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CHAPTER 4

SUKAYK AND AL-SUMMĀQAH: MAMLUK RURAL GEOGRAPHY IN THE NORTHERN JAWLĀN/GOLAN HEIGHTS IN LIGHT OF QĀYṬBĀY'S ENDOWMENT DEEDS

Roy Marom

This chapter presents and discusses three unpublished 15th century CE endowment deeds (*waqfiyāt*, sing. *waqfiyah*), by Sultan al-Ashraf Qāyṭbāy (r. 1468–1496 CE) concerning the villages of Sukayk and al-Summāqah in al-Jawlān (the Golan Heights,

henceforth, the Golan). The chapter provides an annotated and rectified transcription of the *waqfiyahs*, with an English translation followed by a discussion of their contents.

THE DOCUMENTS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

The latter stages of the Mamluk period witnessed the encumberment of considerable properties as religious endowments, called *waqf* in Arabic; a phenomenon Bethany Walker termed 'waqfization'.¹ Waqfization aimed, in part, to control sources of revenue in a time of property confiscation and socio-economic upheavals and political insecurities.² According to Islamic law, only an owner (*mallāk*) can dedicate properties as *waqf*, therefore necessitating the production, confirmation and dissemination of official legal deeds which

document the process of purchase and endowment of properties.³ Because of the permanence and irreversibility ascribed to endowments under *shari'ah* law, the Ottoman judiciary collected, copied and abridged many of these endowments, whose original deeds are otherwise lost.⁴

Few works from the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods, like Yāqūt's *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, refer extensively to the settlement geography of the Levant.⁵ Occasional information is found in genealogical encyclopedias like al-Qalqashandī's *Ṣubḥ al-A'shā*,

- 1 Walker, B.J. Mobility and Migration in Mamluk Syria: The Dynamism of Villagers 'on the Move'. *Mamluk Studies* 7 (*Proceedings of the Conference Everything is on the Move: The 'Mamluk Empire' as a Node in (Trans-) Regional Networks*) (2014), 337.
- 2 Igarashi, D. Waqf as a Means of Securing Financial Assets: The "Self-Benefiting Waqf" in Mamluk Egypt and Syria. In Levanony, A. (ed.) *Egypt and Syria under Mamluk Rule* (Leiden, 2021), 277–291.
- 3 Obaidullah, M. A Framework for Analysis of Islamic Endowment (waqf) Laws. *Int'l J. Not-for-Profit L.* 18 (2016), 54–72.
- 4 Ipshirli, M. and al-Tamīmī, M. *Awqāf wa-'Amlāk al-Muslimīn fī Filastīn fī Alwiyat Ghazza, Nāblus, 'Ajlūn, ḥasab al-Daftar Raqam 522 min Dafātīr al-Tahrīr al-'Uthmāniyya al-Mudawwana fī al-Qarn al-'Ashir al-Hijrī* (Istanbul, 1982).
- 5 Yāqūt, Shihāb al-Dīn. *Mu'jam al-Buldān: lil-Shaykh al-Imām Shihāb al-Dīn Abī Abdillāh Yāqūt b. Abdillāh al-Hamawī al-Rūmī al-Baghdādī* (Beirut, 1977).

or in biographical dictionaries like al-Sakhāwī's *al-Daw' al-Lāmi'*.⁶ Besides these broad works, local chronicles or histories like Ibn 'Asākir's *Ta'rikh Dimashq*, al-Maqdisī's *al-'Unus al-Jalīl* and al-'Uthmānī's *Ta'rikh Şafad* focus primarily on the urban elites and rarely shed light on minor rural settlements in the hinterland.⁷

Mamluk endowment deeds are among the most important surviving records of the Mamluk period in Bilād al-Shām.⁸ Although little used for historical-geographical research, these documents often contain the only mention of rural inhabited sites. The documents provide modern researchers with an unparalleled window into the historical geography, toponymy, demography and economics of urban and rural fabrics alike.⁹ In the case of the Golan, the same is true for the Early Ottoman period. For example, vezier Muşţafā Lālā Pāshā's endowment deed provides the most detailed account of the rural geography of region alongside, and beyond, that offered by 16th century Ottoman fiscal registers.¹⁰

Waqfiyahs and other legalo-fiscal documents follow Late Islamic legal and fiscal-geographical conventions. Each listing includes the name of the property, the endowed fraction (in 24–qarats), and a description of its boundary. Boundary descriptions define the borders using names of neighbouring fiscal units or landscape elements, starting, in Bilād al-Shām, in the south (*qiblah*, the Islamic direction of prayer) and progressing counterclockwise.¹¹ Words in some endowment deeds, like those discussed here, are written without marking the *hamzah*,¹² and diacritical points (*tanqīṭ*) are also sometimes dropped.

Waqfiyahs also follow established Late Islamic conventions in designating the status of a site. For example, an inhabited village is designated as a *qaryah*, while an uninhabited parcel of agricultural land, often associated with a historic site or ruin, is called a *mazra'ah*. Later copies or emendations of waqfiyahs often mention the status of ruined (*kharāb*), disused or dysfunctional (*'āṭil*) sites.¹³ The distinction between *qaryah* and *mazra'ah* lost its

6 Al-Sakhāwī, Shams al-Dīn. *al-Daw' al-Lāmi' li-Ahl al-Qarn al-Tāsi'* (Beirut, n.d.); Al-Qalqashandī, Aḥmad. *Kitāb Subḥ al-A'shā fī Şinā'at al-Inshā* (Cairo, 1922).

7 Ibn 'Asakir, 'Alī b. al-Ḥasan. *Ta'rikh Maḍīnat Dimashq wa-Dhikr Faḍliha wa-Tasmiyat Man Hulliha min al-Amāthil aw Ijtāza bi-Nawāḥihā min Wāridihā wa-Ahlihā* (Beirut, 1998); Al-Maqdisī, Muḥjir al-Dīn. *Al-Unus al-Jalīl bi-Ta'rikh al-Quds wal-Khalīl* (Amman, n.d.); Al-'Uthmānī, Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān, *Ta'rikh Şafad ma'a Malāḥiq 'Arabiyya wa-Lātīniyya Mutarjama Tunshar Lil-Marra al-Ulā*, edited by S. Zakkār (Damascus, 2008).

8 Frenkel, Y. Awqāf in Mamluk Bilād al-Shām. *Mamlūk Studies Review* 13 (2009), 149–155; Marom, R. and Taxel I. Ḥamama: The Historical Geography of Settlement Continuity and Change in Majdal 'Asqalan's Hinterland, 1270–1750 CE. *Journal of Historical Geography* 82 (2023), 60.

9 Marom, R. Mamluk and Ottoman Endowment Deeds as a Source for Geographical-Historical Research: The Waqfiyya of Haseki Sultan (1552 CE). *Horizons in Geography* (in press).

10 Mardom Bek, *Waqf al-Wazīr Lālā Muşţafā Bāshā wa-Yalīhi Kitāb Waqf Fāṭima Khātūn b. Muḥammad bek b. al-Sulţān al-Mall al-Ashraf Qānsūh al-Ghawrī* (Damascus, 1925), 1–238; Khalaf, T. *Wathā'iq 'Uthmāniyah Hawl al-Jawlān: Awqāf, awāmīr, sālnāmāt* (Damascus, 2006), 9–54.

11 Marom, R. and Zadok, R. Early-Ottoman Palestinian Toponymy: A Linguistic Analysis of the (Micro-) toponyms in Haseki Sultan's Endowment Deed (1552), *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* 139/2 (2024), 260.

12 The *hamzah* is the sign used in Arabic writing to represent the glottal stop, usually written above another letter and shown in English transliterations as an apostrophe.

13 Hütteroth, W.D. and Abdulfattah, K. *Historical Geography of Palestine, Transjordan, and Southern Syria in the Late 16th Century* (Erlangen, 1977), 29–32; Toledano, E. The Sanjaq of Jerusalem in the Sixteenth Century: Aspects of Topography and Population. *Archivum Ottomanicum* 9 (1984), 281–285.

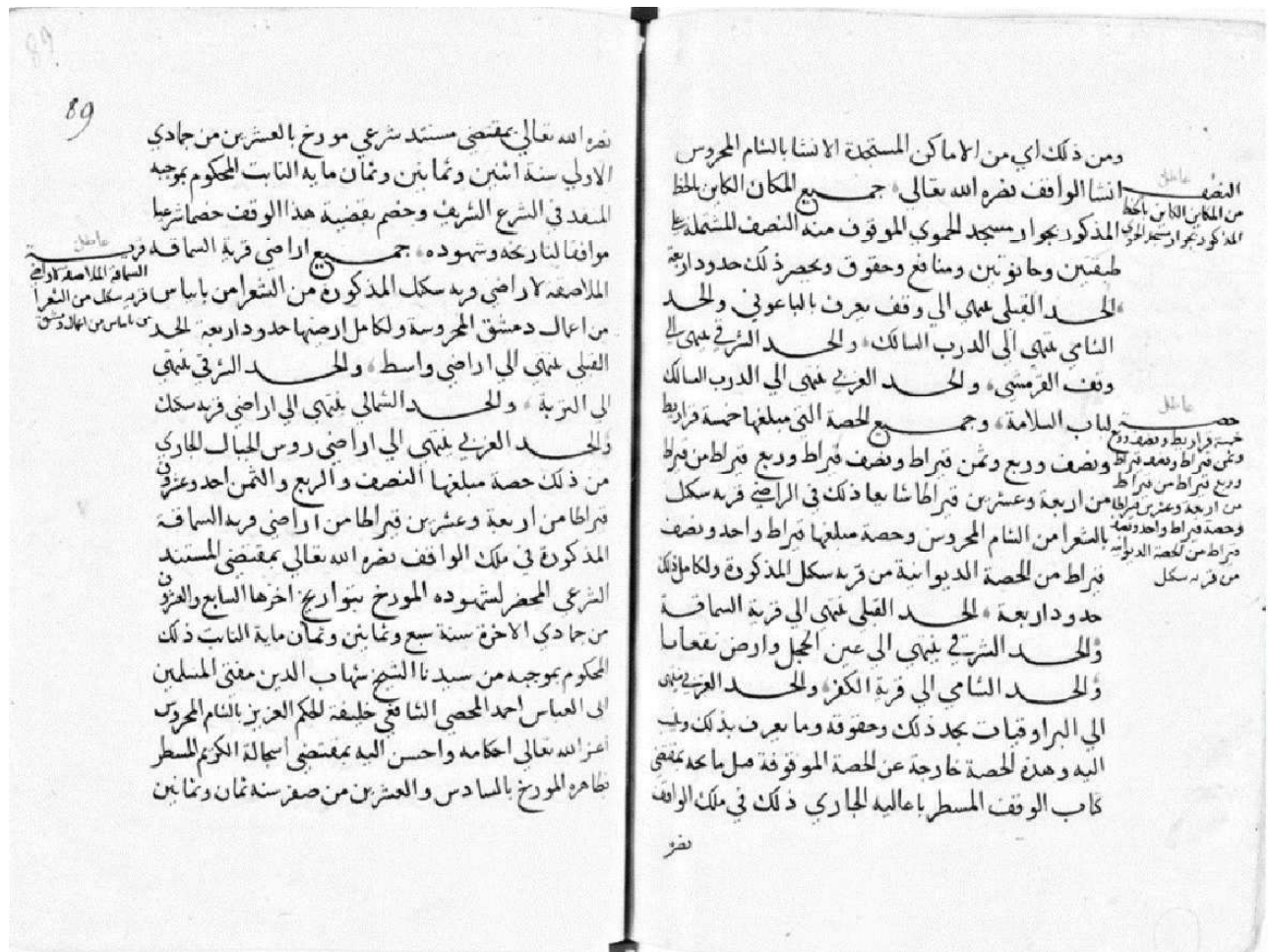


Figure 4.1. Sultan Qāytbāy's endowment deed for Sukayk (Deed B).

significance for most of the Levant by the end of the 19th century. However, it remained in use in Syria and the Golan well into the 20th century.¹⁴

Sultan Qāytbāy's official *waqfiyah* contains Sukayk's and al-Summāqah's endowment among hundreds of listings of properties, from the subdistrict to the house level, throughout Egypt and Syria.¹⁵

14 Administratively, as well colloquially (in daily life), the term '*mazra'ah*' represented a hamlet, or satellite or temporary dwellings, or dependency, for residents of the pre-1967 Golan (Palestinian Rural History Project, [hereafter PRHP] interviews, 2022–2023). See Ṭalās, M. (ed.) *al-Mu'jam al-Jughrāfī lil-Qutr al-'Arabī al-Sūrī* (Damascus, 1990–1993); al-Sallūm, 'A.Ḥ.M. *Durar al-Bayyān fī Ta'rīkh al-Jawlān* (no place of publication, 2022), 21; al-Sallūm, M.Z. *Mu'jam al-Jawlān al-Jughrāfī al-Mukhtaṣar* (no place of publication, 2023).

15 Copy in Bibliothèque nationale de France [BnF]. Département des Manuscrits. Arabe 1118. For a list of urban properties see: Mayer, L.A. (ed.) *The Buildings of Qaytbay as Described in His Endowment Deed: 1: text and index* (London, 1938). For a spatial analysis see: Petry, C. Fractionalized Estates in a Centralized Regime: The Holdings of al-Ashraf Qāytbāy and Qānshūh al-Ghawrī According to Their Waqf Deeds. *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 41/1 (1998), 96–117.

The ornate manuscript in which these *waqfiyah* endowments are documented reflects Qāyṭbāy's grandious donations of private and public properties for the benefit of the Ḥaramayn (Fig. 4.1).¹⁶

THE TEXTS

Deed A

Marginal note: The whole portion of 5 qirāṭs out of 24 qirāṭs,¹⁷ and 21 portions (*sihm*) and a third and a quarter of a qirāṭ, out of 24 qirāṭs [21 and 7/12 qirāṭs ≈ 89.93%] of the lands of the village of Sukayk of [the region of] al-Sha'ra of the settlements of Protected Damascus

In red: disused (ʿĀṭil), Damascus

The whole portion of 5 qirāṭs out of 24 qirāṭs, and 21 portions (*sihm*) and a third and a quarter of a qirāṭ, out of 24 qirāṭs [21 and 7/12 qirāṭs ≈ 89.93%], of the lands of the area (*nawāḥī*) of the village of Sukayk of [the region of] al-Sha'ra of the 'amal of the portion (*al-ḥissah*) [recte: *qaṣbah*, 'the market town'] of Bānyās of the settlements (*a'māl*) of Protected Damascus. Including this village, with its cultivable and non-cultivable lands

(*arādī mu'tamal wa-mu'aṭṭal*), plain and rugged terrain, the distant parts and the close parts (*aqāsī wa-adānī*), summer quarters and winter quarters (*maṣāif wa-mashātī*), threshing floors, pens/corrals (*ṣiyar*), and an inhabited settlement in the form of the dwelling places of its fellahin and associated orchards (*dimna 'āmira bi-rasm suknā fallāḥihā wa-kurūm dhālika*).

[Sukayk] is confined by four boundaries: the southern boundary ends at the lands of the village of al-Summāqa,¹⁸ and the eastern boundary ends at the lands of the village of al-Thalḥiyāt [recte al-Thaljīyāt]¹⁹ and it terminates at the land of the village of Buq'āthā.²⁰ And the northern boundary ends at the lands of the village of al-Kufayr,²¹ and it terminates at the land of the village of al-Jarash.²² And the western boundary ends at the lands of Mazāri' al-Bārqiyyāt,²³ and it arrives at this village

16 Petry, C.F. A Paradox of Patronage during the Later Mamluk Period. *The Muslim World* 73.3/4 (1983), 182–207; Behrens-Abouseif, D. Qāyṭbāy's Foundation in Medina, the Madrasah, the Ribāt and the Dashishah. *Mamluk Studies Review* 2 (1998), 61–71; Al-Mu'ti, H.A. Piety and Profit: The Haramayn Endowments in Egypt (1517–1814). In Pascale, G. (ed.) *Held in Trust: Waqf in the Islamic World* (Oxford, 2011), 41–72. For a contemporary account of Qāyṭbāy's renovation of the Ḥaramayn and Ummayyad Mosque at Damascus see: BnF Arabe 1615, 38–44.

17 In Arabic legal and fiscal terminology, *qirāṭ* functions as a quantifier of portion. Like its English language cognate, *carat*, when used to indicate the purity of precious alloys, *qirāṭ* does not represent a given amount but a ratio, or fraction, equal to 1/24 of the whole. The area of land thus granted to each village is left unspecified and cannot be calculated today.

18 Schumacher, G. *The Jaulān* (London, 1888), 242–243; Vilnay, Z. *Golan ve-Ḥermon* (Jerusalem, 1970), 194; al-Sallūm, *Durar al-Bayyān*, 67; al-Sallūm, *Mu'jam*, #120.

19 Mardom Bek, *Waqf*, 26, 142; al-Sallūm, *Durar al-Bayyān*, 34; al-Sallūm, *Mu'jam*, #37.

20 Schumacher, *The Jaulān*, 242–243; Vilnay, *Golan ve-Ḥermon*, 71; al-Sallūm, *Durar al-Bayyān*, 32; al-Sallūm, *Mu'jam*, #32.

21 Coordinates 2174.2918 on the 1923 Palestine Grid. It does not appear in Mardom Bek, *Waqf*; Schumacher, *the Jaulān*; Vilnay, *Golan ve-Ḥermon*; al-Sallūm, *Durar al-Bayyān*; al-Sallūm, *Mu'jam*.

22 Unidentified. It does not appear in Mardom Bek, *Waqf*; Schumacher, *the Jaulān*; Vilnay, *Golan ve-Ḥermon*; al-Sallūm, *Durar al-Bayyān*; al-Sallūm, *Mu'jam*.

23 To be identified with the Bārjiyyāt or Bargiyāt (colloquial Bedouin pronunciation, as recorded in PRHP interview, 25 September 2023) at the western slopes of the Golan Heights, just on the Syrian-Israeli international border (e.g., 'Tāhūnat al-Barjiyyāt' on Palestine Grid 2132/2844). The transition from /q/ to /j/ or /g/ probably took place through the mediation of Bedouin

[Mazāri‘al-Bārqiyyāt] from the eastern direction, and other [directions].

[This portion] is encompassed in whole, with its entitlements, roads, and any associated entitlement within its bounds or outside of them, and whatever is acknowledged as such, or is associated with it. [All that] is present in the ownership of our lord, of noble stature, the endower referred to above in his noble name (may God glorify and make him glorious) in accordance with the legal deed of sale dated the 28th of Honored Sha‘abān 886 AH [= 31 October 1481], which is ruled in accordance with its fixed content, after meeting the legal requirements. [It was confirmed] by our lord, the poor servant unto God, the Chief Judge (*qāḍī al-Quḍāh*) Nijm al-Dīn, the *qāḍī* of the Muslims, and the pillar of Amir al-Mu‘minīn, Abū Ḥafṣ, ‘Umar b. Muflīḥ, of Jerusalem, the Hanbalī supervisor of the legal rulings in the Mamlaka (province) of al-Shām, may God glorify his judgments and bestow blessings upon him, in accordance with a generous record written on its back side, dated the 6th of most appreciated and inviolable Ramaḍān 886 AH as accounted for by the *shari‘ah* after a [thorough] legal inspection and consideration of this deed in the question of this endowment according to its date and witnesses.

Deed B (Figure 4.1)

Marginal note: 5 qirāṭs, and a half and a quarter and an eighth of a qirāṭ, and a half qirāṭ, and a quarter of a qirāṭ [=6 and 37/96 qirāṭ] out of 24 qirāṭs of the lands of the village of Sukayk

In red: disused [‘Āṭil)

The whole of the portion amounting to 5 qirāṭs, and a half and a quarter and an eighth of a qirāṭ, and a half qirāṭ, and a quarter of a qirāṭ [=6 and 37/96 qirāṭ] out of 24 qirāṭs of the lands of the village of Sukayk [the region of] al-Sha‘arā [of the sub-district] of Bānyās of the settlements of Protected Damascus.

And a portion amounting to 1.5 qirāṭs in the portion of the Dīwān in the aforementioned village of Sukayk.

The entirety of this is bounded on its four sides: the southern boundary ends at the village of al-Summāqah, the eastern boundary ends at ‘Ayn al-Jamal [recte ‘Ayn al-Ḥajal]²⁴ and the land of Buq‘āthā, and the northern boundary ends at the village of al-Kafr [recte al-Kufayr],²⁵ and the western boundary ends at al-Bārqiyyāt²⁶ up to that, and its rights and what is accordingly acknowledged and ascribed to it. And this portion is in addition [literally: removed from] the portion already endowed before its date in accordance with the deed of endowment registered above [in the manuscript compilation] in the ownership of endower, may God support him according to a legal deed dated the 20th of Jumādā al-‘Ulā 882 AH. This ruling [e.g. the validity of endowment] has been confirmed and has been executed in accordance with the *shari‘ah* after a [thorough] legal inspection and consideration according to its date and witnesses.

Deed C

Marginal note: village of al-Summāqah adjoining the lands of the aforementioned village of Sukayk

dialects with the shift from fushā /q/ to /g/, with secondary pronunciation as /j/. Cf. Bedouin pronunciation of classical /Qīrah/ (modern Yoqne‘am) as /Jira/. See Conder, C.R. and Kitchener, H.H. *The Survey of Western Palestine: Memoirs of the Topography, Geography, Hydrography, and Archaeology, Vol. II: Samaria* (London, 1882), 60. The use of the plural form -āt suggests a multiple of lands and is common in Levantine toponymy.

24 Schumacher, *the Jaulān*, 77; Vilnay, *Golan ve-Hermon*, 204; al-Sallūm, *Durar al-Bayyān*, 91–92; al-Sallūm, *Mu‘jam*, #196.

25 See Footnote 24.

26 See ‘al-Barjiyyāt’ Footnote 24.

of [the region of] al-Sha'rā [of the sub-district] of Bānyās of the settlements of Damascus.

In red: disused [ʿĀṭil]

The whole of the lands of the village of al-Summāqah adjoining the lands of the aforementioned village of Sukayk of [the region of] al-Sha'arā [of the sub-district] of Bānyās of the settlements of Protected Damascus. The whole of its lands has four boundaries: the southern boundary ends at the lands of Wāsiṭ,²⁷ and the eastern boundary ends at the Turba/graveyard,²⁸ and the northern boundary ends at the lands of the village of Sukayk, and the western boundary ends to the lands of Rūs al-Jibāl.²⁹

Out of this [area] a portion of 21 and 7/8 qirāṭs out of 24 qirāṭs [≈ 91.145%] of the lands of the aforementioned village of al-Summāqah is the private property of the endower, may God support

him according to a legal deed presented with its witnesses, dated with various dates, the latest of which is the 27th of Jumādā al-Ākhira 887 AH. This ruling [e.g. the validity of endowment] has been confirmed by our master, the Shaykh Shihāb al-Dīn, Mufti of the Muslims, Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Muḥṣī [recte: al-Ḥumṣī], the Shafīʿī, substituting for the precious legal authority in Protected al-Shām [=Damascus] (may God make his judgments glorious, and show his beneficence towards him) according to a noble record written on the back side [of the deed] dated 26th of Ṣafār 888 AH. The remainder [of the endowment] is among the properties of the public treasury (Bayt al-Māl al-Maḥmūd), according to the testaments of those who so reckoned in writing down their testimony at the end of the chapter yet to be written.

DISCUSSION

The documents presented above are the only fully extant *waqfiyahs* from the Mamluk period Golan.³⁰ Therefore, these records deserve greater attention for decoding the spatial, demographic, administrative, economic, social, toponymic and environmental information encoded therein. Taken together, these documents provide an important source for reconstructing the rural pattern of settlement in the northern Golan before the 16th century, for which

extensive systematic Ottoman documentation did survive.³¹

For overlapping endowment deeds to be understood properly, the various deeds should be compared and contrasted in a synchronous fashion. Synchronous analysis allows us to distinguish repeated formulas from ideosyncratic information particular to each endowed property. A synchronous analysis also facilitates the reconstruction

27 Schumacher, *the Jaulān*, 268; Vilnay, *Golan ve-Ḥermon*, 121; al-Sallūm, *Durar al-Bayyān*, 132–133; al-Sallūm, *Mu'jam*, #294.

28 Unidentified.

29 Literally, the Heads of the Mountains (= peaks). While the name might remind one of Jabal Rōs/Har Dov, at the western slopes of Mt. Hermon, see Vilnay, *Golan ve-Ḥermon*, 106–107, that mountain range is north beyond al-Kufayr.

30 For a seventh century AH/13th century CE endowment deed of Na'arān and Ḥaḍr villages see Khalaf, *Wathā'iq*, 9.

31 For a synchronous publication of the inhabited places and tribal groups in the 1590s registers see: Hütteroth and Abdulfattah, *Historical Geography*, 112–220; For areas adjacent to the Golan, see Rhode, H. *The Administration and Population of the Sancak of Safad in the Sixteenth Century*. PhD diss. Columbia University. (New York, 1979); Al-Bakhit, M.'A. and Hmoud [al-Sawariyyah], N.R. *The Detailed Defter of Al-Lajjun: Tapu Defteri No. 181 1005 A.H./1596 AD: A study edition and translation of the text* (Amman, 1989); Al-Bakhit, M.'A. and N.R. al-Sawariyyah, *Defter-i Mufasssal of Marj Bani 'Amir, its Dependencies and Appendices Entrusted to Amīr Tarabay 945 A.H./1538*, 2nd ed. (Amman, 2010); Al-Bakhit, M.'A. and al-Sawariyyah, N.R. *Daftar Mufasssal Liwā' 'Ajlūn raqm 185* (Amman, 2011).

of the settlement system, while a diachronic analysis permits researchers to recover changes in the cultural landscape and legal geography over time. For example, identifying the boundary elements and georeferencing them allows us to track changes in the territory of the fiscal units (in this case, two villages) through time.³² This analysis of endowment records can then be synthesized with other written and archaeological evidence into a fuller historical picture.

Chronology

On 20 Jumādā al-ʿUlā 882 AH/7 September 1477, Qāyṭbāy endowed 6 and 37/96 qirāṭs of his previously owned possession in Sukayk, in addition to another 1.5 qirāṭs of imperial domain (*Diwān*). Deed B's text mentions Deed A, which precedes it in the defter. However, Deed B chronologically predates Deed A by four years, thus creating a textual discrepancy in the referencing of Deed B to Deed A.

On 28 Sha'abān 886 AH/31 October 1481 CE Qāyṭbāy purchased the remaining 21 and 7/12 qirāṭs (≈ 89.93%) of the lands of Sukayk (Deed A). The purchase was authorized by the chief judge Nijm al-Dīn of al-Shām (=Damascus). The purchase was quickly followed, on 6 Ramaḍān/7 November of the same year, by a judicial review undertaken by ʿUmar b. Muflīḥ, the hanbali *muftī* appointed as 'supervisor of the legal rulings in the Province of al-Shām'.³³ The properties were endowed at an unspecified time during the same month. While the name of the original owner of the purchased portions is not named, the involvement of these high functionaries, and especially of the mufti, suggests

that Qāyṭbāy purchased the property from the state treasury.

Qāyṭbāy, probably through agents (*wukalā'*) in Damascus, accrued 21 and 7/8 qirāṭs of "the lands of the village of al-Summāqah, adjoining the lands of the aforementioned village of Sukayk" (Deed C). The land purchases were completed on 27 Jumādā al-Ākhira 887/21 August 1482. On 26 Şafar 888/13 April 1483, Qāyṭbāy endowed the whole of al-Summāqah, including the remaining portions owned by the public treasury (*Bayt al-Māl*). The endowment was authorized by the *muftī* Shaykh Shihāb al-Din, and the *Shāfi'ī* jurist Abū al-ʿAbbās of Ḥumṣ, in lieu of the judicial authorities in Damascus.

The comments in the margins declaring Sukayk and al-Summāqiyah to be disused [e.g., uninhabited] (*ʿāṭil*) are not contemporaneous with the endowment itself; external, independent sources attest to Sukayk's inhabited status at the time of endowment and for centuries thereafter. These comments may reflect a much later Ottoman examination of the status the Ḥaramayn's properties endowed by Qāyṭbāy throughout the Levant and Egypt, and provides one undated, though apparently synchronous testament to the abandonment of Sukayk and al-Summāqah, as part of the wider process of regression in settled life in the Golan during the 17th–18th centuries.

Administration

The deeds shed important light on the administrative structure of the northern Golan during the 1470s–1480s. Sukayk and al-Summāqiyah belonged to an administrative unit called al-Sha'arā of the

32 Petry, *Fractionalized Estates*.

33 Starting in the 12th century, hanbalī jurists from the environs of Nablus migrated to Damascus, establishing the suburb of al-Şāliḥiyah as the nexus of hanbalī jurisprudence in Bilād al-Shām for centuries to come. ʿUmar b. Muflīḥ, termed a Jerusalemite (*maqdisī*), might have been associated with this center. See: al-Şāliḥī, Muḥammad b. Ṭūlūn, *al-Qalā'id al-Jawhariyah fī Ta'rīkh al-Şāliḥiyah* (Damascus, 1980).

subdistrict of Bānyās of the Province (*Mamlaka*) of Damascus.

In the first half of the 14th century, al-Sha‘arā was an independent district (*wilāyah*), located northwest of the District of Nawá and southeast of the District of Bānyās. During this time its administrative seat was at a village called Hān or at al-Qunaiṭira.³⁴ According to al-Qalqashandī (d. 1418), al-‘Sha‘arā “was attached to Bānyās during the time of the Nāširids” (*wa-kānat fī al-ayyām al-Nāširiyah muḍāfah ilá Bānyās wa-hiya al-‘ān wilāyah munfarida*). While it is unclear which of the many Nāširs al-Qalqashandī refers to, it is clear that by his time it had again become a separate district (*wilāyah*).³⁵ Al-Qalqashandī indicates that al-Sha‘arā’s administrative seat was sometimes at al-Qunayṭirah, indicating that al-Sha‘arā reached as far southeast as that village.³⁶

Bānyās was an important fortress town during Mamluk times, with its military command located in Qal‘at al-Ṣubayba overlooking the town, on the border between the Provinces of Ṣafad and Damascus.³⁷ Thus, Sukayk and al-Summāqiyah formed part of the Bānyās hinterland, the extent of which is otherwise unrecorded.

Geography

The name “al-‘Sha‘arā” derives from the Arabic word for forest, or thicket, and refers to the wooded nature of the land north and east of Sukayk (Fig. 4.2). Writing about events in 551 AH/1156/7 CE, historian-scholar Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī (d.

1347/8 CE) described Bānyās’ al-Sha‘arā as “meadows for the horses” (*jishārāt al-khuyūl*) of the Crusaders.³⁸ Writing half a century later, al-Qalqashandī described the subdistrict (‘*amal*) of al-Sha‘arā as located southeast of Bānyās’ ‘*amal*, and its longer axis (*tūluhā*) between Bānyās and Mt. Hermon (*Jabal al-Thalj*).³⁹

Deed A provides a stylistically compelling description of Sukayk’s varied geography, which included “cultivable and non-cultivable lands (*arādī mu’tamal wa-mu’aṭṭal*), plains and rugged terrain, the upper parts and the lower parts (*aqāsī wa-adānī*),” along with several man-made installations listed under “economy.” Deed C informs us that the lands of al-Summāqah were territorially contiguous (*mulāṣaqah*) to the lands of Sukayk.

Settlement

Describing Bānyās’ al-Sha‘arā during the mid–13th century CE, Abū al-Maḥāsin Yūsuf ibn Taghrībirdī (d. 1470) painted a picture of “much land disused/uninhabited because of Crusader control of [the District] of Ṣafad” (*arḍ kathīrah ‘āṭilah bi-ḥukm istīlā’ al-Faranj ‘alá Ṣafad*). With the threat of Crusader raids removed after the conquest of Ṣafad (1266 CE), al-Zāhir Baybars sought out ways to repopulate al-Sha‘arā. “Some scholars gave *fatwās* to appropriate al-Sha‘arā as state/ eminent domain,” explained Ibn Taghrībirdī, but Baybars “did not heed their *fatwās*, and ordered the restoration of private properties to their former owners” (*fa-lamma fataḥa Ṣafad aftāhu ba’d al-‘ulamā’*

34 Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-‘Umarī, *Kitāb al-Ta’rīf bil-Muṣṭalah al-Sharīf* (Beirut, 1988), 228.

35 Al-Qalqashandī, *Kitāb Subḥ al-A’shá*, vol. 4, 207.

36 Al-Qalqashandī, *Kitāb Subḥ al-A’shá*, vol. 4, 108.

37 Amir, D. *Banias: Minei Kedem veAd Yamaynu* (From Ancient till Modern Times, Dan, 1968 [Hebrew]), 104–110. Al-Qalqashandī lists al-Ṣubayba as an independant *wilāyah* later attached to Bānyās. See Al-Qalqashandī, *Kitāb Subḥ al-A’shá*, vol. 4, 207.

38 Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī, *Ta’rīkh al-Islām wa-Wafiyāt al-Mashāhīr wal-A’lām* (Beirut, 1993), vol. 38, 7.

39 Al-Qalqashandī, *Kitāb Subḥ al-A’shá* 4, 108.



Figure 4.2. Al-Sha'arā, typical woodlands (adapted from Wikipedia, photo by Ronen Rothfarb, March 2014).

*bi-stiḥqāq al-Sha'āra, fa-lam yarja' ilā al-fatayā, wa-taqaddama amruhu annā man kāna lahu fihā mulk [sic] qadīm [sic] fal-yatassalamuhu).*⁴⁰

While the results of this decree are unspecified, we can presume that some of the northern Golan's original inhabitants did return, thus providing some continuity with pre-Crusader populations and settlement. Presumably, this included heterodox Muslim sects, like the Shi'ites who had inhabited Sukayk by the 14th century, and the Druze, whose presence around Mt. Hermon is documented since the times

of the *da'wah* (call to embrace their religion) in the early 11th century CE.⁴¹

A spatial analysis of the endowment deeds shows that in the last quarter of the 15th century, settlement in the northern Golan was thin and dispersed (see Fig. 4.3). The deeds list eleven toponyms which presumably represent independent fiscal units. Some are most likely inhabited villages (Sukayk, al-Summāqah, Buq'āthā, al-Kufayr, al-Jarash, al-Thaljīyāt, 'Ayn al-Ḥajal, Wāṣīt), or possibly *mazāri'* (al-Barjīyāt/Bārjīyāt). Some designations,

40 Abū al-Maḥāsīn Yūsuf ibn Taghrībirdī, *Kitāb al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wal-Qāhirah* (Egypt, u.d.), vol. 7, 180.

41 Hitti, P.K. *The Origins of the Druze People and Religion, with extracts from their sacred writings* (New York, 1928), 5; Marshall, S., Das, R., Pirooznia, M. and Elhaik, E. Reconstructing Druze Population History. *Scientific Reports*, 6/1 (2016), 1.

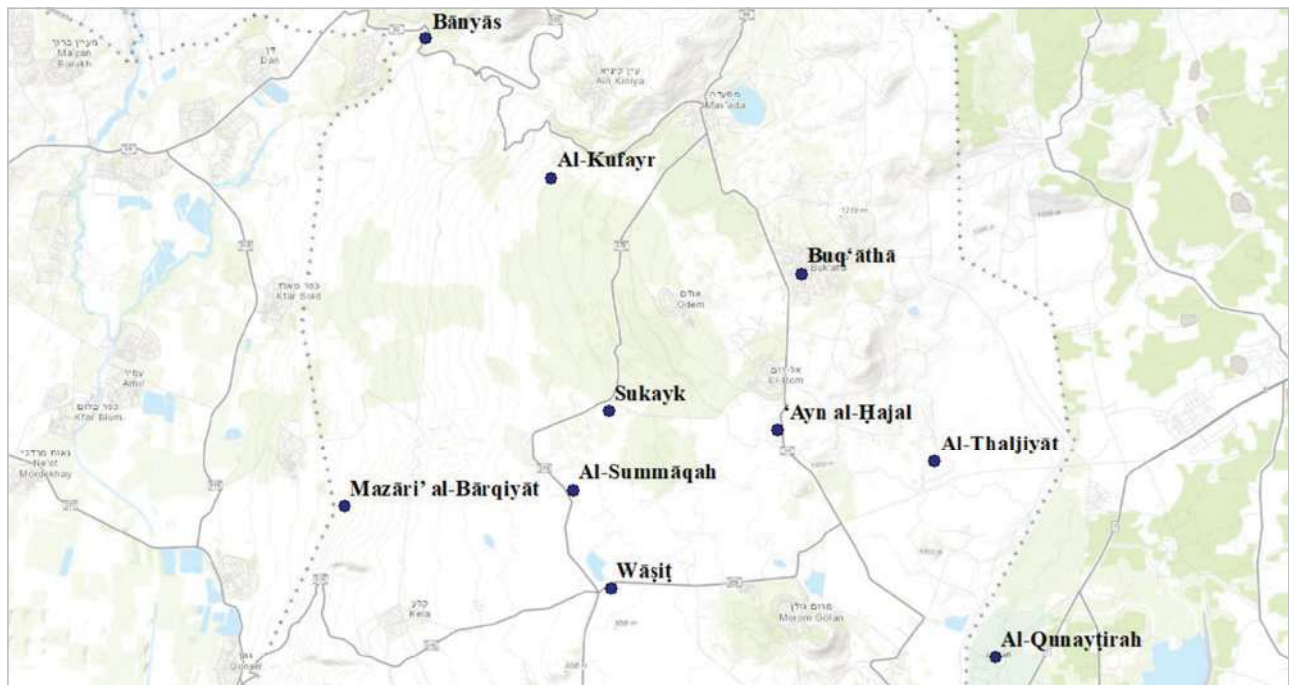


Figure 4.3. Identified locations mentioned in the endowment deeds, with al-Qunayṭira for reference.

like Rūs al-Jibāl (colloquially, “heads of the mountains” = peaks), are geographic in nature. Others, like “al-turbah”, lit. the cemetery/shrine, can signify either a prominent burial ground or a namesake village.⁴²

In comparison to its pre-1967 boundaries, Sukayk’s territory in the 15th century was much more extensive, and included many places later designated as separate settlements. The large distance between the identified sites and Sukayk indicates that no settlements existed in this area; thus testifying to sparse habitation (in the 1960s there were nine village territories, including Sukayk and al-Summāqah, within the same region, as shown in Fig. 4.4).⁴³

Mamluk sources make a clear socio-economic and cultural distinction between settled populations (*fellahin*) and nomads (*‘arab*, *‘urbān*). Deed A describes Sukayk as an “inhabited settlement” populated by sedentary fellahin residing in houses (*dimna ‘āmira bi-rasm sukna fallāḥihā*).⁴⁴ Nonetheless, the document also mentions Sukayk’s “summer quarters and winter quarters” (*maṣāif wa-mashātī*), indicating that Sukayk’s inhabitants engaged in transhumance — seasonal migration together with their livestock. Similar transhumance movements in the Golan are already referred to in ‘Uthmān b. As‘ad al-Munjī’s Na‘arān and Ḥaḍr endowment deed dated 634 AH/1237 CE.⁴⁵ Summer quarters and winter quarters are repeatedly mentioned for

42 No site with this name can be identified in available maps or publications. See for example: Schumacher, *The Jaulān*; Vilnay, *Golan ve-Ḥermon*.

43 Al-Jumhūriyah al-Sūriyah, Qaḍā‘ay al-Qunayṭirah wal-Zawiyah, kharīṭat taqaddum a‘māl al-masāḥah wal-taḥsin al-‘iqārī, 1:000,000, c. 1965 (Tel Hai Academy’s map archive).

44 Compare to similar phrasing in other Ayyubid/Mamluk waqfiyahs, like Na‘arān’s, in Khalaf, *Wathā‘iq*, 9.

45 Khalaf, *Wathā‘iq*, 9, note 1.

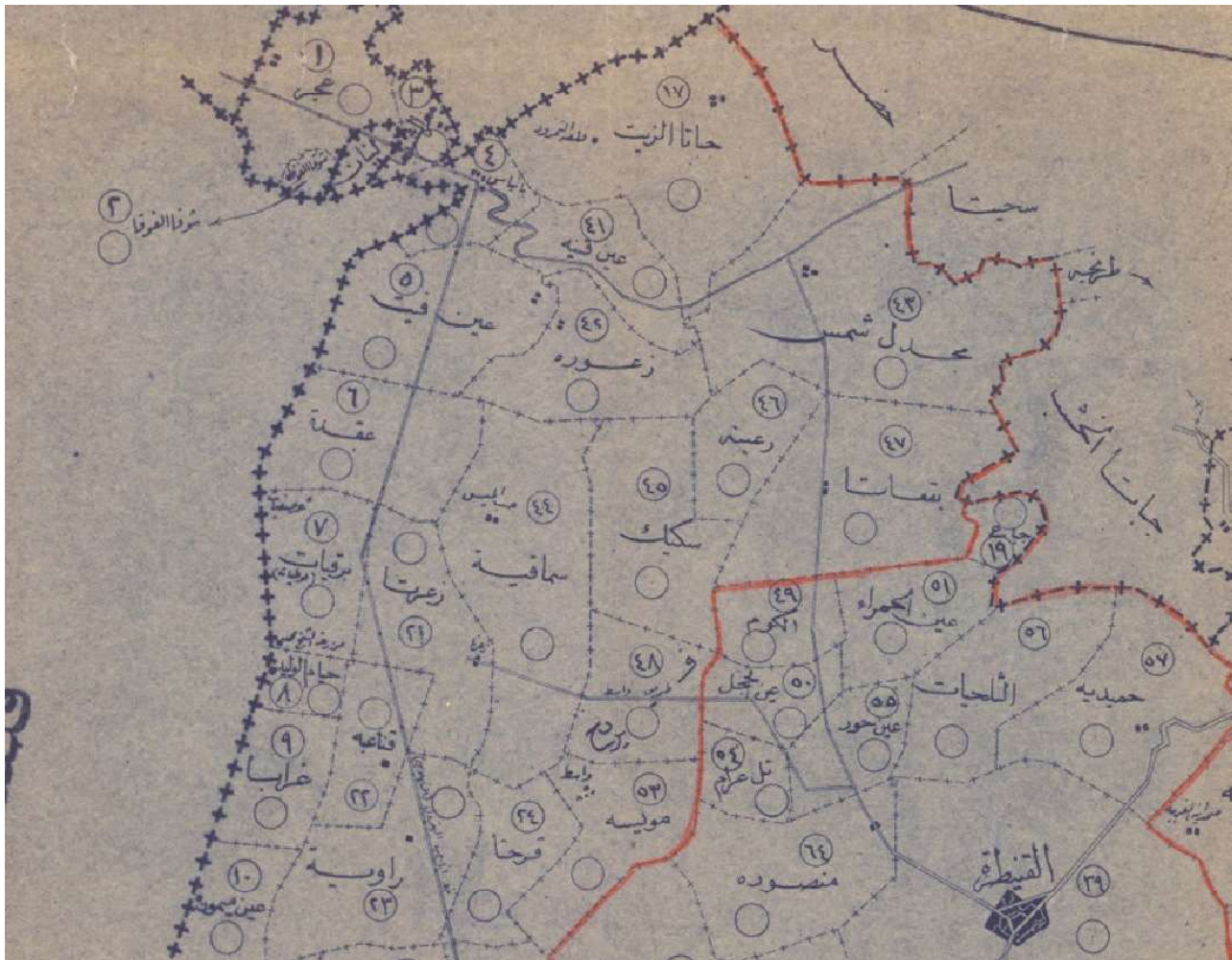


Figure 4.4. A Syrian cadastral map showing modern village territories around Sukayk, 1965.

some villages in Muṣṭaf Lālā's extensive *waqfiyah*.⁴⁶ This *waqfiyah* lists over 90 villages and *mazāri'* in the 1550s Golan, reflecting decades of dramatic demographic growth and settlement expansion in

the Southern Levant under Ottoman rule.⁴⁷ Transhumance remained a lasting phenomenon due to the Golan's harsh winter weather, which forced tribespeople until the 19th century to live in hundreds of

46 Mardom Bek, *Waqf al-Wazir*, al-Qunayṭirah (included, 38), but omitted for other villages, like Rāwiyah (p. 40).

47 For Palestine's southern coastal plain, see: Marom and Taxel, Ḥamama, 57 and Etkes, H. *Legalizing Extortion: Protection Payments, Property Rights, Taxation, and Economic Growth in Ottoman Gaza*, Working Paper (Stanford, 2008), 1-54. Stanford, 2008; for Lydda's hinterland, see: Marom, R. Lydda Sub-District: Lydda and its Countryside During the Ottoman Period. In Shavit, A. (ed.) *Lod- Diospolis — City of God*. Journal of the History, Archaeology and Heritage of Lod 8 (Lod, 2022), 109–116; for Marj ibn 'Āmir, see: Marom, R., Tepper, Y. and Adams, M.J. Lajjun: Forgotten Provincial Capital in Ottoman Palestine, *Levant* 55/2 (2023), 225; Bilād Ṣafad [the Galilee], see: Rhode, *Ṣafad*, 160–191; for the District of Jerusalem, see: Toledano, *The Sanjaq of Jerusalem*, 309.



Figure 4.5. Settlement around Sukayk in the 1880s (excerpt from Schumacher's map, *al-Jaulan*).

rudimentary “winter villages” in their tribal territory (Fig. 4.5).⁴⁸ These winter villages later came to be fixed and formed the nucleus of fully sedentary life in the 20th century Golan:

“As, however, the tent is not able to withstand the effect of the weather, especially the snow and cold, the inhabitants of these tent villages have erected out of the ruined old places which cover north and west Jaulan, and upon the sites

of them, wretched low stone huts with wooden roofs. Here they store the in-gathered pasturage and barley, as well as the straw during the rainy season, and take refuge therein during the fierce winter weather. These winter villages consist of from 6 to 30 huts, which in summer are completely deserted; they are closed up by a wooden door made out of a strong oak and serve only as haunts for the wild cats and foxes.”⁴⁹

48 In contrast to proper ‘villages’ west of the Jordan, villages in the territories of the Nu‘aym and Faḍl tribal confederacies in the northern Golan were only inhabited seasonally during winter.

49 Schumacher, *The Jaulan*, 55. Compare to Vilnay, *Golan ve-Hermon*.

Economy

Sukayk and al-Summāqah were agricultural villages whose residents utilized their varied terrains for various agricultural activities. Sukayk's properties included "cultivable [...] lands (*arādī mu'tamal wa-mu'aṭṭal*), plain and rugged terrain [...] summer quarters and winter quarters, threshing floors, pens/corrals, [...] and associated orchards (*wa-kurūm dhālika*." (Deed A). The mention of threshing floors — linked with grain production — implies the growing of field crops in the cultivable lands, while orchards suggest the planting of fruit trees for domestic consumption (e.g., olives for olive oil, figs and grapes for dried fruit).

Deed A's mention of pens or corrals (*ṣiyar*) implies animal husbandry. In describing al-Sha'arā and other regions of the "stony Jaulān", Schumacher noted that "although of little use agriculturally, it is all the more valuable as pasturage for the numerous herds of the Bedawin, and serves as the ideal of such a 'land of spring pasturage'."⁵⁰ Sukayk's residents probably used its rugged, uncultivable lands as

pastures, and by analogy to more modern cases, also grazed in the fields left fallow after harvest (*shilif*). Herding in Sukayk's extensive territory probably required sheepfolds for protecting the herds.⁵¹

The revenues collected (or expected to be collected) from Sukayk and al-Summāqah are not specified in the endowment deeds. However, the endowment reflects both the financial interests of distant actors in Sukayk and al-Summāqah, and the way that the Muslim polity formed a common legal and economic space with long-distance fiscal linkages. Thus, the two villages' production and revenues were encumbered to support religious establishments some 1,500 km away. Endowments to the Two Noble Sanctuaries were widespread, and by the 1600s they had become the major landholders in the Levant.⁵² Like in the later Ottoman era, these substantial imperial endowments were likely managed centrally by the state throughout the Mamluk era. Revenues from the endowments supported the purchase and transport of supplies for the people living in Mecca and Medina.⁵³

50 Schumacher, *The Jaulan*, 13.

51 Cf. the southeastern Golan (al-Zāwiyah al-Sharqiyah) in Schumacher, G. *Across the Jordan — Being an Exploration and Survey of Part of Hauran and Jaulan* (London, 1889), 3, 21.

52 Cf. Ipsirli and al-Tamīmī 1982, *Awqāf wa-'Amlāk al-Muslimīn*.

53 Behrens-Abouseif, Qāyṭbāy's Foundation in Medina; Al-Mu'ti, Piety and Profit.

APPENDIX: ARABIC TEXT

Deed A (Folio 12)*At the margins:* disused, Damascus*Underneath:* a colophon in the original handwriting

جميع الحصة التي مبلغها خمس قراريط من أربعة وعشرين
قراطا واحد وعشرون سهما وتلت سهم وربع سهم من قراط
واحد من اصل أربعة وعشرين قيراطا من قرية سكيك من
الشعرا من اعمال دمشق المحروسة

Main text

وجميع الحصة التي مبلغها خمس قراريط من أربعة
وعشرين قراطا واحد وعشرون سهما وتلت سهم وربع سهم
من قراط واحد من اصل أربعة وعشرين قيراطا ذلك من
أراضي ناحية قرية سكيك من الشعرا من عمل الحصة
بانياس من اعمال دمشق المحروسة المشتملة هذه القرية
علي أراضي معتمل ومعطل وسهل ووعر واقاصي واداني
مصايف

New page

ومشاتي وبيادر وصير ودمنه عامره برسم سكاني فلاحيتها
وكروم

ذلك ويحصر ذلك حدود أربعة * الحد القبلي ينتهي الى
اراضي قرية السماقة * والحد الشرقي ينتهي الى اراضي
قرية الثلجيات [الثلجيات] وتماه ارض قرية بقعاثا *
والحد الشمالي ينتهي الى اراضي قرية الكفير وتماه قرية
الجرش * والحد الغربي ينتهي الى اراضي مزارع البارقيات
ويتوصل الى هذه القرية [سكيك] من جهة الشرق وغيرها
يحد ذلك كله وحقوقه وطرقه وكل حق له داخل فيه وخارج
عنه وما يعرف بذلك وينسب اليه الجاري ذلك في ملك
مولانا الشريف المقام الواقف المنوه باسمه الشريف اعلاه
شرفه الله تعالى وعظمه بمقتضي مكتوب التبايع الشرعي
المورخ [المورخ] بالثامن والعشرون [SIC] من شعبان
المكرم سنة ست وثمانين وثمان مائة التابت مضمونه
المحكوم بموجبه بعد استيفا الشرايط الشرعية من سيدنا

ومولانا العبد الفقير الي الله تعالى قاضي القضاء نجم الدين
قاضي المسلمين وخالفة امير المومنين ابي حفص عمر بن
مفلح المقدسي الحنبلي الناظر في الاحكام الشرعية بالملكة
الشامية اعز الله تعالى احكامه واسبغ عليه انعامه بمقتضي
اسجالت الكريم المسطر بظاهره المورخ السادس من شهر
رمضان المعظم قدره وحرمة سنة ست وثمانين وثمان مائة
المنعد في الشرع الشريف وخصم هذا المكتوب بقضية هذا
الوقف خصما

New page

خصما شرعيا موافقا لتاريخه وشهوده

Deed B (Folio 89)*At the margins:* disused*Underneath:* a colophon in the original handwriting

حصة خمسة قراريط ونصف وربع وثمان قيراط ونصف
قيراط وربع قيراط من قيراط من أربعة وعشرين قيراطا
وحصة قيراط واحد ونصف قيراط من الحصة الديوانية من
قرية سكيك [سكيك]

Main text

وجميع الحصة التي مبلغها خمس قراريط ونصف وربع
وثمان قيراط ونصف قيراط وربع قيراط من قيراط من أربعة
وعشرين قيراطا شايبا ذلك في اراضي قرية سكيك [سكيك]
بالشعرا من الشام المحروس وحصة مبلغها قيراط واحد
ونصف قيراط من الحصة الديوانية من قرية سكيك [سكيك]
المذكورة ولكامل ذلك حدود اربعة * الحد القبلي ينتهي
الى قرية السماقة * والحد الشرقي ينتهي الي عين الجمل
وارض بقعاثا [without diacritics] * والحد الشامي
الى قرية الكفر [recte الكفير] * والحد الغربي ينتهي
الي البراقيات بحد ذلك وحقوقه وما يعرف بذلك وينسب
اليه وهذه الحصة خارجة عن الحصة الموقوفة [without
diacritics] قبل تاريخه بمقتضي كتاب الوقف المسطر
باعاليه الجاري في ملك الواقف

New page

نصره الله تعالى بمقتضي مستند شرعي مورخ العشرين من جمادي الاولي سنة اثنين وثمانين وثمان مائة التابت [الثابت] المحكوم بموجبه المنفذ [منفذ] في الشرع الشريف وخصم بقضية هذا الوقف خصما شرعيا موافقا لتاريخه وشهوده

Deed C (Folios 89–90)

At the margins: disused

Underneath: a colophon in the original handwriting

قرية السماقة الملاصقة لاراضي قرية سكك [سكك] من الشعرا من بانياس [without diacritics] من اعمال دمشق

Main text

جميع اراضي قرية السماقة الملاصقة لاراضي قرية سكك [سكك] المذكورة من الشعرا من بانياس من اعمال دمشق المحروسة ولكامل ارضينها [ارضينها] حدود أربعة الحد القبلي ينتهي الى اراضي واسط * والحد الشرقي ينتهي

الى التربة * والحد الشمالي ينتهي الى اراضي قرية سكك [سكك] والحد الغربي ينتهي الى اراضي روس الجبال الجاري من ذلك حصة مبلغها النصف والربع والثلث احد وعشرين قراطا من اربعة وعشرين قيراطا من اراضي قرية السماقة المذكورة في ملك الواقف نصره الله تعالى بمقتضي المستند الشرعي المحضر لشهوده المورخ بتواريخ اخرها السابع والعشرون من جمادي الاخرة سنة سبع وثمانين وثمان مائة التابت [الثابت] ذلك المحكوم بموجبه من سيدنا الشيخ شهاب الدين مفتي المسلمين ابي العباس المحصي [الحمصي] الشافعي خليفة الحكم العزيز بالشام المحروس اعز الله تعالى احكامه واحسن اليه بمقتضي اسجالة الكريم المسطر بظاهره المورخ بالسادس والعشرين من صفر سنة ثمان وثمانين

Ending on Folio 90

وثمان مائة والثلث الباقي من ذلك جار في أملاك بيت المال المحمود بشهادة من يعتبر ذلك في رسم شهادته اخر الفصل الذي سيسطر بعد