sources conflicted at determination the accurate date for the mosque's foundation, so it is worthily to narrate what mentioned in historical sources about the foundation date of the mosque. *Ibn al-Shohna* who died in 815 A.H / 1412 A.D, mentioned in his book *Rawd al-mnazer* that the mosque was founded in 768 A.H / 1366 A.D, when Menkali Bogha returned to Aleppo as a governor for the second time [17]. *Ibn al-Agamy* who died in 884 A.H / 1479

his rule continued one year, then he left Aleppo and transferred to be a governor in Damascus in 764 A.H / 1363 A.D, and continued there until the year 768 A.H / 1366 A.D, that he returned a gain to be a governor in Aleppo, he began to build his mosque in this year [17], and he commissioned a person called *Ibn al-Mehendar* to be responsible for the construction works, and ordered him to treat the workers by justly [10]. By the end of the year 768 A.H / 1366 A.D, al-sultan al-Ashraf Sha'ban ordered him to come to Cairo and promoted him to be a vice for the *sultan na'ib al-saltana*, in the same year he promoted again to be a leader for the armies *atabek al-'askr*, also he commissioned by *al-sultan al-Ashraf* to be responsible for *al-Marestan al-Mansoury* in Cairo, Menkali Bogha still in Cairo till he died in 774 A.H / 1372 A.D [15].

A.D mentioned in his book *Konoz al-zahab* that the construction began in 767 A.H / 1365 A.D, and ended in 768 A.H / 1366 A.D [10]. *Ibn al-Shohna* -the junior-, who died in 890 A.H / 1485 A.D, mentioned in his book *al-Dorr al-montakhab* that the mosque was found in 778 A.H / 1376 A.D [8]. *al-Ghozzi* who died in 1352 A.H / 1933 A.D, and *al-Tabbakh* who died in 1370 A.H / 1951 A.D, agreed with *Ibn al-Agamy* on the date 767 A.H / 1365 A.D, noting that they read the inscription which includes the date 769 A.H, but they read the phrase 'تسع وستين وسبعمايةه' as 'سبع وستين وسبعمايةه', pl. (1) & fig. (3), and they also mentioned that the founder built the mosque when he appointed as a governor in Aleppo in 768 A.H [11,12]. From the proceeding, there is a concord between these sources on the date 767 A.H, and the date 768 A.H except, the date 778 A.H, which was mentioned by *ibn al-Shohna*, but no doubt that this date is a mistake because Menkali Bogha died before this date by four

years, and it may be a mistake in the copy, and may be the author means the date 768 A.H. As for the date 767 A.H, which the previous sources concord on it may be a mistake for these reasons: * There is a consensus in the same sources that the founder in this date did not exist in Aleppo, but he stayed in Damascus as a governor from 764 A.H / 1363 A.D, until 768 A.H/ 1366. * The date 767 A.H, did not agree with the event of defeating the crusaders that the same sources mentioned that this event was in 769 A.H. * The foundation date in the inscription combined with the position 'Atabek al-'askr', and the same sources mentioned that the founder obtained

this position in 769 A.H. * may be the historical sources mentioned the date 767 instead of 769 as a consequence for the similarity between the word 'سبع' and the word 'تسع' pl. (1) & fig. (3). As for the date 768 A.H, there is no conflict on it, because the historical sources mentioned that the founder began to build his mosque when he returned to Aleppo to be a governor for the second time, and this agree with the mentioned date, so the conclusion which can be drawn from the previous narration is the foundation of the mosque began in 768 A.H / 1366 A.D, and ended in 769 A.H / 1367 A.D.



Plate (1) Shows the inscriptions at the top of the main entrance.

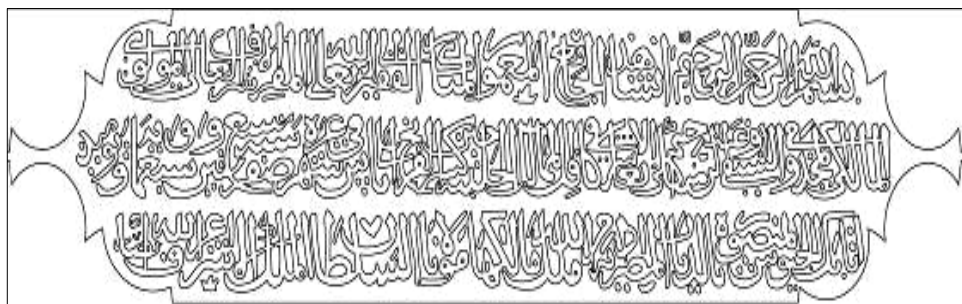


Figure (3) Shows foundation inscription at the top of the main entrance

3. Discussion, Descriptive and Analytical Study

3.1. The facades

Menkali Bogha mosque includes only two façades; that the northern and the western facades are overlooking to outside, but the eastern and the southern facades are invisible now because the other buildings were constructed beside them in the later periods, fig. (1-a, b), the

northern façade is the main one, pl. (2) & fig. (4-a), it overlooks to a narrow street known by *Ragheb Agha*, the façade built from stone, its length is 37.60 meters, its height is 12.30 meters, the façade is very simple and has no decorations, and it ends at the top by a

prominent stone cornice. The western façade is a side one, fig. (4-b), it overlooks to a very narrow street known by *haret al-Deery*, it also built from stone, its length is 33.80 meters, it has the same height of the main one, and it is very

simple and has no decorations except the decorations which surmounted the two windows which are opened align with the main portico, but they are closed now, fig. (4-c).



Plate (2) Shows the northern façade of the mosque, the main façade.

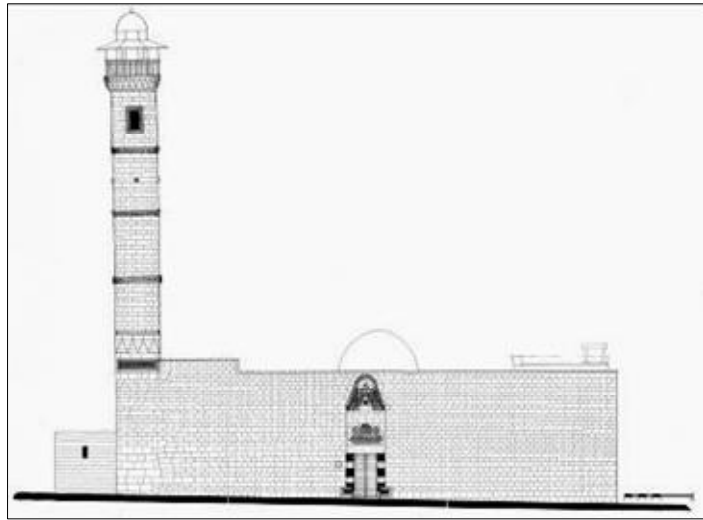


Figure (4-a) Shows the northern façade of the mosque, the main façade (*Circle of Aleppo endowments*)

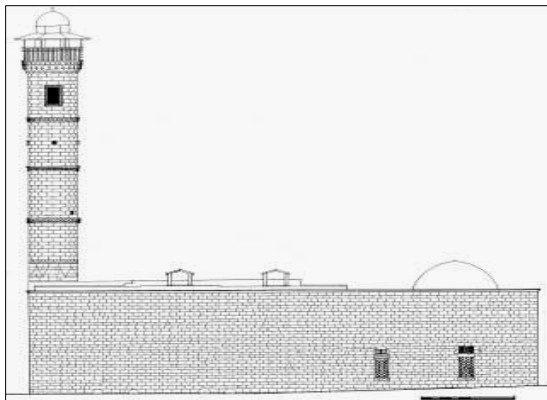


Figure (4-b) Shows the western façade of the mosque (*Circle of Aleppo endowments*)

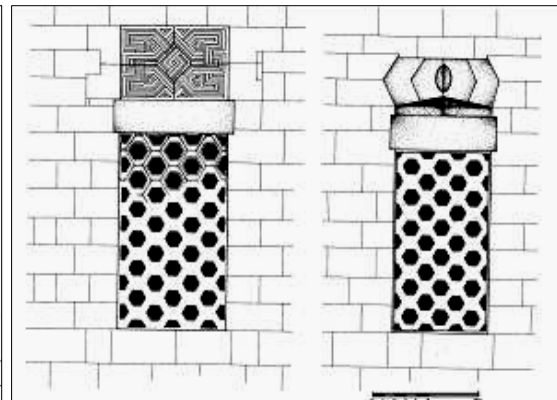


Figure (4-c) Shows the two windows in the western façade. (*Circle of Aleppo endowments*)

3.2. The entrances

The original plan of the mosque included two entrances [18], the first one is the main entrance, it is located in the middle of the northern façade, the second one is located in the eastern façade, fig. (1-a), but it is closed now because of the renewal works which were performed at this side, fig. (1-b). The main entrance is striking in its richness, pl. (3-a) & fig. (5); it composed of a huge recess surmounted at its top by a pointed arch decorated with radial decorations emanating from the arch

center, inside the arch center there is a small panel decorated with an inscription written by square *Kufic* line, and it is read as ‘*Mohammed is the prophet of Allah*’"محمد رسول الله", the pointed arch based on a superb stalactites, the certificate of consolidation was written inside it by *Kufic* line, pl. (3-b). In both right and left side of the recess there is a terrace *meksala*, inside the recess there is the door which leads to inside the mosque, it is closed by two wooden shutters plated with iron, and it

surmounted by a straight stone lintel. The areas in both right and left side of the door are decorated with *al-ablaq* style, pl. (3-c). The style of the entrance which depends on a recess with stalactites is complicated and developed from the simple style. It is believed that the use of stalactites in the portals began in

Iraq, and then it spread in Syria and Egypt [19], this shape of entrances appear in Aleppo before Mamluk period such as the main entrance of al-shazbakhtyyia school 589 A.H/ 1193 A.D, and entrance of the royal palace in the citadel 628 A.H/ 1231 A.D [20].



Plate (3-a) Shows the main entrance of the mosque

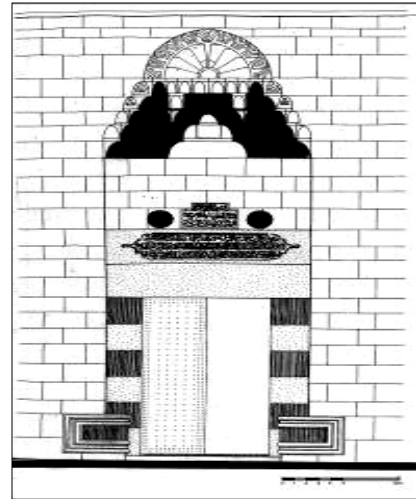


Figure (5) Shows the main entrance of the mosque. (Circle of Aleppo endowments)



Plate (3-b) Shows the upper part of the main entrance



Plate (3-c) Shows the lower part of the main entrance

Inscriptions of the entrance; above the door lintel, there is a foundation inscription pl. (1) & fig. (3); it is trapped inside a rectangular cartouche, it composed of three lines of Mamluk *Naskhi* line, and it is read as follows: “*al- Basmalah, this blessed mosque was constructed by the poor to Allah al- Maqarr al-Ashraf al-‘aly al-Mawlawy*

al-Maliky al-Makhdomy al-Saify Abo Abd al-Reheim Menkali Bogha al-Ashrafy the governor of Aleppo when he defeated the crusaders in Iyas in the beginning of Safar by the year 769 at that time he was the leader of Egyptian armies in the reign of its owner al-Sultan al-Malik al-Ashraf Allah reinforces his supporters”

"بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم أنشأ هذا الجامع المعمور المبارك الفقير إلى الله تعالى المقر الأشرف العالي المولوي / المالكي المخدومي السيفي أبو عبد الرحيم منكلي بغا الأشرفي كافل الممالك الحلبية حين كسر الفرنج على إياس في غرة شهر صفر سنة تسع وستين وسبعماية ويومئذ / أتاك الجيوش المنصورة بالديار المصرية أدام الله ملك مالكا مولانا السلطان الملك الأشرف أعز الله أنصاره".

The inscription includes many titles which were specialized to the founder; also it commemorated a historical event, its analysis as following: *The poor to Allah* الفقير إلى الله, the title refer to modesty and grovel, it was used before Mamluk period for Sultans and princes, but in Mamluk period didn't use for Sultans and limited to princes [21]. *Al-Maqarr* المقر, it means the place of stay, and it refers to the owner of the place without mention his name to glorifies him, the title used in Mamluk period for Sultans and great princes [21]. *Al-Ashraf* الأشرف, means the owner of royal highness, it used for Sultans and who close them in his position [21]. *Al-'aly* العالي, it means also the owner of royal highness, and it used for Sultans and their vices [22]. *Al-Mawlawy* المولوي, it was used in Mamluk period for the vices of Sultans [23]. *Al-Maliky* المالكي, its origin is *al-Malik* which used before Mamluk period for Sultans only, then it developed through Mamluk period to be *al-Maliky* and used for both Sultans and the leaders of armies [19]. *Al-Makhdomy* المخدومي, it refers to the person who worth the service [22]. *Al-Saify* السيفي, it used for the person who works in army or the person who titled

by saif al-din [22]. The inscription commemorated a historical event represented in defeating the crusaders in Iyas^(e) that the crusaders attacked the city in 769 A.H / 1367 A.D, but Menkali Bogha went to there with the armies of Aleppo, and defeated them [24], after that he ordered to record this event on the inscription of his mosque to commemorate it [14]. At the end of the inscription there is a mentioned to the Mamluk sultan, who was contemporary with this period al-Malik al-Ashraf الملك الأشرف, which means al-sultan al-Malik al-Ashraf sha'ban Ibn Hessien Ibn mohammed Ibn Qala'un, he assumed in 764 A.H / 1363 A.D, and continued to his death in 778 A.H/1376 A.D [25]. At the top of the previous inscription, there is another one refers to the renewal works which was occurred to the mosque by al-Amir Janim al-Hamzawy^(f) in the beginning of Ottoman period. In both right and left sides of the inscription there is a circular panel decorated with floral decorations, pl. (3-a). The inscription composed of three lines, pl. (1) & fig. (6), and it is read as: "*Al. Basmalah, Janim al-Hamzawy constructed this blessed mosque with pardon and aid of Allah in Ragab 927 A.H/ 1521 A.D*"

"بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم / أنشأ هذا المعمور المبارك بعفو الله وعونه جانم / الحمزاوي بتاريخ شهر رجب الفرد سنة سابع وعشرين وتسع مئة"

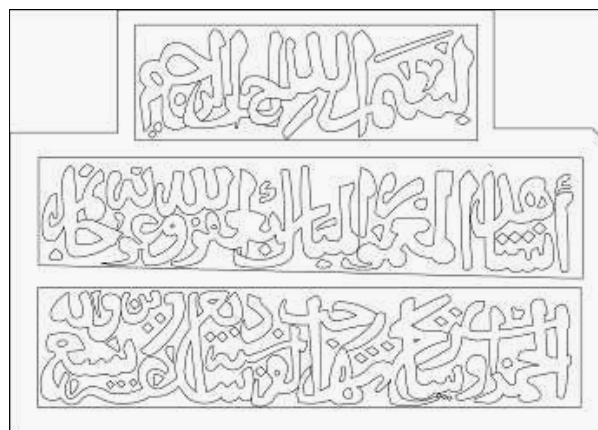


Figure (6) Shows renewal work inscription at the top of the main entrance

3.3. The minaret

As usual in the mosques of Aleppo, Menkali Bogha mosque has only one minaret. It is located at the top

of northern eastern corner. The minaret characterized by a unique style in the city, it composed of one cylindrical

shaft based on a short square base, the diameter of the cylindrical shaft narrows as heading to the top, pl. (4-a) & fig. (7-a, b). Under the base of the minaret there is a foundation inscription composed of one Mamluk *Naskhi* line, it is trapped inside a rectangular frame,

"أنشأه العبد الفقير إلى الله تعالى منكلي بغا الشمسي غفر الله له"

pl. (4-b) & fig. (7-c), it repeated for three times by the same shape on the eastern, western, and northern sides, and it is read as: "The poor to Allah Menkali Bogha al-Shamsy built it Allah forgive him"



Plate (4-a) Shows the minaret

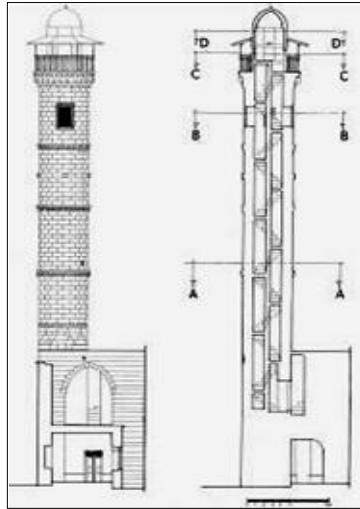


Figure (7-a) Shows outside façade and inside sector for the minaret. (Circle of Aleppo endowments)

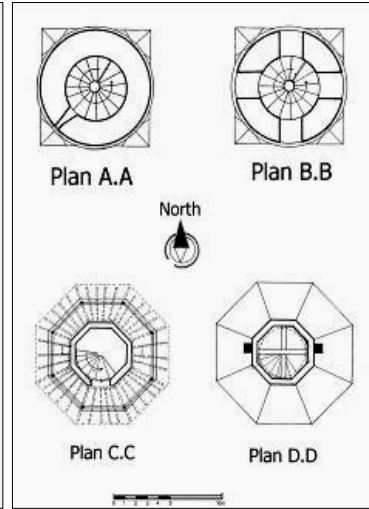


Figure (7-b) Shows plans of different areas in the minaret. (Circle of Aleppo endowments)



Plate (4-b) Shows inscriptions on the base of the minaret

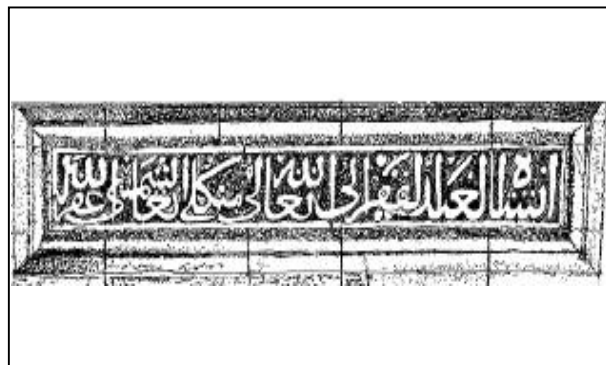


Figure (7-c) Shows inscriptions on the base of the minaret

The cylindrical shaft was decorated with three prominent frames wrapped round it, the first and the third frames composed of stalactites, whereas, the middle one composed of floral decorations, fig. (7-d), the three frames divided the shaft to four equal sections. The lower section includes a sundial *Mezwala*, the name of its maker was carved above it 'it made by Mohammed al-Tezeeny' "عمل محمد التيزيني", pl. (4-c), the mentioned maker was born in Tezeen^(g) in 818 A.H / 1415 A.D, he worked as a leader to the group who

determine the time on Umayyad mosque, and he died in 911 A.H / 1505 A.D [26], through the period which the maker lived in it, we can suppose that the sundial of the minaret was added to it after its construction. The upper section of the cylindrical shaft includes four open windows. The minaret ended at its top by a prominent balcony based on stone stalactites, above the balcony there is a ribbed sunshade, fig. (7-a, b). The style of this minaret is strange between the Mamluk minarets, which mainly depended on the octagonal

shape, this style didn't appear in Aleppo except the minaret of Menkali Bogha and the minaret of Mehmendar mosque (8th A.H / 14th A.D century), but the last one is different because it has a higher base and its cylindrical shaft has an equal diameter from the base to the top [27], so the minaret of Menkali Bogha is a unique style by its cylindrical shaft with its diameter which narrows as heading to the top. This style spread in eastern Islamic world such as Iran, central Asia, and India, it represented a model style for the minarets in these areas, and it appeared there in early period, that it developed from the minarets of Damghan mosque

(2^{ed} A.H / 8th A.D century), the minarets of Friday in Kashan 446 A.H/ 1054 A.D [28]. So we can suppose that the style of Menkali Bogha minaret represents an eastern influence on the architecture of Aleppo in this period. Unfortunately, a great part from the top of this important minaret was destroyed during the current events of Syrian revolution, pl. (4-d), that the mosque was bombed many times during the year 2013 A.D, so it is necessary to protect the mosque and parallel monuments in the city of Aleppo, and the minaret should be restored to return it to its monumental shape.

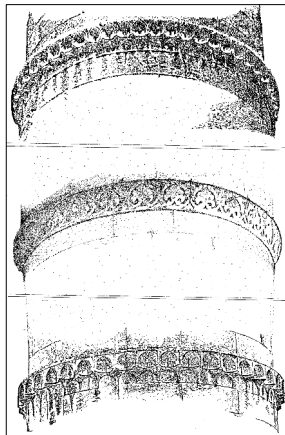


Figure (7-d) Shows decoration frames on the minaret's shaft. (Circle of Aleppo endowments)



Plate (4-c) Shows sundial and its maker were carved on the minaret's shaft



Plate (4-d) Shows the destroyed part at the top of the minaret during the current events in Syria

3.4. The open courtyard

Inside the mosque there is an open courtyard, in the original plan the open courtyard occupied a regular rectangular area, but after the renewal works which were occurred in later period, the open courtyard became irregular and its space was increased as a consequence for removing the northern

portico and adding its space to it, fig (1-a, b). The level of its floor is less than the porticos, and it was paved by yellow stone plates decorated by ornamented panels. Inside the open courtyard there is a square basin built from stone, inside the basin there is a marble fountain the water flows from it, pl. (5).

Plate (5) Shows the open courtyard including the basin inside.



3.5. The main portico

The main portico *al-Qibleyyia* is located in the south side. It extended in the whole extension of the mosque from the east to the west sides, fig. (1-a, 8-a); it composed of two aisles which were separated by four pillars, pl. (6-a). The whole space of the portico was divided to ten square areas, each one of them roofed by cross vault except the area which is situated in front of the prayer niche roofed by dome with a pointed sector rises on a ribbed drum includes twelve windows, pl. (6-b, c) & fig. (8-b, c, d). The portico includes also two iwans located in the east side; the south one has a small door which was allocated to Menkali Bogha the constructor of the mosque [10]. In the middle of the south wall of the main portico there is the main prayer niche *Mihrab*, pl. (6-d) & fig. (8-e), it is striking in its richness that it composed of a squinch covered by colored marble, in both right and left sides of the squinch there is a marble column covered by floral decorations, pl. (6-e). The prayer niche is characterized also by the pointed arch which surmounted the squinch, that it composed of a number of voussoirs which formed on the shape of overlapping circles made by colored marble, pl. (6-f), so the prayer niche looks like a piece of art inside the mosque. This kind of arches spread in Aleppo before Mamluk period that it appeared in the prayer niche of al-shazbakhteyyia 589 A.H / 1193 A.D, al-soltaniyyia 620 A.H / 1223 A.D, and appeared also in the prayer niche of al-ferdus 633 A.H / 1236 A.D, this arch spread also in Aleppo city after Mamluk period, that it appeared by the same shape in Ottoman period in the prayer niche of al-Bahramiyyia mosque 991 A.H / 1583 A.D, it also transferred to Egypt in Mamluk period, that it appeared in the main portal of rebat Azdomor in

Cairo 7th / 13th century. Beside the prayer niche from the right side there is the pulpit, pl. (6-g) & fig. (8-f), it made of colored marble, its two sides were decorated with floral decorations that carved on marble, pl. (6-h), at its top there is a small dome with pointed sector. Beside the prayer niche from the left side there is a flat *mihrab* made of white marble, it was decorated with two candlesticks, a lamp *mishkah* hanging in an inscription represented in a Koranic quotation "كلما دخل عليها زكريا" "المحراب وجد عندها رزقا" in addition to floral decorations were carved on marble, pl. (6-i). The main portico includes also a reporter's tribune hanging on the northern wall, pl. (6-j), the original one was made of marble [11], but the current one was renewed in later period, it made of wood and based on two marble columns. The main portico overlooks to the courtyard by a triple arcade composed of three pointed arches based on two pillars, each one of them includes a small and simple prayer niche, at the top of this arcade there are four gutters for the water of rain. The original plan of the main portico was changed because of the renewal works which were occurred to it in later periods, that the inside space was decreased, and it became composed now from six square areas instead of ten in the original plan, fig. (1-b), the cutting spaces were reused as gardens in both right and left sides of the main portico. Also the portico in original plan was opened on the courtyard and the side porticos, but now it became closed and overlooks to the courtyard by only one entrance in the middle of its façade, pl. (6-k) & fig. (8-g), at the top of this entrance there is a renewal work inscription composed of two line, and it read as "who builds the mosques of Allah who believed in Allah, it was renewed in 1269", pl. (6-l).

"إنما يعمر مساجد الله من آمن بالله جدد بناه سنة ١٢٦٩"

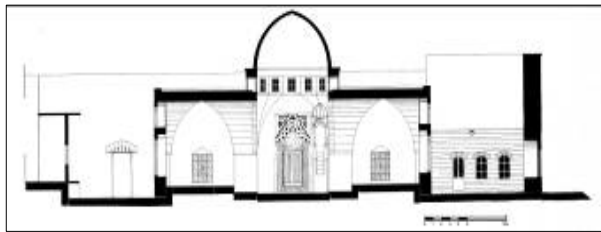


Figure (8-a) Shows sector A.A. Inside the main portico. (Circle of Aleppo endowments).



Plate (6-a) Shows inside the main portico



Plate (6-b) Shows inside the dome of the mihrab.



Plate (6-c) Shows the main portico and the dome from outside.

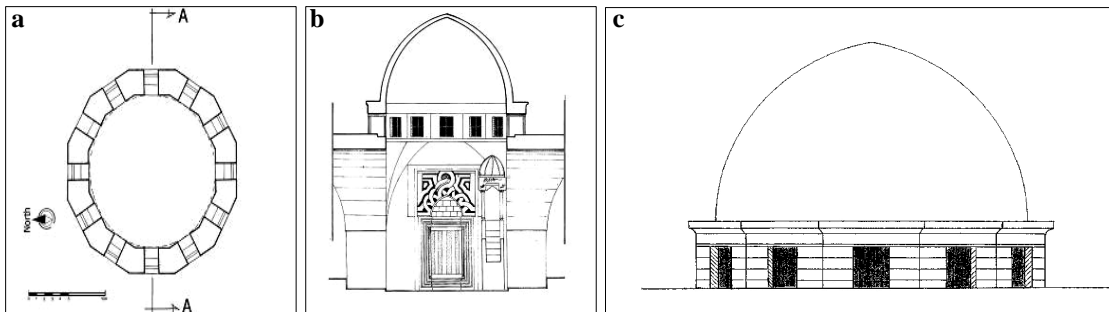


Figure (8) Shows **b**. plan of the mihrab's dome. Circle of Aleppo endowments, **c**. sector A.A, inside the mihrab's dome. Circle of Aleppo endowments, **d**. the mihrab's dome from outside.



Plate. (6-d) Shows the prayer niche.

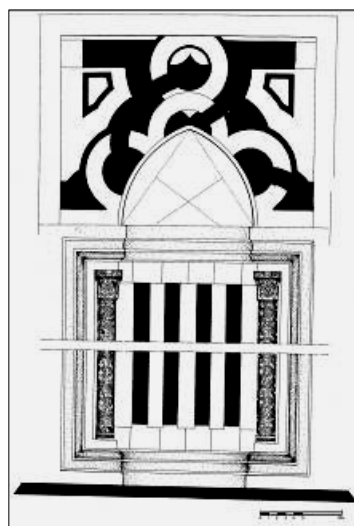


Figure. (8-e) Shows the prayer niche. (Circle of Aleppo endowments)



Plate. (6-e) Shows the decorated marble column which located in the right side of the squinch of the mihrab



Plate (6-f) Shows the upper part of the mihrab, overlapping circles formed the voussoirs of the pointed arch.



Plate (6-g) Shows the pulpit.

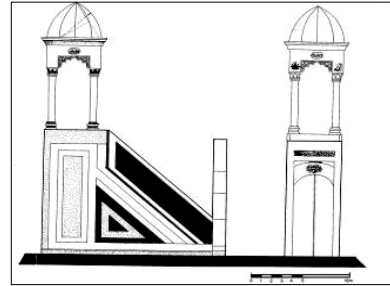


Figure (8-f) Shows the pulpit, front and side view. (*Circle of Aleppo endowments*)



Plate (6-h) Shows the carved floral decorations on both sides of the pulpit.



Plate (6-i) Shows marble flat mihrab beside the main one.



Plate (6-j) Shows the reporter's tribune.



Plate (6-k) Shows façade of the main portico.

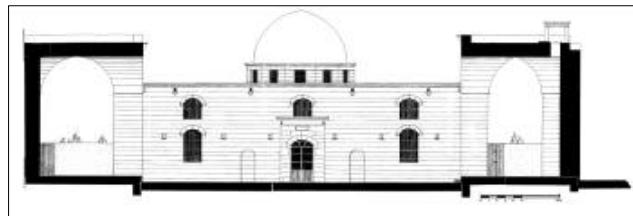


Figure (8-g) Shows sector B.B, façade of the main portico, and inside the side porticos. (*Circle of Aleppo endowments*).



Plate (6-l) Shows Renewal work inscription on the façade of the main portico.

3.6. The side porticos

The original plan of the mosque included three porticos around the courtyard in the eastern, western, and northern sides, each one of them composed of one aisle divided to square

areas roofed by cross vaults, pl. (7) & fig. (1-a). The porticos which were located in eastern and western sides overlooked to the courtyard by a double arcade composed of two pointed arches

based on one pillar, fig. (9-a, b), and the portico which is located in the northern side overlooked to the courtyard by a triple arcade composed of three pointed arches based on two pillars. But now the mosque has only two side porticos

in eastern and western sides, and the portico which was located in the northern side was removed during the renewal works, and its space was added to courtyard, fig. (1-b).



Plate (7) Shows inside the eastern portico, and the added room in the northern side.

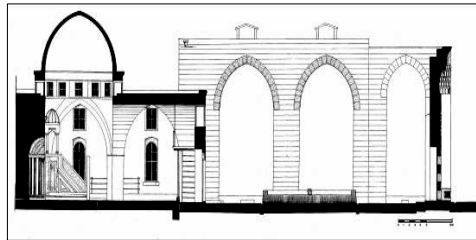


Figure (9-a) Shows sector C.C, inside the main portico, façade of the western portico, inside the northern portico, and the entrance. (*Circle of Aleppo endowments*).

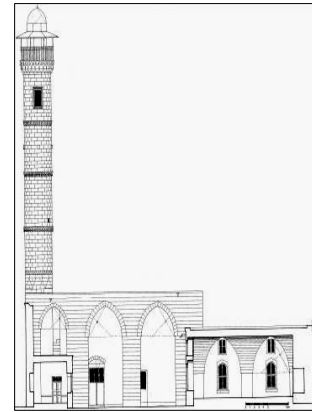


Figure (9-b) Shows sector D.D, the main portico, façade of the eastern, the northern porticos and the minaret. (*Circle of Aleppo endowments*).

4. Renewal Works and its Effect on Original Plan

Many renewal works were occurred to the mosque after its construction. Some of these works were proved in the inscriptions which are still surviving in the mosque; the others were mentioned in the historical sources. The renewal works began in the same period-Mamluk period - which the mosque was constructed on it. In 852 A.H / 1448 A.D, the western wall crackled, *al-hajj Omar* the supervisor of the mosque's waqf intended to rebuild it, and bought a great stones for this purpose, also *al-Amir Tonom*^(h) the governor of Aleppo in that period contributed in these works and send to Cairo to bring the workers for the building works, in 874 A.H/ 1469 A.D, the same wall was greatly crackled again, and it was rebuilt by *al-hajj Mohammed Ibn Safa* who was a wealthy notable in Aleppo [10]. Between the elements which were added to the mosque after its construction, the sundial which was carved on the minaret, pl. (4-c), its maker *Mohammed al-tezeeny* carved his name at its top, he lived between 828

A.H / 1425 A.D, and 911 A.H / 1505 A.D [26], so this confirms that the sundial was added to the minaret after the mosque's construction. The most important renewal works which were occurred to the mosque after its construction were achieved in the beginning of Ottoman period by *al-Amir Janim al-Hamzawy* in 927 A.H / 1521 A.D, his works were proved in a monumental inscription, it is located at the top of the main portal, pl. (1) & fig. (6), these works clearly affected on the original plan of the mosque and changed it, it represented in decreasing the inside space of the main portico by demolishing its two sides and reused them as open gardens [12], fig. (1-b). Also he ordered to remove the northern portico and adding its space to the courtyard, and this greatly affected on the original plan because the mosque was composed of four porticos around the courtyard and became composed of three porticos in the current plan. The original plan of the mosque included a separate ablution situated in front of the minaret

from the northern side, this ablution was still surviving till the year 1264 A.H / 1848 A.D, in this year the ablution was removed by *al-hajj mohammed al-Sabouny* who was a wealthy merchant from his commerce in soap, he removed the mentioned ablution and added its space to his house which was situated beside the mosque from this side, also he built the current ablution beside the eastern façade in front of the eastern entrance [12]. These works affected also on the original plan of the mosque, because it has closed the eastern entrance, and from that time the mosque has only one entrance in the northern façade, also these works have hidden a large part from the eastern façade and changed its straight line fig. (1-b). Some renewal works were achieved also by the same person in 1269 A.H / 1853 A.D; he commemorated his works by a monumental inscription located at the top of the main portico's entrance, pl. (6-l), the inscription didn't refer to *al-hajj Mohammed al-Sabouny*, it referred

5. The Endowments of the Mosque

Although the mosque of Menkali Bogha has a great importance between Aleppo's mosques, there are no endowments belonging to the mosque in current time. But the historical sources mentioned that the founder of the mosque allocated a great waqf to his mosque without determining the endowments which were belonging to this waqf, the historical sources mentioned also that the founder appointed many readers to read the holy Quran inside the mosque and they get their salary from the waqf of the mosque [10], and this proves that the founder allocated a great waqf to his mosque to ensure its continuity. Beside the mosque there was a public bath *Hammam*, which was known by al-Rumi, it was one of the mosque's endowments, but it disappeared since the Mamluk period. Also there were many endowments allocated to the

only to the mentioned date, but the historical sources mentioned that this person renewed the mosque in this year, because the northern wall of the main portico crackled, so he ordered to renew it, and putting this inscription on it [12]. The last renewal works which occurred to the mosque were achieved in 1320 A.H / 1902 A.D, in that year a Sufi man known by al-Sheikh Ragab came to Aleppo, he decided to stay in Menkali Bogha mosque, one of Aleppo's wealthy merchants known by Bakeir ordered to build a great room for the Sufi man on the mosque [12], the room was built on the northern side, pl. (7), it is still surviving, it has a rectangular area, and it includes six windows, three of them on its western wall, the south wall includes the other three windows in addition to its portal. From the preceding, we can suppose that many renewal works were achieved on the mosque after its construction, and these works clearly affected on its original plan.

mosque in later periods, the historical sources mentioned that a wealthy merchant built a public bath beside the Qinnasrin gate, and allocated a part of its yield to the mosque [10]. In 960 A.H / 1553 A.D, a wealthy notable known by *al-hajj Abdallah Ibn Yehia* endowed a shop on the mosque, this shop was situated beside the old ablution, but it was destroyed with the ablution in 1264 A.H / 1848 A.D, he also added a basin to the western aisle included an inscription, which was read as '*The poor to Allah al-hajj Abdallah Ibn al-hajj Yehia built this blessed tap and endowed a shop on the mosque beside the ablution in 960*' "أنشأ هذه الحنفية المباركة الفقير إلى الله الحاج عبد الله بن الحاج يحيى وأوقف عليه الدكان الذي في جانب الميضاة في سنة ٩٦٠" the basin disappeared now with its inscriptions, but they were mentioned in historical sources [12].

6. Conclusion

This paper is allocated to study Menkali Bogha mosque, which is considered one of the most important mosques that constructed in Aleppo city in Mamluk period. The study referred to that the mosque has two names, Menkali Bogha and al-Rumi, but there is no relation between the second name and the construction era that the mosque didn't call by al-Rumi except in the late of Ottoman period. The paper mentioned that Ibn al-Mehndar was the supervisor of the mosque's construction, and he appointed by the founder to supervise on the building works. The study presented a supposition for the accurate date of the mosque's construction based on comparing between the survival inscriptions and what mentioned about the date of construction in historical sources. The study shed the light on the minaret of the mosque as a unique style in Aleppo city, and its style represented an eastern effect on the architecture of Aleppo in Mamluk period, the study also referred to its destruction during the current events in Syria and urged to restore it. The paper studied the renewal works which were achieved on the mosque after its construction, and it shed the light on the changes which occurred to the original plan of the mosque as a consequence for these renewal works, the paper also attributed some of these renewal works to a determine date, such as the sundial on the minaret, and the renewal work inscription on the northern wall of the main portico which the study attributed it to a determine person. At the end the paper confirmed that the founder of the mosque endowed a great Waqf on it, but it disappeared in current time.

Endnotes

- (a) This mosque was constructed by al-Amir al-Tonbogha al-Salhy who appointed as a governor of Aleppo in 714 A.H / 1314 A.D, and it was the first great mosque which constructed in the city after the great Umayyad mosque inside the city's walls, the mosque has a magnificent façade reflected the features of Mamluk period [8].
- (b) The gate called by this name because it leads to Qinnasrin side, it was constructed by sief al-Dawla al-Hamadany and renewed by al-naser Yousef in 654 A.H / 1256 A.D [11].
- (c) It refers to the person who supervises on the drums and knocking them during the wars [20].
- (d) This position refers to the person who supervises on one hundred soldiers in the army [20].
- (e) Iyas is a coastal city situated in the west of Aleppo, and it followed Aleppo in Mamluk period [2].
- (f) He was a wealthy notable person in Aleppo city in the late of Mamluk period, and he died in 944 A.H / 1538 [12].
- (g) It is a small city located in the west side of Aleppo, and it followed Aleppo in Mamluk period [2].
- (h) He was one of the slaves of al-sultan al-Mu'yyiad Sheikh, he appointed as a governor in Aleppo city in 851 A.H / 1447 A.D [12].

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