



**Gardens of Damascus:  
Landscape and the Culture of Recreation in the Early Modern  
Period (Return)**

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## **Thesis Abstract**

This is a study of the urban and cultural history of Ottoman Damascus in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Its main concern is the socio-cultural changes that took place in the early modern period, which gardens played a role in facilitating and enabling. The thesis does not cover all social changes; it covers only those which are associated with gardens and their uses. With reference to recent studies of the Ottoman capital, Istanbul, which revealed dynamic developments in social practices in the public domain, this study explores whether similar changes occurred in the provincial centre of Damascus. These changes include the emergence of new social habits, such as coffee drinking, smoking, and entertaining in public, which were associated with the emergence of new urban institutions and facilities, such as coffee houses, restaurants, and leisure gardens. The study argues that during the early modern period, and in resonance with what was happening in Istanbul, the public spaces, urban fabric, and the leisure gardens in Damascus did play a role in stimulating a new vibrant culture of public recreation.

The study discusses the urban development of the city and especially the different types of Damascene gardens, their urban furniture and amenities, social gatherings, and the cultural life that flourished within the gardens and public spaces. The examination is based on primary Arabic sources, which include historical accounts, anthologies of poetry, biographical dictionaries, chronicles, and law-court records of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The thesis is divided into two sections: analytical and documentary. The first section includes the first three chapters, offering a fresh examination of the different garden typologies in Damascus and the urban development of the city in the early modern period. This section analyses how the urban facilities found in Damascene gardens contributed to a culture of recreation, which subsequently changed the physical and social fabric of Damascus and contributed to the emergence of the public sphere. The second section comprises one chapter which provides comprehensive new documentation of Damascene gardens traced from a wide range of primary historical sources, and the production of a map of Ottoman Damascus in the early modern period, showing the names and locations of the known gardens and other natural places of recreation.

**Thesis Declaration**

NAME: GEORGINA HAFTEH

PROGRAM: MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

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This research has been written with funding from the University of Adelaide and a Discovery Grant from the Australian Research Council (ARC). I am thankful to the University of Adelaide, the School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture and Urban Design, and the Centre of Asian and Middle Eastern Architecture (CAMEA), for giving me this opportunity to pursue my research in Australia.

Thank you to all staff members in the law-court archives in Damascus, especially Dr. Ghassan Abud, Mr. Akram al-Ulabi and Mr. Hani Khayr. Special thanks to the Institut Français du Proche-Orient's (Ifpo), especially to Dr. Sarab Atasi, Prof. Jean-Paul Pascual and Mr. Issam Hajjar, who offered a great assistance in preparing the map for this thesis, entitled —the current map”.

At a personal level, thank you to my family in Syria, my father, my mother, my sisters, without whom this thesis could not have been pursued. Despite the current events in Syria and the enormous distance between us, they constantly maintained their support and love. I am grateful to Andrew Kwitko, who offered an amazing amount of help and support throughout all this process. He has graciously endured many phone conversations in my moments of mental and emotional exhaustion. Andrew also proof-read the final drafts of the work and offered invaluable assistance correcting the grammar and punctuation. Finally, I am grateful to have known Shayda Mortal, Alex Mortal, Somati Urich, Sada Panahli, and Jorge Lopez Aceves, my friends in Australia: my home for the last couple of years. I cannot express my sentiments enough when I say that they have made these the most memorable years of my life.

## **Note to the Reader**

All translations of Arabic sources mentioned in the thesis are mine except for the translated texts by others as identified in the footnotes.

In transliteration, I have followed the *IJMES* (the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*). All dates are of the Common Era (CE), except when there are two dates between brackets. In the case of (H/CE), H refers to Hijrī and CE refers to Common Era.

Full details of the sources are given when referred to for the first time in the footnote, afterwards an abbreviated citation is used.



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## **Introduction**

### ***Aims of the Study***

This research focuses on the urban and cultural history of Ottoman Damascus during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Its main aim is to show how the development of new social and cultural practices associated with coffeehouses and leisure gardens led to transformations in the city's public life. It examines the typologies of the Damascene gardens that proliferated along the river Barada, and the urban, commercial, and religious facilities commonly found within them. The research takes into account recent studies of the Ottoman capital, Istanbul, which revealed dynamic developments in the social practices of the public domain.<sup>1</sup> It explores whether or not the Ottoman culture and the social changes that occurred in Istanbul, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, had resonance in Damascus. It focuses on how the city experienced changes that reflect the opulence and prosperity of the Ottoman rule, showing the role of urban institutions and facilities in the adoption of new socio-cultural activities, such as coffee drinking, smoking, and entertaining in public. It shows how the development of new social and cultural practices associated with coffeehouses and leisure gardens had contributed to a culture of recreation that transformed the physical and social fabric of the city's public sphere. It also shows how the city had continued to undergo a series of social and urban developments, reflecting vibrant lifestyle based around the city's gardens and public spaces.

### ***The City and its Natural Environment***

Damascus often referred to as the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world, has witnessed changes at the hands of many civilisations. In 921/1516, when Mamlūk Sultan Qānṣūh al-Ghūrī was defeated in the battle of Marj Dābiq by Sultan Salīm I, Damascus came under the control of the Ottomans. Vestiges of Ottoman rule can still be perceived in the physical structure of Damascus today.

Four centuries of Ottoman rule continued the previous transformation of the urban fabric of Damascus from a Roman city into a Muslim city. The grid of the Roman era (Fig 0.1)

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<sup>1</sup> For studies on Istanbul, see Literature Review. The scope of this research does not include a comparative study between Istanbul and Damascus; it only uses the socio-urban developments in early modern Istanbul as a background and a point of reference.

was transformed into an organic and maze-like street pattern (Fig 0.2), broken up into numerous compartments, with a multitude of small cul-de-sacs.

Even outside the city wall, the development of new suburbs was guided by the increasingly predominant rules of an Islamic way of life. Examples of such suburbs include: al-Ṣaliḥiyya, al-Ḥayyā, Sūq Sārūjā and al-Ḥamāra, located north and northwest of the city and al-Qanawāt and al-Mīdān, located on the south western edge of Damascus.<sup>2</sup>

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**Figure 0.1** The old city of Damascus before the Arab conquest showing the predominant grid pattern.  
(Source: Dorothee Sack, *Dimashq: Taṭawwur wa-Bunyān Madīna Mashriqiyya Islāmiyya*, 2005).

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<sup>2</sup> See for information on Islamic cities: Salma Jayyusi, Renata Holod, Attilio Petruccioli, and Andr Raymond, eds., *The City in the Islamic World* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2008); Attilio Petruccioli, *After Amnesia: Learning from the Islamic Mediterranean Urban Fabric* (Bari, Italy: ICAR, 2007); Jamel Akbar, *Crisis in the Built Environment: The Case of the Muslim City* (Singapore: Concept Media Pte Ltd, 1988); Attilio Petruccioli, ed. *Gardens in the Time of the Great Muslim Empires: Theory and Design* (Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1997); Amira Bennison and Alison Gascoigne, eds., *Cities in the Pre-Modern Islamic World: The Urban Impact of Religion, State and Society* (London: Routledge, 2007); Basim Hakim, *Arabic-Islamic Cities: Building and Planning Principles*, 2nd ed. (London: Kegan Paul International, 1988); Hisham Mortada, *Traditional Islamic Principles of Built Environment* (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003).

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**Figure 0.2** The old city of Damascus, 1924, shows the organic urban form.

(Source: *Kharīṭat al-Shurṭa, –Police map,–* 1924).

When examining the expansion and development of the city’s natural and urban environments, it is probable that Damascus witnessed architectural prosperity under the rule of the Ottomans. The Ottomans placed many of their prominent monuments outside the walled city, especially in gardens and within the natural landscape. For instance, in the eighteenth century when the al-‘Aẓm family came to power, Damascus benefited from an increase in wealth and the subsequent development and construction of structures like *khāns*, *sūqs* and palaces.<sup>3</sup>

The city’s growth could have not occurred without the Baradā river, which provided Damascus with an essential source of water. As Ross Burns affirms, —“if there was no Baradā river, there could be no Damascus.”<sup>4</sup> Without the Baradā river, Ghūṭat Dimashq, the agriculturally rich land surrounding Damascus, (Figs 0.3, 0.4) would not have provided feasible land for farming and other agricultural cultivation. Nor would these

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<sup>3</sup> Numerous religious and commercial buildings were built under Ottoman rule, for instance, Sūq and Khān al-Ḥarīr, Sūq Juqmuq, Khān Sulaymān Bāshā, and Ḥammām al-Qīshānī as well as the al-Darwīshiyya complex that contained a religious school (*madrasa*), a school for children (*kuttāb*), a mosque and a mausoleum. Also, Khān As‘ad Bāshā, Sūq al-Jadīd, and al-‘Aẓm Palace were all constructed under the rule of al-‘Aẓm family. Eliss eff, —“Dimashq,” in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2: 286-287.

<sup>4</sup> Ross Burns, *Damascus: A History* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), xvii-xviii.

areas have provided the aesthetic backdrop of Damascene recreational events (*tanazzuh/sayrān*), which eventually developed as sites for entertainment and recreation. The natural expansion of the city, through the development of the al-Ghūṭa gardens and their surrounding landscapes played an important role in the city's growth and development in the late Mamlūk period and continued into the Ottoman period. Throughout history the Ghūṭat Dimashq was recognised as one of the most famous places to visit. For example, al-Badrī cites, in his text on the beauty of Damascus, *Nuzhat al-Anām fī Maḥāsin al-Shām*: —Visitors from around the world unanimously agreed that the best four gardens on earth are: Sughd Samarqand, Shi‘b Bawwān, Nahr al-Ubulla, and Ghūṭat Dimashq... I visited them all and found the most virtuous one to be Ghūṭat Dimashq... It is like paradise that has been adorned and presented on earth.”<sup>5</sup>

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**Figure 0.3** The city of Damascus surrounded by al-Ghūṭa, taken from the Qāsyūn mountain north of the city.

(Source: Ministry of Information, *la Syrie d'aujourd'hui*).

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<sup>5</sup> Al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 309-10. The editor Ibrāhīm Ṣāliḥ mentioned that Sughd Samarqand, Shi‘b Bawwān and Nahr al-Ubulla are three rivers surrounded by gardens, water and palaces.

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**Figure 0.4** Damascus geographical features; Qāsyūn mountain (D.J. Kassioun), Baradā river and al-Ghūta.  
(Source: Institut français du Proche-Orient (IFPO)).

### ***Urban Development and Decline Theory***

It is commonly believed that the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were situated between two remarkable centuries. The sixteenth and nineteenth centuries are well documented by historians who believed that the Ottoman period had reached its peak of social and urban development under the rule of Sulaymān the Magnificent and therefore

the most glamorous stage of Ottoman rule was considered to be the sixteenth century.<sup>6</sup> In contrast, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have yet to receive adequate scholarly attention.<sup>7</sup> After the sixteenth century, historians commonly describe a period of stagnation characterised by decline, ineffectiveness, weakness, and sheer laziness. The phrase “Ottoman decline theory” has been used in conjunction with analysis of post sixteenth century Ottoman history. It was considered that this period of decline continued until the period of modernisation in the nineteenth century.<sup>8</sup> However, as research into Ottoman history has recently gained more popularity and attention, questions have arisen regarding the accuracy of the “Ottoman decline theory,” and modern scholars have started to dismantle this notion of decline. Their studies have focused on the hidden realities of the Ottoman period, rather than on simply reiterating the testimonies of Ottoman failures.

### ***Research Method***

This thesis focuses on creating an account of the urban and cultural history of Damascus during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Primary Arabic sources were interpreted to shed light on the landscape architecture and social practices that occurred in Damascus during this period of history.

The first stage of this research involved the collection of primary Arabic sources including anthologies, chronicles, biographical dictionaries, historical accounts, and various cases from the law-court records of the Ottoman period. The data collection also contains secondary sources including Arabic and non-Arabic literature, written by contemporary scholars, from the twentieth and twenty first centuries, as well as accounts

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<sup>6</sup> Shirine Hamadeh, *The City's Pleasures: Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2008).

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>8</sup> For information about the “Ottoman Decline Theory,” its proponents and opponents see Dana Sajdi, “Decline, its Discontent and Ottoman Cultural History” in *Ottoman Tulips, Ottoman Coffee: Leisure and Lifestyle in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Dana Sajdi (London; New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007). As Dana Sajdi mentioned, Albert Hourani was the one of the earliest to question the theory of Ottoman decline and to propose a new contradictory view of the period of history. See Albert Hourani, “The Changing Face of the Fertile Crescent in the XVIIIth Century,” *Studia Islamica* 8 (1957), 89-122. Scholars who support the theory of Ottoman decline often use the progress of modernization in the West as a standard with which to compare progress (or the perceived lack of it) in the Ottoman Empire; Donald Quataert stated that “they placed this period as it had been incapable of westernizing properly.” See Quataert’s debate about the paradigm of Ottoman decline in “Ottoman History Writing and Changing Attitudes Towards the Notion of Decline,” *History Compass* 1: 1 (2003), 2.

from travellers, drawings and maps. A visit to Damascus was essential to collect the required data.<sup>9</sup>

After the completion of the data collection, qualitative analysis, interpretation and discussion of the information gathered from the primary and secondary sources were undertaken. This stage of interpretation and analysis is based on several recent studies about the Ottoman period.

### ***Literature Review***

Recent studies on the urban and cultural activities associated with public spaces have shown that Ottoman societies, both in Ottoman and Arab cities, were far more dynamic and socially progressive than what was previously believed. A review of literature focusing on the Ottoman period in Istanbul, specifically the eighteenth century, shows that recently there has been a burgeoning interest in exploring the city's urban developments, particularly gardens and natural landscapes, which were associated with prominent social practices.

In 2008, in her book, *The City's Pleasures: Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century*, Shirine Hamadeh addressed the question of how the architecture, landscape and urban fabric of eighteenth century Istanbul served to enhance the development of intellectual culture. She examined how changes to the ways in which the social classes interacted together had led to the development of new forms of public spaces. Hamadeh also introduced the concept of *décloisonnement*, a French word meaning —opening up.” She used this term in

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<sup>9</sup> My research trip was conducted between December 2010 and February 2011. I visited the al-Asad Library (the national library), the al-Ādīliyya Library, the National Museum's library, the Institut Français du Proche-Orient's (Ifpo) library. An essential part of the research gathered during the Damascus field trip was sourced from the Ottoman law-court records, today the centre of historical documents, which is located in the house of Khālid al-Āzm. 22 volumes that covered the seventeenth century and 225 volumes that covered the eighteenth century were discovered. The 247 volumes referenced composed 15% of the total number of volumes that recorded the Ottoman period in general. Each volume contained numerous documents, in some cases exceeding 800. The volumes were ordered by number and scanned in high resolution for the purpose of examination. Due to the differences in the style of handwriting used during this period, combined with the variations in the record keeping styles used by those responsible for the collation of these documents, great patience was required to correctly read and translate much of this recorded history. Moreover, some documents were not scanned properly which led to incomplete translations. These documents are not accompanied by any table of contents, nor are they arranged according to subject. All volumes, however, are organised according to year and refer to the name of the court from which they are derived. By concentrating on three courts, namely, al-Bāb, al-Mīdān and al-Sālihiyya, the number of volumes of research most relevant to this study was subsequently reduced to 40.



reference to the changes the city of Istanbul was undergoing, when the Ottoman court returned to the capital in 1703ce.<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile in 2007, a series of papers exploring the cultural phenomena of the Ottoman Tulip period was addressed in *Ottoman Tulips, Ottoman Coffee: Leisure and Lifestyle in the Eighteenth Century*. This book, edited by Dana Sajdi, discussed the common hypothesis on the theory of Ottoman decline, greater socialisation as a result of a developing culture of coffeehouses, the rise of secular print, and greater use of urban spaces for public celebrations.<sup>11</sup>

These studies have enhanced the understanding of Ottoman urban history and the intellectual culture of Istanbul, showing that during the eighteenth century, the culture of the city flourished. The development of new public spaces, architectural monuments, extravagant fountains, royal palaces and gardens, was undertaken. Many of these new spaces and monuments were adorned with tulips, a reason why this period in Istanbul has historically been described as the Tulip period. These architectural developments were followed by an increase in the vibrancy of social life within the city's public spaces. Furthermore, greater intermingling between the various socio-economic classes of the city began to occur. These studies show that the social and economic transformations of the Tulip period were indications of the vibrancy of Istanbul's society, which stand in contrast to the commonly held theory that this period was overshadowed with decline and ineptitude.

In addition to the studies by Hamadeh and Sajdi, there are a series of articles, published under the title *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire*.<sup>12</sup> These articles contribute to the discussion on the early modern/pre-modern period of Ottoman history and question the degree to which the Ottoman Empire resembled European society. Furthermore, the articles discuss the characteristics of early modern Europe and explore whether or not similar characteristics were found in the Ottoman Empire. For example, the rise of nation states, greater individualism, the economic activity and possessions of

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<sup>10</sup> Hamadeh, *The City's Pleasures*, 3-16. For the same argument, see also Hamadeh's article —Public Space and the Garden Culture of Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century,” in *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire*, ed. Virginia H. Aksan and Daniel Goffman (UK Cambridge University Press, 2007).

<sup>11</sup> Dana Sajdi, *Ottoman Tulips, Ottoman Coffee: Leisure and Lifestyle in the Eighteenth Century* (London; New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007).

<sup>12</sup> Virginia H. Aksan and Daniel Goffman, eds., *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

women, their appearance in public, the erosion of strict class systems, the emergence of a greater secular life, and the public questioning of political rulers.<sup>13</sup>

One of the most recent contributions to the literature on the Ottoman gardens of Istanbul is an article by Walter Andrews, “Gardens—Real and Imagined—in the Social Ecology of Early Modern Ottoman Culture”,<sup>14</sup> published in 2008. In this article, Andrews introduces the concept of the “cultural ecology of Ottoman society,” which referred to the social interaction within the gardens of Ottoman Istanbul. He refers to a series of requirements necessary to facilitate this level of social interaction, which he describes as a “chain.” Andrews’ chain starts from an urban park, public or private garden, where inhabitants of the city would gather. Inevitably, informal social interactions between visitors would occur, providing the next link in the chain. Andrews explains that this then leads to social gatherings, fostering increased social intercourse and cultural communication. This would therefore encourage a spike in cultural development, completing the final link in Andrews’ chain. At this point a culture of social exchange, garden leisure and entertainment would be established.

All the aforementioned studies are based on chronicles, manuscripts, poetry and other Ottoman historical accounts.<sup>15</sup> They focus on a period of Ottoman history that was dynamic and vibrant, during which secular recreational activities increased within the gardens, coffeehouses, and other public spaces of Istanbul.

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<sup>13</sup> Virginia Aksan and Daniel Goffman, “Introduction: Situating the Early Modern Ottoman World,” in *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire*, 1-12.

<sup>14</sup> Walter Andrews, “Gardens—Real and Imagined—in the Social Ecology of Early Modern Ottoman Culture,” in *Gardens and Imagination: Historical Forms and Cultural Roles*, ed. Michel Conan (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2008). See also: Walter Andrews, *Poetry’s Voice, Society’s Song: Ottoman Lyric Poetry* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1985); Michel Conan, ed. *Middle East Garden Traditions: Unity and Diversity: Questions, Methods, and Resources in a Multicultural Perspective* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Trustees for Harvard University, 2007).

<sup>15</sup> For further information on similar studies see Karen Barkey, *Empire of Difference: The Ottomans in Comparative Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Peter Sluglett, *The Urban Social History of the Middle East 1750-1950*, 1st ed. (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2008); Can Erimtan, *Ottomans Looking West? The Origins of the Tulip Age and its Development in Modern Turkey*, (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007); Rhoads Murphey, *Studies on Ottoman Society and Culture, 16th-18th Centuries* (U.K: Burlington, VT: Ashgate Pub. Co., 2007); Heghnar Zeitlian Watenpaugh, *The Image of an Ottoman City: Imperial Architecture and Urban Experience in Aleppo in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2004); Gabriel Piterberg, *An Ottoman Tragedy: History and Historiography at Play* (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 2003); Madeline Zilfi, *Women in the Ottoman Empire: Middle Eastern Women in the Early Modern Era* (Leiden; New York: Brill, 1997).

There are also a number of significant studies focusing on the urban and recreational culture of Ottoman Damascus, though each study approaches the topic from a specific area of interest. All these studies use primary Arabic sources written during the Ottoman period of Damascus. Samer Akkach offers significant insight into the period of seventeenth and eighteenth century Damascus. His articles, published in 2007 and 2010,<sup>16</sup> explore the culture of entertainment in Damascus, with a focus on the *Wine of Bābil* anthology,<sup>17</sup> written by a seventeenth-eighteenth century scholar and Sufi master, ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī. Through analysis of al-Nābulusī’s poems and other primary Arabic sources from the Ottoman period in Damascus, Akkach examined partly the social and urban history of Damascus including the gardens and the surrounding landscapes as well as cultural gatherings between the elites, which included al-Nābulusī and the ordinary people of Damascus. His study provides an important point of departure for future research in this field.

Significant studies written by James Grehan, entitled “Smoking and Early Modern Sociability: The Great Tobacco Debate in the Ottoman Middle East,” and *Everyday Life and Consumer Culture in Eighteenth Century Damascus* written in 2006 and 2007 respectively,<sup>18</sup> examine in-depth the link between the materials consumed during everyday life (such as fashion, drink, bread and other common foods) and the cultural transformation across the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Ottoman Damascus. As a part of his contribution, he examined the role of coffee and tobacco as luxurious commodities that enhanced social changes. Nevertheless, Grehan’s studies do not examine the macro level of urban culture. Rather, he focuses on micro materials of everyday urban life and consumer’s habits.

Muhannad Mubayḍīn offered a further contribution to scholarship on Ottoman Damascus, in his book *Thaqāfat al-Tarḥ wa-l-Madīna al-‘Arabiyyah fī al-Azmina al-Ḥadītha*:

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<sup>16</sup> Samer Akkach, “The Wine of Bābil: Landscape, Gender and Poetry in Early Modern Damascus,” *Literature & Aesthetics* 17: 1 (July, 2007), 107-124; Samer Akkach, “Lisure Gardens, Secular Habits: The Culture of Recreation in Ottoman Damascus,” *METU JFA* 27: 1 (2010), 67-80.

<sup>17</sup> ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī, (d.1143/1731), *Burj Bābil wa Shadū al-Balābil*, ed. Aḥmad al-Jundī (Dimashq: Dār al-Maʿīfa, 1988).

<sup>18</sup> James Grehan, “Smoking and Early Modern Sociability: The Great Tobacco Debate in the Ottoman Middle East Seventeenth to Eighteenth Centuries,” *The American Historical Review* III, no. 5 (December 2006); James Grehan, *Everyday Life and Consumer Culture in Eighteenth Century Damascus* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007).

*Dimashq al-‘Uthmāniyya Namūzajan* (The Culture of Recreation and the Arabic Cities in Modern Times: Ottoman Damascus as a Case Study),<sup>19</sup> published in 2009. His study drew primarily on Arabic sources and the law-court records from Ottoman Damascus.

Mubayḍīn’s study comprises a general survey of the variety of recreational activities that typically took place in Damascus, including singing, dancing, smoking, drinking coffee and visiting gardens. His book also briefly discusses the debate of permitting and allowing of drinking coffee, dancing and singing during the period of Ottoman rule.

Despite the available scholarship about Damascus during the Ottoman period, they have rarely been used to address the subject of —landscape architecture” in any significant way.<sup>20</sup> Little is known about the urban history of Damascus in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, especially in relation to the gardens, landscapes and public spaces. Therefore, this research examines how the use of the public spaces, for recreational and intellectual pursuits, acted as a catalyst for social development. This examination takes into account Hamadeh’s concept of *décloisonnement* and sheds light on whether Damascus witnessed similar social and cultural changes to those that happened in eighteenth century Istanbul. This examination is underpinned by the fact that Damascus and Istanbul were connected both culturally and politically under Ottoman rule.

The Ottoman tradition of describing the urban and natural environment of the city, as well as the city’s social life, was conducted primarily through the miscellaneous writings of the city’s inhabitants. Arabic accounts rely on historians’ writings from the Ottoman period and other earlier periods, such as the Mamlūk period. These sources include: historical accounts (*twārīkh*), such as al-Badrī’s *Nuzhat al-Anām* and Ibn Kannān’s *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*. Anthologies of Poetry (*dīwāns*), such as, al-Nābulusī’s *Khamrat Bābil*, biographical dictionaries (*tarājim*), such as al-Murādī’s *Silk al-Durar*, and chronicles (*yawmiyyāt*), such as al-Budayrī’s *Hawādith Dimashq al-Yawmiyya* and Ibn

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<sup>19</sup> The profession of Landscape Architecture was founded in the late nineteenth century in North America. However, I use this terminology given the discipline within which this thesis is written today and the way this discipline enables the interpretation of the spaces discussed.

<sup>20</sup> Muhannad Mubayḍīn, *Thaqāfat al-Tarfīh wa-l-Madīna al-‘Arabiyya fi al-Azmina al-Ḥadītha: Dimashq al-‘Uthmāniyya Namūzajan* (Bayrūt: al-Dār al-‘Arabiyya li-l-‘Ulūm, 2009). See also: Yūsuf Jamīl Nu\_aysa, *Mujtama‘ Madīnat Dimashq fī al-Fatra mā Bayn 1186-1256h/1772-1840ce*, 2 vols. (Dimashq: Dār Ṭlās li-l-Dirāsa wa-l-Nashr, 1968); Linda Schatkowski Schilcher, *Dimashq fī al-Qarnayn al-Thāmin ‘Ashar wa al-Tāsi ‘Ashar*, trans. \_Anr al-Mallāh and Dīnā al-Mallāh (Dimashq: Dār al Jumhūriyya, 1998).

Kannān's *Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya*. Finally, and most importantly, the Ottoman law-court archives of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are utilised to provide essential information about the urban development of the city and especially the gardens and public spaces.<sup>21</sup> In summary, the primary Arabic sources for this study provide information on the different types of Damascene gardens, their urban furniture and amenities, social gatherings, and the cultural life that flourished within the gardens and public spaces of Damascus.

### ***Thesis Outline***

The thesis is divided into two sections: analytical and documentary. The first section (part 1) includes the first three chapters. Chapters 1 and 2 provide information from original sources about different garden typologies in Damascus and shows that the city underwent significant urban developments. This development resulted in the division of the Damascene landscape into separate natural and urban components. The urban landscape includes recreational gardens and suburbs, fully equipped with the necessary urban facilities for intellectual and entertainment purposes. Whereas, the natural landscape was predominantly used for agriculture purposes, however, it also served as a place for Damascene gatherings and the sensory enjoyment of the landscape.

Chapters 1 and 2 also examine the importance of urban furniture, urban equipment and other facilities that were established in gardens and public spaces for the preparation and facilitation of greater social interactions. These facilities varied from religious and educational institutions, such as mosques and schools, to commercial structures, such as coffeehouses, public baths and palaces for recreation. Detailed and original information regarding the public spaces, gardens and the facilities found within these areas are included in these chapters.

In addition, this study focuses on how authors, poets, historians, and chroniclers, from the Ottoman period, saw, perceived and valued their own urban spaces and culture. Furthermore, the first two chapters illustrate how extravagant architecture, such the elite's palaces, played a key role in furthering the emergence of this culture of recreation, by

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<sup>21</sup> See Chapter one for detailed information about the primary Arabic sources.

providing meeting places suitable for the pursuit of entertainment.

The first section (Part A) of this research, found in chapter 3, sheds new light on the role of public spaces, including gardens, coffeehouses, streets and restaurants, as sites of interaction in the Damascene society.

This section deals with the social life which flourished in the gardens and other public spaces. It shows how during the Ottoman period in Damascus, the public spaces, architectural structures and the wider landscape played a role in the rise of a social atmosphere. This rise of the public atmosphere encouraged development as a result of cultural exchange, echoing Hamadeh's concept of *décloisonnement*.

Chapter 3 of this study examines how the public spaces of Damascus offered visitors a place for recreation and the enjoyment of nature, and investigates the social values that related to recreational activities at this time. Examining the social and cultural practices provides evidence that this period of Ottoman history in Damascus was not a period of decline, as many historians have previously assumed.

Chapter 3 also addresses whether the “opening up” of Istanbul's “social/cultural ecology,”<sup>22</sup> during the eighteenth century, was mirrored in the Ottoman city of Damascus. It also examines to what extent Damascus had undergone social and cultural transformations that shared links and similarities with the changes that occurred in Istanbul.

In Chapter 3, the study also addresses the question of whether the developments seen within the culture of recreation, during this period, resulted in new and controversial styles of gathering, including intermingling between the elite and common classes, greater interactions, and fraternisation between the genders.

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<sup>22</sup> For clarification of the term “social/cultural ecology,” see Walter Andrews, “Gardens—Real and Imagined—in the Social Ecology of Early Modern Ottoman Culture,” cited above.

Chapter 3 also addresses how changes in Damascene culture resulted in a greater appearance of women in Ottoman society and how females enjoyed a heightened sense of individuality, independence and increases in professional responsibilities.

The second section comprises one chapter, chapter 4, which provides comprehensive new documentation of Damascene gardens traced from a wide range of primary historical sources, and the production of a map of Ottoman Damascus in the early modern period, showing the names and locations of the known gardens and other natural places of recreation. This map was created through the analysis of a range of historical records from this period. A list of Damascene gardens visited by people during the Ottoman period is also provided.

In summary, this research endeavours to show how the development of public spaces and their urban facilities in Ottoman Damascus provided the necessary catalyst for important events: an increase in socialisation, which was centred around public spaces and which in turn resulted in cultural progress within the Damascene social sphere. As a result of this research, this period of Damascene history is not viewed through the previously accepted belief systems of —social stagnation,” but rather as a vibrant and important period, during which a wide range of social practices developed.

## **PART I: READING LANDSCAPE**



## **Chapter 1: Sources and Conceptual Parameters**

### **1.1 Survey of Primary Arabic Sources**

This study examines specific aspects of the socio-urban history of Damascus during the Ottoman period, particularly in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It focuses on the recreational and public spaces of Damascus, in particular the Damascene gardens.

Examining the development of the gardens over time, the study shows how the local population utilised the gardens and how they served as important centres of social interaction and communication.

Primarily, this thesis relies on the Arabic accounts of historians from the Ottoman period. These accounts have been used extensively to conduct historical, geographical, social, and cultural research. The urban and intellectual history of Damascus during Ottoman rule remains a poorly researched period. These important sources have rarely been used to address —landscape architecture” in any significant way. Little is known about the development of the urban history of Damascus during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Even less is known about the city’s gardens, the wider landscape surrounding the city, and how the use of these areas impacted upon the population’s recreational and intellectual pursuits.

The Ottoman tradition of describing the urban and natural environment of a city, as well as the city’s social life, was conducted primarily through the miscellaneous writings of the city’s inhabitants, as well as travellers. As pictorial representations were not common among Arab writers in this era, any significant visual illustrations of Damascus remain mainly the work of foreign visitors.

In Istanbul a variety of illustrations and texts relating to the subject of the city’s gardens and landscapes have been discovered and analysed by historians. Some of the most notable collations of pictorial representations of Istanbul’s gardens and landscape are those by Thomas Allom, Robert Walsh, W.H Bartlett and Enderunlu Fazil in his book *Hûbânnâme ve Zenânnâme*.

Images, drawings, engravings and paintings of Damascus were depicted by European travellers. As these pictorial representations were produced through the creative process of travelling artists they do not always give a credible perspective of the actual details of the garden. Furthermore, these visual representations have been historically limited to the nineteenth century onwards. For instance, the British traveller and artist William Henry Bartlett visited Damascus in 1840ce. His sketches depict the city's topography and provide images and impressions of many famous sites and structures.<sup>23</sup>

As a result of the lack of illustrations of Damascus during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, careful examination of a wide range of textual accounts was necessary to best reconstruct the growth of the city's landscape as well as the social developments which occurred during this era. Despite the fact that this study concentrates on the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and since historians from this period frequently quoted earlier works, sources from earlier than this period were utilised. In particular, al-Badrī's account, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, dated from the late Mamlūk period.

This research examines a varied body of historical writings, composed by authors, many of whom were prominent members of Damascene society. These include historical accounts (*twārīkh*), anthologies (*dawāwīn*), chronicles (*yawmiyyāt*), biographical dictionaries (*tarājim*) as well as travellers' accounts. In addition to these main sources, the study examines law-court records (*sijillāt wathā'iq al-maḥākīm al-shar'iyya*). Through careful analysis of the legal documents obtained from these law-court archives, more details from this period came to light. These research sources form the primary components of this study and are thus identified as —primary Arabic sources.”

### 1.1.1 Historical Accounts (*Twārīkh*)

Accounts on the history of Damascus can be classified into three different types, each presenting a different aspect of the urban history of the city. These types can be exemplified by texts dealing with *maḥāsin al-shām* (the beauties of Damascus), *faḍā'il al-Shām* (the virtues of Damascus) and *al-ziyārāt* (visitation of religious sites). Writings

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<sup>23</sup> Henry William Bartlett, William Purser, and John Carne, *Syria, the Holy Land, Asia Minor & Co.*, 3 vols. (London, Paris and America: Fisher, Son & Co., 1836). Some of his sketches illustrated people strolling, smoking, chatting, drinking coffee, singing and being entertained within the recreational gardens (*mutanazahhāt*).

in these varying styles were produced by Arab historians, beginning around the eleventh century and continuing into the Ottoman period. Al-Irbillī (d. 726/1326) was probably the first scholar to write on the beauties of Damascus,<sup>24</sup> whereas al-Rab‘ī (d. 444/1052) the first to write about the virtues of the city,<sup>25</sup> and al-Harawī (d. 611/1215) the first to write about visitations.<sup>26</sup>

The *maḥāsin* texts are distinguished by their praise and admiration of the city’s beauties, for example, its suburbs (*maḥallāt*), recreational gardens (*mutanazzahāt*), flowers, fruits, vegetables and other cultivated plants. Whereas both *faḍā’il* and *ziyārāt* texts are writings oriented towards the religious virtues and merits of various places in the city, such as mosques, tombs, shrines, graves, caves and other sacred places. These two types of writing were influenced by the religious views of the time.

This study focuses mainly on the genre of *maḥāsin*, with little attention devoted to the genres of *faḍā’il* or *ziyārāt*.<sup>27</sup> The word *maḥāsin* comes from the root *ḥ.s.n.*, meaning “beauty, good, and the opposite of ugliness.”<sup>28</sup> *Maḥāsin al-Shām* is thus a form of historical writing, by residents of Damascus, or visitors, through which they document their experience of the city’s beauties and reveal their moments of joy.

A prominent example of this type of urban history is an exposition of Damascus’ beauties that dates back to the late Mamlūk period in the fifteenth century. It was written by a Damascene scholar residing in Cairo named ‘Abd Allāh Ibn Muḥammad al-Dimashqī al-

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<sup>24</sup> Bdr al-Dīn al-Ḥasan al-Irbillī, (d.726/1326), —*Maḥāsin Dimashq*,” (Dimashq: al-Asad library, al-Zāhiriyya manuscript, no: 6692).

<sup>25</sup> ‘Alī Ibn Muḥammad al-Rab‘ī, (d.444/1052), *Faḍā’il al-Shām wa-Dimashq*, ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid (Dimashq: al-Majma‘ al-‘Ilmī al-‘Arabī, 1950).

<sup>26</sup> Abī al-Ḥasan ‘Alī Ibn Abī Bakr al-Harawī, (d.611/1215), *Kitāb al-Ishārāt ilā Ma., rifatal-Ziyārāt*, ed. Jānīn Sūrdīl - Ṭūmīn (Dimashq: al-Ma‘had al-Faransī bi-Dimashq, 1953).

<sup>27</sup> There are various accounts specified with the genre of *faḍā’il*, see for instance: Yāsīn Ibn Muṣṭafā, (d.1095/1684), —*Rwḍat al-Anām fi Faḍā’il al-Shām*,” (Dimashq: al-Asad library, al-Zāhiriyya manuscript, no: 8603-11241-11407); Aḥmad al-‘Adawī al-‘Uthmānī al-Manīnī (d.1172/1759), —*al-lām bi-Faḍā’il al-Shām*,” (Dimashq: al-Asad library, al-Zāhiriyya manuscript, no: 7916-7530); ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn ‘Abd al-Razzāq, (d.1138/1725), *Ḥadā’iq al-In‘ām fi Faḍā’il al-Shām*, ed. Yūsuf Badiwī (Dimashq: Dār al-Ḍiā‘, 1989). All of which followed the religious view of Damascus. They mentioned verses and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (*āyāt wa-aḥādīth nabawiyya*), cemeteries and shrines of famous religious figures and mosques etc. However, Ibn ‘Abd al-Razzāq’s account was different to that of *Faḍā’il*. He ended his text by citing a poem that praised the beauty of Damascus.

<sup>28</sup> Muḥammad Ibn Makram Ibn Manzūr (d.711/1311), *Lisān al-,Arab* (Bayrūt: Dār Ṣādir li-l-Ṭibā‘a wa-l-Nashr, 1997), the root *ḥ.s.n.*.

Qāhirī al-Shāfi‘ī, who is more commonly known as al-Badrī or Abū al-Tuqā (d. 894/1498).

By analysing the author’s background and the socio-cultural setting that prevailed in Damascene society during his time, we are better able to understand his point of view, with regards to his text. Al-Badrī was a scholar, a poet and a historian. He was born in 847/1443 in Damascus. In his early years he worked with his father as a trader, but later moved to Cairo.<sup>29</sup> His life in Cairo made him nostalgic for Damascus and it was these feelings of nostalgia which led him to write *Nuzhat al-Anām fī Maḥāsin al-Shām* (*The People’s Stroll within the Beauties of Damascus*). This text is considered to be a work of praise and admiration of the beauty of Damascus. It provides an insight into the city’s gardens and landscapes, as well as representing many aspects of the Damascene socio-cultural activities associated with the appreciation of natural beauties.

Al-Badrī’s account, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, seemed to have been popular among seventeenth- and eighteenth-century scholars in Damascus, as it was extensively used by a notable scholar of the period Ibn Kannān al-Ṣāliḥī (d. 1135/1740). Ibn Kannān was born into a Damascene elite family in al-Ṣāliḥiyya, where he grew up under the care of his father, a notable Muslim Sheikh, surrounded and influenced by other prominent Sheikhs in Damascus.<sup>30</sup> His entire life was spent in Damascus. Like al-Badrī, he wrote on the theme of the beauty of Damascus and declared that his love and attachment to Damascus motivated him to write *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya fī al-Mamālik wa-l-Maḥāsin al-Shāmiyya* (*The Islamic Convoys in the Places and Beauties of Damascus*).<sup>31</sup>

Moreover, he depicted abundant details of Damascus’ horticulture and the cultivation of trees and flowers. His account was also rich in information on the society’s cultural practices, the urban environment, and the wider landscape surrounding Damascus. Ibn Kannān cited several descriptions of gardens from al-Badrī’s account in the chapter that

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<sup>29</sup> Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sakhāwī, (d.902/1497), *al-Ḍaw’ al-Lāmi’ li-Ahl al-Qarn al-Tāsi’*, 12 vols. (Bayrūt: Dār al-Jīl, 1992), 11: 40; Khayr al-Dīn al-Ziriklī, (d.1310/1893), *al-A’lām: Qāmūs Tarājīm li-Ashar al-Rijāl wa-l-Nisā’ min al-‘Arab wa-l-Musta’ribīn wa-l-Mustashriqīn*, 8 vols. (Bayrūt: Dār al-‘Ilm li-l-Malāyīn, 1979), 2: 66.

<sup>30</sup> Abī al-Faḍl Muḥammad Khalīl al-Murādī, *Silk al-Durar fī A’yān al-Qarn al-Thānī ‘Ashar*, ed. Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Qādir Shāhīn, 4 vols. (Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1997), 4: 85.

<sup>31</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 176.

focused on the —Beauties of Damascene Recreational Gardens” (*maḥāsin Dimashq al-mutanazzahiyya*).<sup>32</sup> At the end of this chapter, he offered considerable information about gardens and landscapes in Damascus and presented an overview of the changes that took place in the city’s gardens, citing extensively from al-Badrī’s account. Preliminary comparison of the accounts of al-Badrī and Ibn Kannān reveals that both writers used the genre of *maḥāsin* to exude admiration for the city’s beauties, which included gardens, landscape, and architectural marvels. The text also provided descriptions of local flowers, along with records of their medicinal uses and physical benefits.<sup>33</sup> Analysis of the al-Badrī’s and Ibn Kannān’s accounts provides original information on the Damascene landscapes, both urban and natural, from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Essential information was derived from these sources about different typologies of Damascene gardens. Also, significant data was constructed about how gardens were furnished for the preparation of the recreational events which facilitated social communication among the Damascene population.<sup>34</sup>

In addition to *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, Ibn Kannān wrote *al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya al-Fasīḥa fī Talkhīṣ Tārīkh al-Şālihiyya*.<sup>35</sup> In this account, Ibn Kannān summarised an earlier text on al-Şālihiyya, while adding his interpretations and observations. The first text referenced was written by Yūsuf ʿAbd al-Hādī, better known as Ibn al-Mibrad.<sup>36</sup> The editor of *al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya*, Aḥmad Duhmān, created a map of al-Şālihiyya. This map is considered as an important pictorial representation of the urbanity and natural environment of al-Şālihiyya, the northern part of Damascus. However, Duhmān did not give any information on the method and sources used to develop his map. In this study, a critical analysis is conducted in order to assess the accuracy, comprehensiveness, and reliability of the map. The outcome of this assessment is then used as a basis to develop a

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid, 1: 222.

<sup>33</sup> There are so many Damascene beauties that it becomes —difficult to count,” al-Badrī said. See also for discussion on the same point: Al-Nābulusī, *Burj Bābil*, 103.

<sup>34</sup> Georgina Hafteh, —The Garden Culture of Damascus: New Observations Based on the Accounts of ʿAbd Allāh al-Badrī (d.894/1498) and Ibn Kannān al-Şāliḥī (d.1135/1740),” *Bulletin d’ études orientales* (2012, forthcoming).

<sup>35</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya al-Fasīḥa fī Talkhīṣ Tārīkh al-Şālihiyya*, ed. Muḥammad Aḥmad Duhmān (Dimashq: Maṭbaʿat al-Taraqqī, 1947).

<sup>36</sup> Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Ibn ʿAlī Ibn Ṭūlūn, (d.953/1529), *al-Qalāʿid al-Jawhariyya fī Tārīkh al-Şālihiyya*, ed. Muḥammad Aḥmad Duhmān, 2 vols. (Dimashq: Maṭbūʿat Majmaʿ al-Lugha al-ʿArabiyya 1949-56?).

revised map to be used as a main reference for identifying the locations of historical gardens and suburbs in this study.<sup>37</sup>

Examining the differences between the texts of al-Badrī and Ibn Kannān, which were separated by over two centuries, provides a valuable resource from which to better understand and recount the city's urban development over that period. In particular, with regards to this study, an accurate account of garden areas that have yet to be discovered was gained from this examination. These two core sources have enabled this research in the history of landscape architecture to develop a partial reconstruction of the gardens in Damascus, which is of vital interest as these locations served as an important setting for urban life and greatly influenced the development of Damascene society. While the aforementioned accounts mention numerous gardens in Damascus, details are only available regarding a limited number, such as al-Rabwa, Qatya, al-Jabha, al-Nayrab and Bayn al-Nahrayn.

### 1.1.2 Anthologies of Poetry (*Dawāwīn*)

*Khamrat Bābil wa Ghinā'* al-Balābil (*The Wine of Bābil and the singing of Nightingales*) and *al-Barq al-Mut'alliq fī Maḥāsin Jilliḡ* (*The Brilliant Lightning in the Beauties of Damascus*) are salient anthologies of poetry that give valuable insights into Damascene gardens, their urban and suburban settings, their surrounding landscapes, and the social practices associated with them.<sup>38</sup> The accounts were written by 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī (d. 1143/1731) and Ibn al-Rā'ī (d. 1195/1780), respectively.

Ibn al-Rā'ī was known for his poetic talents. He worked in Damascus as the person in charge of Ottoman tax-farming (*maqāṭi'jī*), in the official financial institute (*al-bāb al-daftarī*). He also worked as a scribe and was responsible for documenting (*kātib*) the pious endowments in the two holiest cities of Mecca and Medina (*awqāf al-Ḥaramayn al-Sharīfayn*).<sup>39</sup> His passion for literature (*al-adab*), especially related to the history (*al-*

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<sup>37</sup> For more information about Duhmān's map see chapter 4.

<sup>38</sup> Al-Nābulusī, *Burj Bābil wa Shadū al-Balābil*; Muḥammad Ibn Muṣṭafā Ibn al-Rā'ī, (d.1195/1780), *al-Barq al-Mut'alliq fī Maḥāsin Jilliḡ*, ed. Muḥammad Adīb al-Jābir (Dimashq: Majma' al-Lughā al-'Arabiyya bi-Dimashq, 2006).

<sup>39</sup> Cited from Adīb al-Jābir, who is the editor of *al-Barq al-Mut'alliq*. As al-Jābir mentioned, the biography of Ibn al-Rā'ī was not referred to in the published texts of al-Murādī's, *Silk al-Durar*. However, the

*tārīkh wa-l-akhbār*) of cities motivated him to write his anthology on Damascus. His collection offers important insights regarding geographical information on the Baradā river and its branches, as well as descriptions of the gardens which grew outside the walled city and were irrigated by the river branches. Unlike al-Nābulusī, who was the principle author of his compiled anthology, Ibn al-Rā‘ī reputation as an author is rarely referenced in his anthology of poems, as he did not take credit as a primary composer of the poems in his collection. Rather, in his anthology, which engages the genre of Damascene beauty, he was only the author of one poem. The remaining poems collected can be attributed to various historians, such as Ibn ‘Abd al-Razzāq, al-Manīnī,<sup>40</sup> and even ‘Abd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī. Ibn al-Ra‘ī’s anthology does not provide insights about the social life that took place in the Damascene gardens. Rather, his account is a prominent source of garden locations. Hence, this information proved to be a significant resource for the creation of the map of the gardens in Damascus, during this period which is discussed in Chapter 4.

In contrast to Ibn al-Ra‘ī’s background, Al-Nābulusī descended from a family of religious scholars. He was —recognised as a Sufi master, a theologian, a *ḥadīth* scholar, a historian, a traveller and a poet... his main domain of influence was religious science... He presented a new individualistic model of a self-made Sufi master, who apparently saw no conflict between worldly pleasure and spiritual fulfilment.”<sup>41</sup> According to Akkach’s studies on al-Nābulusī, his anthology, *Khamrat Bābil*, was devoted to corporeal pleasure. The published title, *Burj Bābil wa Shadū al-Balābil (The Tower of Bābil and the Tweeting of Nightingales)* was edited by Aḥmad al-Jundī, who changed the original title of the text. As noted by Akkach, al-Jundī’s reason behind changing the title seem to be his preference not to refer to the word “wine” or —singig” in the title of his edition.

The importance of al-Nābulusī’s anthology lies in the fact that he himself compiled his poems along with those by his companions, who like him described moments of delight

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biography was found in the manuscript of *Silk al-Durar*, from the library of ‘Arif Ḥikmat in Medina. See Ibn al-Rā‘ī, *al-Barq al-Mut’alliq*, B.

<sup>40</sup> Aḥmad al-‘Adawī al-Manīnī was born in Mnīn village near Damascus in (1089/1678). He was a senior scholar (*kibār* „*ulamā*”) in Damascus, a writer and a poet. He taught in the Omayyad mosque and in other religious schools and wrote several accounts, such as ‘Adawī al-Manīnī, —ḥal Jām bi-Faḍā‘il al-Shām,” For more information about al-Manīnī, see al-Murādī, *Silk al-Durar*, 1: 153-166.

<sup>41</sup> Samer Akkach, —The Wine of Bābil,” 109-111.

and entertainment. Thus the focus of such anthologies differs from those that report on religious gatherings. —The anthology,” Akkach writes, —provides ample poetic references to the landscape and natural settings of these gatherings, identifying most of the places by name and location. Apart from a few distant places, all the gardens mentioned, public and private, were within or on the perimeters of Damascus’ urban environs... the anthology has historical value as an urban record of Damascus.”<sup>42</sup>

The anthology of al-Nābulusī was written in a style rich with feeling and emotion. He romanticised the natural elements of Damascus’ gardens, writing in a poetic style known in Arabic as *ghazaliyyāt*. These poems flowed with admiration for the Damascene landscape and sang the praises of the city’s flowers, fountains, rivers and other natural features.

Unfortunately, these poems do not include any specific spatial descriptions of the gardens, nor do they refer to the design of the surrounding landscape. While poetic representations are non-conventional sources of historical information, they are highly significant with regards to providing different perspectives on the growing culture of urban entertainment and leisure, in contrast to many of the more conventional religious writings of this period. An example of the poetic representations of landscape found in this anthology can be seen in the following poem by al-Nābulusī:

If you are in serious trouble and feeling uneasy,  
    settle in the land of Sham and live in Damascus.  
You will find your desire in it and all that you aspire for,  
    you will even achieve renown and become eloquent in speech  
The spaciousness of al-Rabwa, The smooth wind whispers  
    as it passes me by, creating joy as the wind and I met  
God, the foothill of al-Nayrabayn, how many  
    beauteous gardens full of splendour  
Al-Şālihiyya, what a place, where  
    the graves of righteous and prayerful reside

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<sup>42</sup> Akkach, —The Wine of Bābil,” 108-109; for more information about al-Nābulusī, see Samer Akkach, „*Abd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī: Islam and the Enlightenment* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2007).



It has lofty palaces, richly ornamented  
appearing like stars in the sky.<sup>43</sup>

As expressed in this poem, al-Nābulusī's style of writing was highly romantic and sentimental towards Damascus, its gardens and its landscape. *Khamrat Bābil* reflects al-Nābulusī and his companions' appreciation to the natural pleasures of garden, including the flowing rivers, the fragrance of flowers, and the singing birds. The anthologies of al-Rā'ī and al-Nābulusī complement other historical sources, such as diaries, chronicles, historical accounts, and biographical dictionaries, and thus assist in compiling an exhaustive list of the gardens, that existed in Damascus during this period.

### 1.1.3 Biographical Dictionaries (*Tarājim*)

During the Ottoman period, several accounts were written featuring the biographies of Damascene scholars and eminent characters. These were presented in the common format of a biographical dictionary. Najm al-Dīn al-Ghazzī's *al-Kawākib al-Sā'ira*, is one example of biographical dictionary from the sixteenth century.<sup>44</sup> This dictionary was divided according to date into three generations (*tabaqāt*), starting from 911/1505 and ending in 1000/1592. Each generation is organised alphabetically and includes biographical information for a wide range of people, including the Ottoman Sultans, respected religious leaders (*ulamā'*), and notables (*a'yān*) in Eastern Ottoman provinces, but mainly Damascus. To write his accounts, al-Ghazzī relied on the documents of his predecessors to present biographical details, including dates of birth and death.

Al-Ghazzī's work was followed by the biographical dictionaries of Muḥammad Amīn al-Muḥibbī and Muḥammad Khalīl al-Murādī, *Khulāṣat al-Athar* and *Silk al-Durar*.<sup>45</sup> Both contain memoirs from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, are divided into four parts and then organised alphabetically. Al-Muḥibbī relied on al-Ghazzī's work,

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<sup>43</sup> Al-Nābulusī, *Burj Bābil*, 102-103. The translation of the first two lines are by Akkach, the rest is mine.

<sup>44</sup> Najm al-Dīn al-Ghazzī, (d.1061/1651), *al-Kawākib al-Sā'ira bi-A'yān al-Mā'a al-Āshira*, 3 vols. (Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1997).

<sup>45</sup> Muḥammad Amīn al-Muḥibbī (d.1111/1699), *Khulāṣat al-Athar fī A'yān al-Qarn al-Ḥādī 'ashar*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥasan Ismā'īl, 4 vols (Bayrūt: Dār Ṣādir); Abī al-Faḍl Muḥammad Khalīl al-Murādī, (d.1206/1791), *Silk al-Durar fī A'yān al-Qarn al-Thānī 'Ashar*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir Shāhīn, 4 vols. (Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1997).

commonly referencing his accounts.<sup>46</sup> Al-Murādi was the Hanafī jurisconsult (*muftī ḥanafī*) of Damascus. He was passionate about reading historical books and was fascinated by collecting anthologies and news of *al-fuḍalā'*. These interests motivated him to write numerous historical accounts. Al-Murādi stated in his prologue that the primary reason for writing his accounts was the lack of Damascene biographies in the eighteenth centuries. His sources were writings by other historians, his correspondence with residents of other cities outside of Damascus, and travellers' accounts, such as the accounts of the journeys of 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī, especially the short one to Jerusalem and the long one to Ḥijaz.<sup>47</sup>

These biographical dictionaries are important sources on the socio-urban history of Damascus in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Beyond being a collection of narratives about the lives of various individuals, the biographies highlight a number of social aspects peculiar to the period. Such writings provide valuable information about people, places, socio-cultural practices, political events, and economic conditions, revealing more than basic information about peoples' lives, education, and preoccupations. They provide information which illustrates the events that occurred in Damascene society and the experiences of the city's inhabitants. For instance, the emergence of coffee as a popular drink was documented in al-Ghazzī's account. Also, these biographical dictionaries provided accounts of the social interaction between the elite class and common people, as well as the stories of recreational gardens, such as that of Kīwān, for example.

#### **1.1.4 Chronicles (*Yawmiyyāt*)**

In addition to the historical sources described above, there are chronicles that provide detailed information about the daily life in Damascus, covering economic, political, cultural, and social matters. The information obtained from these chronicles has been beneficial to this study.

Several chronicles by historians from different religious backgrounds and strata of society have survived from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Eight of these cover the

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<sup>46</sup> Al-Zirikī, *al-A'lām*, 7: 63.

<sup>47</sup> Al-Murādi, *Silk al-Durar*, 1: 3-5

historical period this study endeavours to examine. Ibn Jum\_ā al-Maqqār's chronicle, —*al-Bāshāt wa-l-Quḍāt fi Dimashq*,<sup>48</sup> recorded events between 921/1516 and 1155/1743. Ibn Jum\_ā al-Maqqār was not born until the end of this period. The first part of his chronicle, then, provides accounts which are based on the collation of records of earlier events by other authors.

Ismā'īl al-Maḥāsini began recording history in 1073/1663, in an account later titled —*Ṣafahāt fi Tārīkh Dimashq fi al-Qarn al-Ḥādī Ashr al-Hijrī*,” which documented events until 1116/1705.<sup>49</sup> Ibn Kannān began recording historical events in his account, *Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya* at the end of the seventeenth century in 1110/1699. His account concluded in 1152/1740.<sup>50</sup> Mīkhā'īl Breik's *Tārīkh al-Shām* covered the period from 1132/1720 until 1196/1782.<sup>51</sup> Aḥmad al-Budayrī's *Ḥawādith Dimashq al-Yawmiyya* described the events between 1154-1175/1741-1762.<sup>52</sup> Ḥasan Ibn al-Ṣiddīq's *Gharā'ib al-Badā'i*, wa „*Ajā'ib al-Waqā'i*, chronicles events between 1168-1185/1754-1771.<sup>53</sup> Ḥasan Āghā al-Abd's *Ḥawādith Bilād al-Shām wa-l-Imbaratūriyya al-Uthmāniyya* covers the period between 1124-1186/1771-1826.<sup>54</sup> The last chronicle used in this study is *Tārīkh Mīkhā'īl al-Dimashqī (1192-1257/1782-1841)*, written by an anonymous author.<sup>55</sup> Notably, the anonymity of authorship does not diminish the significance of the text.

The chronicles of Ibn Jum\_ā and al-Budayrī are different from that of Ibn Kannān, al-Maḥāsini, Ibn al-Ṣiddīq and Ḥasan Āghā al-Abd due to their social status. The account

<sup>48</sup> Ibn Jum\_ā al-Maqqār, —*al-Bāshāt wa-l-Quḍāt fi Dimashq*, in *Wulāt Dimashq fi al-'Ahd al-Uthmānī*, ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid (Dimashq: 1949).

<sup>49</sup> Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid, —*Ṣafahāt fi Tārīkh Dimashq fi al-Qarn al-Ḥādī Ashr al-Hijrī* Mustakhraja min Kunnāsh Ismā'īl al-Maḥāsini,” *Majallat Ma'had al-Makhtūtāt* 6(1960).

<sup>50</sup> Ibn Kannān al-Ṣāliḥī, Muḥammad Ibn 'Īsā, (d.1135/1740), *Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya: al-Tārīkh al-Musammā bi-al-Ḥawādith al-Yawmiyya min Tārīkh Aḥad 'Ashar wa-Alf wa-Miyya*, ed. Akram Ḥasan al-'Ulabī. (Dimashq: Dār al-Diā', 1994).

<sup>51</sup> Mīkhā'īl Breik, *Tārīkh al-Shām 1720-1782* (Lubnān: Ḥarīṣā, 1930).

<sup>52</sup> Aḥmad al-Budayrī, (d.12th/18th cent), *Ḥawādith Dimashq al-Yawmiyya 1154-1175h/1741-1762ce*, ed. Muḥammad Sa'īd al-Qāsimī and Aḥmad 'Izzat Abd al-Karīm (Dimashq: Dār al-Ṭabbā' I-l-Ṭibā'a wa-l-Nashr wa-l-Tawzī', 1997).

<sup>53</sup> Ḥasan Ibn al-Ṣiddīq, *Gharā'ib al-Badā'i wa „Ajā'ib al-Waqā'i*, (1168h-1185h) (1754ce-1771ce) ed. Yūsuf Jamīl Nu\_aysa (Dimashq: Dār al-Ma'rifa, 1988).

<sup>54</sup> Ḥasan Āghā al-Abd, *Ḥawādith Bilād al-Shām wa-l-Imbaratūriyya al-Uthmāniyya (1186-1124h/1771-1826ce)*, ed. Yūsuf Jamīl Nu\_aysa (Dimashq: Maṭba'at al-Shām, 1986).

<sup>55</sup> Anonymous, *Tārīkh Ḥawādith al-Shām wa-Lubnān/Tārīkh Mīkhā'īl al-Dimashqī (1192-1257/1782-1841)* ed. Muḥammad Ghassān Sabānū (Dimashq: Dār Qutayba, 1982).

of Ibn Jum\_ā and al-Budayrī, a Damascene barber (*ḥallāq*), represent writings from ordinary people (*awāmm*) in society. Both chronicles recorded the voices of the public through the expression of their perspectives and feelings. Due to the differences in social stratum and education, the lives of the other four authors were completely different and these differences in experience are reflected in their accounts. Al-Maḥāsinī, for instance, was raised in a famous and wealthy family, from which a number of relatives were 'ulamā' and jurists. He studied under famous sheikhs such as al-Najm al-Ghazzī. He visited al-Rūm (Istanbul) with his father and learned from highly placed members of the Muslim religious establishment. After that, he became the *ḥanafī* preacher at the Umayyad mosque and subsequently enjoyed the benefits of socialising with the society's notables and elites.<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, Ḥasan Āghā al-ʿAbd was a senior officer with the rank of āghā and worked with the governor of Damascus (*wālī*). As a result of his job Ḥasan Āghā al-ʿAbd was privy to both the local and international news of his period.<sup>57</sup> Ibn Kannān was also of the elite class and like his father, was affiliated with *khalwatiyya* Sufi order. All these aforementioned authors came from Islamic backgrounds, which differ from the Greek Orthodox priest, Mīkhāʿīl Breik, whose chronicles utilised the Christian calendar for dating historical events. Mīkhāʿīl Breik was the head of the monastery of Sayyidat Ṣaydnāyā.<sup>58</sup> In addition to Breik, it can be assumed that the anonymous author who penned the chronicle, *Tārīkh Mīkhāʿīl al-Dimashqī*, appeared to have come from a Christian upbringing. This may have influenced his decision to publish his chronicle anonymously.<sup>59</sup>

The participation of Ibn Jum\_ā and al-Budayrī in their chronicles was not obvious in the daily events of their respective periods of history. Furthermore, the popular biographies by al-Murādī and al-Muḥibbī do not contain information about the lives of Ibn Jum\_ā and al-Budayrī. Even their dates of birth and death remain unknown to modern day historians. In contrast, the diaries of Ibn Kannān, al-Maḥāsinī, Ibn al-Ṣiddīq and Ḥasan Āghā al-ʿAbd provide accounts of each writers' individual participation in the social and cultural events of their times.

<sup>56</sup> Al-Muḥibbī, *Khulāṣat al-Athar*, 2: 371-373.

<sup>57</sup> Ḥasan Āghā al-ʿAbd, *Hawādith Bilād al-Shām*, 10-11.

<sup>58</sup> Mīkhāʿīl Breik, *Tārīkh al-Shām*, 2.

<sup>59</sup> Anonymous, *Tārīkh Hawādith al-Shām wa-Lūbnān*, 6-7.

The chronicles penned by Ibn Jum\_ā, Ḥasan Āghā al-\_Abd, al-Maḥāsini, Ibn al-Ṣiddīq, Mīkhā‘īl Breik and the anonymous Christian author were predominantly devoted to political and economic events, including the appointment and expulsion of governors in Damascus. Mīkhā‘īl Breik was particularly aware of the political events which accompanied the emergence of the al-\_Azm dynasty, whereas the chronicles of Ibn Kannān and al-Budayrī dealt predominantly with daily events and everyday life.

With regards to this research, the chronicles of Ibn Kannān and al-Budayrī were most useful. As a result, this study does not heavily reference all eight chronicles, mentioned above, due to the specific focus and objectives of this research project. However, these chronicles, covering the Ottoman period during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have been listed due to their importance for future historical research projects. Also, further examination for further research could be done on these chronicles to see whether there are any insights regarding Damascene social life.

In the chronicles of Ibn Kannān and al-Budayrī, there is ample information recorded regarding the social, intellectual and cultural life of Damascus. The chronicles included detailed records about daily Damascene life, including the participation of different stratum of society at popular events, such as pilgrimage processions, as well as recreational garden activities, socialising in coffeehouses, markets and public baths. Both authors described the construction of a number of new mosques, religious schools, and houses, as well as the work undertaken to clean and reconstruct the canal of the Baradā river. For instance, Ibn Kannān, who shared the same social standing as \_Abd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī, mentioned the recreational gathering in al-Ṣaliḥiyya’s gardens, specifically in al-Rabwa, Kīwān and al-Nayrab.

Al-Budayrī mentions several incidents regarding public life. His account records times of chaos, disorder, and even the outbreak of health epidemics, as well as increases in the prices of essential goods, and the proliferation of prostitution in Damascus. In addition to these social concerns, al-Budayrī also recorded details about leisure and the recreational activities of the Damascene people. For instance, he recorded festivals, lasting several days, commenced by the Damascene governor to celebrate traditional occasions. These festivals included Damascene people from all levels of society and provided an

opportunity for recreational activities, which at times often verged on becoming frenzied behaviour. Al-Budayrī's diary also provides accounts of excursions and picnics that were held in different gardens and landscapes. Sadly, al-Budayrī diary, which was originally written in the vernacular language of the period, was edited by Aḥmad Sa'īd al-Qāsimī, who deleted numerous parts which he considered insignificant.<sup>60</sup>

### 1.1.5 Law-Court Records

In addition to the above scholarly sources, the Ottoman law-court records served as an essential source of historical information.

The records examined provide accounts of numerous legal cases, involving disputes about economic, commercial, social and even administrative matters, such as civil status (marriage and divorce), inheritance, the sale of property, and the purchase and endowment of property. Furthermore, the archive contains documents regarding the rent of land, assault on individuals, and theft of property. They also provide detailed architectural information about alterations relating to local houses, streets, lanes, and quarters. In addition and more importantly, occasional news about everyday life and secular social behaviour in Damascus can be found when examining a range of general accusations and infringements which were brought before the jurists.

Sometimes the court documents refer to information taken from the other primary sources utilised to complete this study. For instance, diaries and historical texts provide information about the palaces used for recreational purposes in the landscapes beyond the walled city, where the elites used to spend their vacations. However, these sources do not include any architectural descriptions of these palaces. Occasionally, the archives provide the required details. The documents also provide an insight into the vocabulary used at this period of history, when, for example, they describe the contents and facilities found inside coffeehouses. Furthermore, when researching the court documents, information regarding the structure of these palaces was gathered and could then be integrated with

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<sup>60</sup> Al-Budayrī, *Ḥawādith Dimashq*, see the introduction of al-Budayrī's diary. For further information about using primary Arabic sources see Astrid Meier, "Perceptions of a New Era? Historical Writing in Early Ottoman Damascus," *Arabica* 51: 4 (Oct, 2004), 419-434; Dana Sajdi, "A Room of His Own: The 'History' of the Barber of Damascus (Fl. 1762)," *The MIT Electronic Journal of Middle East Studies* 3 (Fall, 2003), 19-35; Abdul Karīm Rāfeq, *The Province of Damascus 1723-1783* (Bayrūt: Khayats, 1966).

the aforementioned information gathered from the other primary sources.

In addition, important information essential to this study regarding the guild of gardeners (*tā'īfat al-basātina*),<sup>61</sup> garden water supply, the equipment used in coffee houses, and the social practices that accompanied these urban places was gathered from the law-court archives.

In conclusion, to gain a more complete understanding of this period it is necessary to examine the information available through the archives in close conjunction with the other primary sources. When examined together, the information gathered constitutes an important body of knowledge that has significant value to the interpretation of “landscape architecture” and the social and historical changes evident in the history of Damascus.

## 1.2 Survey of Terms and Concepts

### 1.2.1 The Meanings of “Garden”

“What on the earth is a Garden?”<sup>62</sup> This question was posed by John Dixon Hunt, a landscape historian of high renown, when he first tried to define a “Garden.” In the Encyclopaedia of horticulture, the *Illustrated Dictionary of Gardening*, a garden is defined as a “piece of land of many description of size, adjacent to or connected with a residence and set apart, either for the purpose of growing vegetables and fruits for the supply of the house hold, or for the cultivation of the plants and flowers for the embellishment of any part of the house or the Garden itself.”<sup>63</sup> However, Hunt noted that this definition is largely devoid of any references to either the design of a garden or the cultural significance of the activities which could take place within a garden.

The meanings of “garden” in Arabic are many and lack precise definitions. In the primary Arabic sources introduced above, Damascene recreational destinations used for picnics, leisure, and literature gatherings occurred in a variety of places within the Damascene natural and urban landscape, including gardens, valleys, the banks of rivers, mountain

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<sup>61</sup> The Arabic term *tā'īfat al-basātina* is used in the law-court documents.

<sup>62</sup> John Dixon Hunt, *Greater Perfections: The Practice of Garden Theory*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 16. See also John Dixon Hunt, *Garden History: Issues, Approaches, Methods* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1992).

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid*, 17.

areas, as well as mosques, religious schools, and other sacred places. In this research, the term —*gaten*” is used loosely to refer to such places. In the primary Arabic sources different terms are used to refer to a —*gaten*,” namely, *bustān*, *ḥadīqa*, *rawḍa*, *junayna* and *mutanazzah*. A linguistic interrogation of these terms would help us establish some conceptual parameters for this study. The linguistic examination will be done with the help of three key Arabic dictionaries, al-Farāhīdī’s *Kitāb al-ʿAyn*, Ibn Manẓūr’s *Lisān al-ʿArab* and al-Zabīdī’s *Tāj al-ʿArūs*.<sup>64</sup>

### ***Mutanazzah, Maḥalla, Ḥadīqa, Bustān, Rawḍa, Junayna***

#### ***Mutanazzah***

The term *mutanazzah* comes from the trilateral root *n.z.h*. In fact, the word *mutanazzah* was not mentioned in the Arabic dictionaries; however, the root *n.z.h* is well explained with other derivatives.

The verb —*tanazzah*” means —going to *nuzha*,” but neither *tanazzah* nor *nuzha* were explained clearly in al-Farāhīdī’s dictionary. Instead, he clarified other words which came from the root *n.z.h*.

Literally, if someone —*tanazzaha* of something,” it means he —~~kept~~ himself away from this thing.” Also, al-Farāhīdī mentioned the derivative word, *tanzīh*, in a religious context. In this instance *tanzīh* Allah referred to exalting God.<sup>65</sup>

Similarly, the explanation of *tanazzah* and *tanzīh* were mentioned by Ibn Manẓūr and al-Zabīdī, although with some variations. Both added that the verb *tanazzah* originally refers to a person who went alone by himself to a place with no people, water or grass, like a desert.<sup>66</sup> *Al-tanazzuh* means to isolate oneself (*al-tabāʾud*).

<sup>64</sup> Al-Khalīl Ibn Aḥmad al-Farāhīdī, (d.170/786), *Kitāb al-ʿAyn* (Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyy, 2003); Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*; Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī (d.1204/1790), *Tāj al-ʿArūs min Jawāhir al-Qāmūs* (Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2007).

<sup>65</sup> Al-Farāhīdī, *Kitāb al-ʿAyn*, 4: 213.

<sup>66</sup> Al-Zubaydī, *Tāj al-ʿArūs*, vol 36; Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, the root *n.z.h*.



Though, as both lexicographers state, –the public commonly used these words incorrectly. For example, they used *tanazzah* when they went on a picnic to *the basātīn* and *riyāḍ* (gardens),<sup>67</sup> therefore confusing the true meaning of the word, which was to isolate oneself, often faraway from water, greenery and other people.

From Hunt’s perspective, mentioned above, the term garden should not only be considered a place for horticultural activities, but rather embrace the idea of a garden as a place of beauty, conducive to the enjoyment of social and intellectual activities. Thus, the concept of considering a garden as a place to facilitate enjoyment, cheerfulness, and comfort, is more in line with the use of *tanazzuh* by common people, which refers to visits to a garden with a pleasurable environment, where the spectacle of public life can flourish.<sup>68</sup>

### ***Maḥalla***

While al-Farāhīdī did not mention the term *maḥalla*, both lexicographers, Ibn Manẓūr and al-Zabīdī, noted that the term *maḥalla* comes from the root *ḥ.l.l.*

“*Halla bi-l-makān*” means “to settle in the place” and is the opposite of moving or migrating. In the Arabic dictionaries, the term *maḥalla* is identified as a place (*mawḍiʿ/makān*),<sup>69</sup> and it is mentioned as a residential area for people (*manzil al-qawm*).<sup>70</sup> Linguistically, the term *maḥalla* does not specify any characteristics or urban features of a place. However, thanks to the historical texts of Ibn Kannān and al-Badrī, the term *maḥalla* could be closely associated with the word suburb.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, the root *n.z.h.*

<sup>68</sup> The term *mutanazahāt* was used in the premodern and early modern Arabic sources. A similar term, *muntazahāt*, which has the same meaning, appeared in the nineteenth century.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, the root *ḥ.l.l.*

<sup>70</sup> Al-Zabīdī, *Tāj al-ʿArūs*, the root *ḥ.l.l.*, 28: 318.

<sup>71</sup> Ibn Kannān and al-Badrī referred to the suburb of al-Nayrab as a residential area designated for the notables and elites (*al-ruʿasāʾ wa-l-akābir*), using the term *maḥalla*. See Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 239.

## ***Hadīqa***

Historically, the term *ḥadīqa* has not changed, according to the three lexicographers. It comes from the root *ḥ.d.q.* or *a.ḥ.d.q.*, meaning “circling” (*istadār*). The word iris (*ḥadaqat al-ʿayn*) comes from the same origin and by its definition refers to the circular structure in the eye.

According to the Arabic dictionaries, every area of land rich with water and surrounded by a fence, barrier or high ground was labeled as a *ḥadīqa*. Sometimes, this land would also have fruit and palm trees. It was said that the use of the word *ḥadīqa* is similar to both *bustān* and *rawḍa*, but a *ḥadīqa* must be surrounded by a fence (*ḥājiz*).<sup>72</sup>

Based on the lexicographers’ account, a saying in Arabic, —“by encamped in the iris of a camel” refers to —people residing in a rich and fertile place with an abundance of water.” *A ḥadīqa* has similarities to the iris of an eye, firstly for the reason that it has a border or ending. In the case of a *ḥadīqa*, this border would be its fence. Secondly, both an iris and a *ḥadīqa* are precious, and thirdly are places which are not dry.

In addition, it is possible to assume that a *ḥadīqa* is similar to a courtyard.

Etymologically, the original meaning of courtyard: “court” coming from the Latin origin *cohors*, meaning an enclosed space and the word —*yaṭ*,” from the Indo-European root *ghort*, meaning to enclose or surround. Similarly, the term garden comes from the Indo-European word *gher*, meaning fence and *ghort*, meaning enclosure. Thus, it is possible to assume that the word *ḥadīqa* refers to either a courtyard or garden.

## ***Bustān***

Al-Farāhīdī did not define the term *bustān*. He wrote, *al-bustān ma., rūf* assuming that it was a well known term and there was no need for an explanation.<sup>73</sup> According to the other Arabic dictionaries, the term *bustān* (pl. *basātīn*) has the same meaning as the words *ḥadīqa* or *rawḍa*. *Bustān* comes from two roots, *b.s.t.q.* and *b.s.t.* The former means pruning (*al-tahdhīb*), referring to horticultural practices. The subject from the verb

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<sup>72</sup> Al-Farāhīdī, *Kitāb al-ʿAyn*, 1: 295; Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, the root *ḥ.d.q.*; al-Zabīdī, *Tāj al-ʿArūs*, the root *ḥ.d.q.*, 25: 141.

<sup>73</sup> Al-Farāhīdī, *Kitāb al-ʿAyn*, 1: 838.

*b.s.t.q.* is *al-bustuqānī*, meaning the owner of the *bustān*.<sup>74</sup> On the other hand, *basat* refers to *al-sayr*, defined as walking or promenading.<sup>75</sup> Furthermore, al-Farāhīdī added to the definition of Ibn Manzūr stating that people use the term *bustān* in association with fruit, for example, —Here are quince and apple in my *bustān*.<sup>76</sup> Thus, in this regard, we could say that *bustān* is used more regularly when referring to gardens cultivated for agricultural purpose, in addition to the fact that it is also refer to gardens used for walking or strolling.

### **Rawḍa**

Al-Farāhīdī only mentioned the meaning of the derivative *arāḍa*, which, like *rawḍa*, comes from the same trilateral root *r.w.d.* *Arāḍa* means the same as irrigate.<sup>77</sup> Ibn Manzūr indicates that *al-rawḍa*, (pl. *rawḍ*, *rawḍāt*, *riyāḍ* or *rīḍān*), is an evergreen land (*al-arḍ dhāt al-khudra*); a *bustān*, a place with water and lots of plants.<sup>78</sup> Al-Zabīdī added that *al-rawḍa* refers to —a land that had water, trees, and flowers.<sup>79</sup> Therefore, it may be that water must exist to define *al-rawḍa*. Dictionaries state that —it seems that *al-rawḍa* has its name because of the existence of water (*istirāḍat al-mā*).<sup>80</sup>

In terms of the area of *al-rawḍa*, the smallest *rawḍ* should be around 100 *dhirā*., whereas others say it might be approximately a square mile. If the length or width gets wider than a mile, *al-rawḍa* would then be labelled as a *qā*., (bed/bottom).<sup>81</sup>

The term *rawḍ* has an additional meaning to the terms *ḥadīqa*, *bustān* and *mutanazzah*. Besides the common conceptual meaning, *rawḍ* had a concealed meaning connected with a spiritual and religious symbol identified as —the garden of paradise.” For instance, the term *rawḍ* was mentioned in the Quran as follows: —And as for those who had believed and done righteous deeds, they will be in a garden of Paradise, delighted.”<sup>82</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, the root *b.s.t.q.*

<sup>75</sup> Ibid, the root *b.s.t.*

<sup>76</sup> Al-Zubaydī, *Tāj al-ʿArūs*, 1: 134.

<sup>77</sup> Al-Farāhīdī, *Kitāb al-Ayn*, 2: 861.

<sup>78</sup> Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, the root *r.w.d.*

<sup>79</sup> Al-Zubaydī, *Tāj al-ʿArūs*, 18: 368; Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, the root *r.w.d.*

<sup>80</sup> Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, the root *r.w.d.*

<sup>81</sup> Ibid, the root *r.w.d.*

<sup>82</sup> Qurʾān, al-Rūm, 15.

## *Junayna*

Al-Farāhīdī did not mention the term *Junayna*, rather he mentioned the word *jannā*, which means —*ḥadīqa* and *bustān* filled with trees.”<sup>83</sup> Whereas, according to the other dictionaries, *Junayna* (pl. *janā’in*) comes from the root *j.n.n*, which means to shade and cover (*satar*). Arabs say: —the land is *junnat junūnan* when it filled with plants; whereas, a plant is *junna junūnan* when it grows, wraps and blossoms.”<sup>84</sup>

*Al-Janna* (pl. *jinān*), also comes from the same root as *junayna* and also refers to the garden of paradise.<sup>85</sup> It has the same meaning as *al-bustān* and it comes from *ijtinān* (v. *janan*) which means *al-satr* (v. *satar*) cover/shade. This use of the term *ijtinān* is linked with tree branches when they are dense and intertwined. Also, *al-janna* refers to a *ḥadīqa*, which may have palms and grapes. The mention of these two fruits also links the meaning of *junayna* to a spiritual and religious symbols associated with the garden of paradise: —Would one of you like to have a garden of palm trees and grapevines underneath which rivers flow in which he has from every fruit?”<sup>86</sup>

After this brief summary of the meanings of —*gāten*,” this study uses the term loosely to refer to a variety of landscaped settings. The term covers the meaning of the words *bustān*, *ḥadīqā*, *rawḍa* and *junayna*, all of which form the natural landscape that do not contain urban facilities. Whereas the use of the term —recreational garden” refers to *mutanazzah*, which is an urban landscape equipped with a variety of urban commercial enterprises where the people of Damascus gathered for leisure, entertainment, and social interaction.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Al-Farāhīdī, *Kitāb al-Ayn*, 1: 268.

<sup>84</sup> Al-Zubaydī, *Tāj al-Arūs*, 43: 373; Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-Arab*, the root *j.n.n*.

<sup>85</sup> *Junayna*, a small *janna* in Arabic, is a widely used term for garden.

<sup>86</sup> Qur’ān, al-Baqara, 266.

<sup>87</sup> For an explanation of the word *mutanazzahāt*, see Chapter 2.

## Chapter 2: Damascene Gardens: Socio-Cultural and Urban History

### 2.1 Garden Types

Pictorial representations of Damascene gardens, as well as descriptions in chronicles, anthologies of poetry, biographical dictionaries, and other historical accounts provide only scant information about the forms and types of Damascene gardens that once existed inside and outside the walled city. Excavations focusing on sites dating to the Ottoman period have not been conducted in Damascus. No archeological data exists and no local paintings or engravings exist from seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Ottoman Damascus. Accordingly, it is difficult to identify well defined garden types.

Primary Arabic sources depict gardens and landscapes of various types, ranging from natural landscapes, used predominately for agricultural purposes, to meticulously rendered urban landscapes, richly furnished with a variety of facilities and structures. Here the term —garden” is referred to using the terms *bustan*, *ḥadīqa*, *rawḍa* and *junayna* sourced from Arabic accounts and discussed in chapter 1. In addition to these types of gardens there is evidence of recreational gardens, which were commonly referred to as *mutanazzahāt*, and suburban gardens, which were occasionally referred to as *maḥallāt*.<sup>88</sup>

The examination of different types of Damascene gardens will be based primarily on al-Badrī’s *Nuzhat al-Anām*, Ibn Ṭūlūn’s *al-Qalā’id al-Jawhariyya*, Ibn Kannān’s *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya* and *al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya*, and al-Nābulusī’s *Khamrat Bābil*. This section discusses the various types of gardens that can be traced from these sources and examines the socio-cultural practices associated with them.

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<sup>88</sup> Gardens, in primary Arabic sources of the period, included natural spaces and urban landscaped spaces that had been altered for human use. As mentioned previously, the term garden covers the meaning of the words *bustān*, *ḥadīqā*, *rawḍa* and *junayna*, all of which refer to landscaped spaces that do not contain urban facilities. Whereas the term —recreational garden” refers to *mutanazzah*, which can be defined as an urban or suburban landscaped space equipped with some commercial services.

## 2.1.1 Places of Recreation

### *Maḥalla and Mutanazzah*

#### *Maḥalla*

From the examination of Arabic dictionaries, previously identified in chapter 2 already mentioned, the word *maḥalla* is defined as a “place,” mainly in an urban or suburban setting, without identifying special characteristics or features. However, the use of the term in historical accounts tends to associate it with what can be described as “sub-urban” setting. In these accounts, a *maḥalla* was referred to as a place full of buildings (*amāʿir*), with a variety of residential and recreational areas. For instance, Ibn Kannān and al-Badrī referred to the suburb of al-Nayrab, a residential area designated for the notables and elites (*al-ruʿasāʾ wa-l-akābir*),<sup>89</sup> using the term *maḥalla*. Al-Khulkhāl and al-Munaybiʿ, also frequently referred to as *maḥalla*, were recorded as residential areas predominantly inhabited by Turks.<sup>90</sup> Furthermore, an area called al-Sahm, described as having adjoining houses largely inhabited by commoners, was also referred to as a *maḥalla*. In these suburbs one can find palaces, public baths, coffeehouses, and other facilities for recreation and social interaction.

Several *maḥallāt* (pl. of *maḥalla*) were also described by historians as places for residential and recreational purposes. For instance, the suburb of al-Jisr al-Abyaḍ, according to Ibn Kannān, not only served as an urban centre, but as a result of its popularity, prosperity, and subsequent further development, the suburb included one of only a few gardens that were equipped with urban furniture and a greater variety of public facilities. Ibn Kannān describes the garden of al-Jisr al-Abyaḍ as:

One of the populous suburbs that belonged to al-Ṣāliḥiyya is al-Jisr al-Abyaḍ. It has a water stream, small bakery and a coffeehouse, which served as a place for play (*al-lahū*), having fun (*al-qaṣf*), picnicking, recreation and excursions (*al-nuzha*). [The suburb also contained] a grocer and the public bath of ʿAbd al-Bāsiṭ, one of the virtuous public baths. Adjacent to the public bath was a populous alley and palaces for a few notables who reside there in

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<sup>89</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 239.

<sup>90</sup> Al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 78. Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 269.

the summer. Also located in the suburb was the religious school of al-Mardāniyya, which had a mosque and was located adjacent to the religious schools of al-Ibrāhīmiyya and al-Bāsiṭiyya. There were also palaces (*jawāsiq*) and innumerable gardens, all of which were planted with crops and trees.<sup>91</sup>

The suburb of al-Jisr al-Abyāḍ was one of the most famous recreational centers, with a significant number of visitors and numerous permanent inhabitants. It was highly popular with the Damascene people in general, because it offered a wide spectrum of functions and activities concentrated in one area: agricultural fields, a hub for commercial activities, residential, and recreational areas as well as gardens and open spaces.

With regards to private and public ownership in the suburb of al-Jisr, sources provide only scant information. The historical records indicate that parts of the suburb were assigned as pious endowments. For instance, located on the bank of Thawrā river was the al-Mardāniyya mosque and school which was established as a pious endowment. To the east of al-Jisr were two gardens and three shops (*hawānīt*), all of which were also set up as pious endowments to al-Mardāniyya.<sup>92</sup> Other urban facilities were owned by merchants and notables, such as al-Khawājā Shams al-Dīn Ibn Mazlaq and al-Khawājā Burhān al-Dīn Ibn al-As<sub>adī</sub>.<sup>93</sup>

Although the gardens mentioned in al-Badrī's *Nuzhat al-Anām*, can be dated to the late Mamlūk period, the presence of gardens in Damascus can be dated to well before this time. As evidence, in *Nuzhat al-Anām* and *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, numerous poems were penned by famous scholars prior to the Mamlūk period. These poems invariably represented Damascene gardens as a social gathering place for leisure and recreation, which were frequented by people from all walks of life, from the general public to the upper classes of society. One example is written by Tāj al-Dīn al-Kindī, (d. 613/1217) who praised the Ayyūbid King, Nūr al-Dīn, for bestowing the gift of al-Rabwa to the public:

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<sup>91</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 281-282.

<sup>92</sup> Ibn Ṭūlūn, *al-Qalā'id al-Jawhariyya*, 111.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid, 128.

Surely when Nūr al-Dīn saw that  
in the gardens there are palaces for the rich  
He built the Rabwa as a lofty palace,  
an absolute recreational place for the poor<sup>94</sup>

These suburban areas that include gardens were occasionally referred to as *maḥalla*. The suburban gardens of al-Rabwa continued to host Damascene people in the late Mamlūk and Ottoman period. Al-Badrī described al-Rabwa as a Damascene beauty, located in a valley filled with nature. It overlooked al-Ghūṭa and was located far from the walled city to the west. The al-Rabwa natural landscape housed a suburban centre containing a mosque, a religious school, a public bath, canteens and halls, with additional room above for various purposes (*tibāq*).<sup>95</sup> There is also a reference to the existence of a small bazaar (*suwayqa*), which was filled with a wide selection of essential goods and different food shops, which visitors to the area patronised. By the time of Ibn Kannān, however, the suburban facilities of al-Rabwa seemed to have disappeared, and the area reverted to mostly natural landscape. He added that al-Rabwa had a hundred structures named *takht* (pl. *tukhūt*) and an urban amenity called *maqʿad* (pl. *Maqāʿid*), such as *maqʿad al-Nawfara* in the west.<sup>96</sup>

With regard to ownership in al-Rabwa, Ibn Kannān indicates that it had areas established as pious endowments (*waqf*),<sup>97</sup> as well as meadows and gardens owned by people from Dummar and al-Mazza.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 85. This translation was conducted from the original in Arabic, by author Samer Akkach. See Akkach –“The Wine of Babil,” 116.

<sup>95</sup> *Ṭabaqa* (pl. *tibāq*) refers to a layer situated above another layer, for example, the positioning of eyelids, see Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab*, the root *ṭ.b.q.*

<sup>96</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 301-307. For explanation of the terms *tukhūt* and *maqāʿid*, see the second part of this chapter.

<sup>97</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 294.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid*, 1: 291-307. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, around 1011/1602, the ownership of most of the gardens in al-Mazza and al-Rabwa changed and the properties within the gardens came under the control of Kīwān Ibn ‘Abd Allāh. He was one of the elite soldiers of the Damascus’ army (*kubarā’ ajnād al-Shām*). He seized these gardens from their owners, either voluntarily or by force, by cheating and colluding with court officials, who were paid by Kīwān. See al-Muḥibbī, *Khulāṣat al-Athar*, 3: 299-301. Around 1011/1602, al-Mazza was under Kīwān control, but it was mentioned by Ibn Kannān that it was a village divided among many owners in 1080/1669. Questions still remain about the property of al-Mazza.



### *Mutannazah*

Linguistically, the term *mutanazzah* refers to a place similar to a desert, devoid of water and trees. However, historically in Damascus, the term was used to describe a garden utilised as a focal point for Damascene recreational activities, but also used to some degree for agrarian agriculture, especially during periods of the year when recreational activities were less popular. The word *mutanazzah* still retains the same meaning among Damascene people today, though the culture of garden life is no longer as wide spread among the modern day Damascene population.<sup>99</sup>

When examining the common social practices associated with *mutanazzah*, several references to the use of *mutanazzah* as a recreational garden and urban centre can be found in al-Badrī's and Ibn Kannān's accounts. For instance, both writers mentioned that beyond al-Takiyya Sulaymāniyya was a famous recreational garden named al-Jabha. It was overlooking two branches of the Baradā river, the Bānyās and the Qanawāt. Al-Badrī described al-Jabha as a squared site, strategically situated on the side of the Baradā river with willow, poplar, walnut trees, and trellises providing shade, built as roof structures but without mud on top. The garden was divided into cultivated areas surrounded by water canals from four directions with fountains, ponds, water-jets and waterwheels. It had a mosque, two schools, and a lodge. The garden also contained a commercial area, providing places for eating and cooking utensils, as well as a wide range of markets where cooks, butchers, snack stalls, and drink and fruit sellers resided. Also, quilts, mattresses, and pillows were available for patrons wishing to stay overnight. The garden was fully equipped to serve visitors' diurnal and nocturnal needs, allowing them to stay and enjoy the facilities and entertainment for more than one day.<sup>100</sup>

This pattern of social practices, transforming gardens into places equipped to cater for leisure, spread as a trend, extending to several Damascene gardens. The spread of this trend resulted in the establishment of urban facilities, designed to cater for the developing attitudes of the Damascene people towards leisure and recreation.

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<sup>99</sup> This could be due to the random expansion of buildings and urban developments in Damascus and the reduction of open green spaces.

<sup>100</sup> Al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 79.

### ***Mutannazah vs Maḥalla***

The recreational gardens (*mutanazzahāt*) and the urban/suburban gardens (*maḥallāt*) of Damascus played similar social roles. As already mentioned, *maḥalla* included a residential zone, and we could assume that this zone did not exist in a *mutanazzahāt*.<sup>101</sup> Also, in regard to size, the recreational gardens were smaller than the suburban gardens, but occupied a larger area and contained the same urban facilities found in suburban gardens. According to Ibn Kannān, citing al-Badrī, the recreational garden of Bayn al-Nahrayn was located at the beginning of the Eastern valley. The site was a spacious area with houses, palaces and a water basin. It also has a commercial area full of a wide range of markets, including a restaurant (*ḥānūt ṭabbākh*), a baker of breads made on *saj* (convex disc-shaped grilled made from metal), and another who specialised in a particular kind of desert,<sup>102</sup> a fruit seller, a stand selling cooked meat dish, a cheese fryer, a confectioner making various types of sweets, a nuts seller, and a yogurt store. The site had several kiosks for visitors and a public bath. It was connected with an island by a bridge, where the river of Baradā bifurcated into two sections, one of them being the river of sheikh Arslān. This island had two canteens and a place for Sufi rituals, called Zāwiyat al-Shāb al-Tā'ib. This island was connected with the nearby al-Farrāyīn alley and had halls with a single storey, rooms, and corridors.<sup>103</sup> Interestingly, every single building of this site had its own waterwheel.

The descriptions of the suburban gardens and its urban facilities were in many ways similar to the facilities accounted as being present in a recreational garden. Though, clearly there were differences in the scale of the areas being described. In this study, we refer to a recreational garden as being a part of a suburban gardens/suburbs, understood a residential zone housing permanent inhabitants, including recreational gardens.

### ***Mutannazah and the Mosque***

The use of the term *mutanazzah* was not restricted to recreational gardens, but extended to include religious places and sites, such as mosques and shrines. Accordingly, the term

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<sup>101</sup> For more details refer to the definition of *Maḥalla* in this chapter.

<sup>102</sup> A sweet dumpling filled with nuts and cream.

<sup>103</sup> Al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 69; Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 244-246.

*tanazzuh* is not limited to excursions to garden areas, but also includes visits to sacred places, and thus acts of visiting such places has a recreational dimension to it.

Congregating in and around pious places constituted an important aspect of Damascene urban life. This social practice was referenced by Ibn Kannān, who referred to mosques as places of recreation (*mutanazzahāt al-jawāmi‘*).<sup>104</sup> For instance, Ibn Kannān wrote that it was common for people to visit the mosque of al-Bardabkī, in Damascus, for the purpose of recreation because of its beautiful location. The mosque of al-Bardabkī was hanged over the river Baradā. It had eight windows, two oriented toward the east, four facing the south, and two facing west.”<sup>105</sup> The mosque was also known as al-Mu‘allaq, literally the “the hanging mosque,” referring to the architectural features of the mosque itself.

When reading sources about the recreational practices associated with the mosque, little detail is provided about the activities which occurred during these events. Furthermore, the sources examined do not provide adequate information as to whether these events would take place either in the landscape surrounding a mosque, a courtyard directly adjacent to a mosque, or inside a mosque.

Instead, this study provides details that focus predominantly on the architectural description of the visited religious buildings, such as mosques and religious schools. For instance, the mosque of Tankaz, located in al-Sharaf al-Adnā, al-Badrī writes, one is of the most beautiful in its engineering and construction. It has twenty windows, evenly dividing the top and bottom of the structure. It overlooks the rivers and Marjat al-Mīdān. Bānyās river passes through the mosque’s courtyard where people make their ritual ablution. Two waterwheels were installed on the river, both filling from one basin (*ḥawḍ*) and emptying into another. A variety of trees, basil, and flowers were planted in these basins. Between them there is a squared fountain that has a perfectly rounded cup, to which the waterwheel supplies the necessary water. It is intended as a recreational place as well as a sanctuary for prayer.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 248.

<sup>105</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 249-50.

<sup>106</sup> Al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 73-74.

As a result of the lack of information on the recreational practices associated with mosques, we cannot be sure as to whether or not there was a strong religious component to this cultural activity. If people were congregating in the areas surrounding a religious place rather than in its interior, then we could assume that their purpose was for recreation and the enjoyment of the natural environment, rather than exclusively for prayer and religious discourse.

### ***Ḥadiqa, Bustān, Rawḍa and Junayna***

#### ***Ḥadiqa***

While both the *mutanazzah* and the *maḥalla* had gardens equipped with urban facilities that played a role in the recreational activities and entertainment of their visitors, information was not provided about whether the *ḥadiqa* had similar urban amenities. Nevertheless, the use of the *ḥadiqa* as a space for social gatherings was mentioned in historical accounts. For instance, in the chronicle of Ibn Kannān, the gathering of elites would sometimes take place in private gardens such as the *ḥadiqa* of Ibrāhīm al-Bahnaṣī and the *ḥadiqa* of Sheik Aḥmad Ibn al-Ḥakīm al-Ṣāliḥī. When writing about these *ḥadā'iq*, Ibn Kannān provided accounts of their surrounding rivers, the variety of flowers with gorgeous scents and the singing of blackbirds.<sup>107</sup> Furthermore, the use of the term *ḥadiqa*, in the anthology of al-Nābulusī, was interchangeable with the term *bustān*. He wrote,

We decided one day to go for recreation to our *bustān* in the al-Nayrab al-A‘lā... and we wrote to our Sheik Aḥmad to join us.

We are inviting you to a *ḥadiqa* called  
al-Nayrabayn, with eagerness in our hearts  
In the morning, the birds wake up  
and the branches singing sentimentally  
The youthful breeze of the roses  
makes the branches sway, of or [if inebriated by] wine

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<sup>107</sup> Ibn Kannān, *Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya*, 399-400.

Come and spend sentimental days

playing and having fun (*naqsuf*) in the garden (*al-riyād*)<sup>108</sup>

None of these descriptions mention the existence of any urban services. Though, from al-Nābulusī's poem, an assumption could be made that people would come to *ḥadīqa* for the purpose of enjoying the beauty of the area and the opportunity to connect with nature.

### ***Bustān***

Linguistically, *bustān* refers to a natural landscape,<sup>109</sup> with trees, plants and cultivated areas primarily used for agricultural purposes. The linguistic definition of *bustān* is similar to the common use and meaning of the word among the Damascene people of this period. The term *bustān* was not mentioned in al-Badrī's *Nuzhat al-Anām*. His account predominately used the term *mutanazzahāt*, meaning a recreational garden equipped with a variety of urban facilities.<sup>110</sup> When Ibn Kannān uses the word *bustān* in *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, he does so intentionally to specify the changes that were happening to gardens within the city during his period. By the time of Ibn Kannān, based on his perceptions, the landscape of Damascus was changing. Specifically, many *mutanazzahāt* were being transformed into *basātīn*.<sup>111</sup> This inference comes from the following: —and now, just al-Şāliḥiyya remains as a *mutanazzahāt*. While other places, such as al-Sharafayn and Şadr al-Bāz, were replaced by *basātīn*, *ḥadā'iq*, and palaces... the remnants of what Ibn al-Mazlaq [al-Bardī]<sup>112</sup> mentioned... were places void of any buildings.”<sup>113</sup> —The number of *basātīn* and *ḥadā'iq* were innumerable, with no inch desolate from trees and plants.”<sup>114</sup> —In the *basātīn*,” he adds, —rarely you can find a kiosk for strollers (*al-sīranjiyya*).<sup>115</sup>

With regards to its use among the Damascene people, the term *bustān* is similar to the term *ḥadīqā*. In the chronicle of Ibn Kannān and the anthology of al-Nābulusī, *bustān*

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<sup>108</sup> Al-Nābulusī, *Burj Bābil*, 129.

<sup>109</sup> Urban landscape was normally equipped with urban facilities, whereas natural landscape was normally green areas used primarily for agricultural purposes.

<sup>110</sup> For information on urban facilities in gardens, see Chapter 2.

<sup>111</sup> For information on Damascus' urban development, from the perspective of Ibn Kannān, see Garden and Urban Development: Ibn Kannān's Observation.

<sup>112</sup> Ibn Kannān, in *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, mentioned al-Badrī (the author of *Nuzhat al-Anām*) under the name of Ibn al-Mazlaq.

<sup>113</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 274.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid*, 1: 285.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid*, 1: 274.

primarily refers to a private garden, such as, Naḍr's *bustān*,<sup>116</sup> al-Shaḥṭabī's *bustān*,<sup>117</sup> and *bustān* al-Burj owned by ʿUmar Āghā.<sup>118</sup> Sometimes, these private gardens had a house (*dār*), where the owner could invite his friends to stay overnight. For instance, Ibn Kannān and other notables were invited by Muṣṭafā Bāshā to the *bustān* of al-Qamayhiyya, where they stayed for two days. The reason behind the gathering was not mentioned in the chronicle.<sup>119</sup>

Sometimes, elites assembled for literary gatherings, such as religious lessons or exchanges of poetry, and recreation. Al-Nābulusī and his beloved friends gathered several times in his *bustān* in al-Nayrab al-Fawqānī. The poems composed at these gatherings were often romantic in tone, regularly mentioning red roses, light breezes, numerous streams, blooming flowers, flowing fountains and singing nightingales.<sup>120</sup> As another example, Ibn Kannān describes a gathering of friends which took place in the *bustān* of Zain al-Dīn, where they read from al-Nābulusī's account.<sup>121</sup> It is important to clarify here that the open green areas such as *basātīn* (referred as natural landscape) were not one entity, but a series of individual private parcel of land within the countryside. There is no evidence as to whether these *basātīn* had any of the urban facilities commonly found at a *mutanazzahāt*.

### ***Rawḍa and Junayna***

Examining the Damascene use of *rawḍa* and *junayna*, primary Arabic sources show their similarity to *bustān* and *ḥadīqa*, with the major variation being with regard to the scale of the area. For instance, it is mentioned in the law-court archives that a *junayna* occupies a smaller space than a *bustān* and a number of *janā'in* were joined together would constitute the same area as one *bustān*.<sup>122</sup> Al-Badrī and Ibn Kannān did not use the word *rawḍa* in their accounts. *Rawḍa* was used frequently in al-Nābulusī's anthology, in a romantic, symbolic and poetic style, to describe a place.

<sup>116</sup> Al-Nābulusī, *Burj Bābil*, 221.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid, 272.

<sup>118</sup> Ibn Kannān, *Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya*, 323.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid, 394.

<sup>120</sup> Al-Nābulusī, *Burj Bābil*, 39.

<sup>121</sup> Ibn Kannān, *Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya*, 328.

<sup>122</sup> Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, the root *j.n.n.*; LCR, Damascus, vol. 88, document no. 153, case dated to 1149.

The same unanswered question arises again, that is, whether a *rawḍa* and *junayna* would traditionally come equipped with any of the typical recreational facilities found in a *mutanazzahāt* and *maḥallāt*.<sup>123</sup>

After reviewing the meaning of “garden,” this study uses the term loosely to refer to a variety of landscape settings. The term —garden” covers the meaning of the words *bustān*, *ḥadīqā*, *rawḍa* and *junayna*, all of which form the natural landscape. Whereas the use of the terms *mutanazzah* and *maḥalla* refer to a recreational garden, which is located in an urban landscape and equipped with a variety of urban commercial enterprises, where the people of Damascus gather for leisure, entertainment, social interaction, and sometimes for literary gatherings.

## 2.2 Garden Uses

In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Damascus, gardens formed part of both the natural and urban landscape. They did not only serve as places for agricultural cultivation, but also provided suitable areas for recreation and social interaction. This section endeavours to illustrate a variety of urban facilities that were important in the establishment of gardens as places for recreation and, in particular, how these urban facilities specifically encouraged interaction between people and the landscape. This section also discusses urban centres, meaning recreational gardens where facilities for leisure, commerce, and the practice of religion were located.

### 2.2.1 Garden Furniture, Features and Facilities

Damascene historians of the time, such as al-Badrī, Ibn Kannān, al-Budayrī, and al-Nābulusī, strolled and experienced moments of joy and pleasure in the recreational gardens of Damascus. It was these experiences which provided the inspiration for much

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<sup>123</sup> Besides the aforementioned terms, Ibn Kannān uses the term *iqḷīm*, on one occasion, when he wrote: —~~ك~~ Nayrab is one of the villages of al-Ghūṭa. It is a pleasant Damascene village from the *iqḷīm* of Bayt Lahyā, with water and an abundance of trees...” See Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 302.

It is not clear why Ibn Kannān used the term *iqḷīm*, as literally this translates to a —province or region.” The use of the term *iqḷīm* was not common during this period, as other historians, such as al-Badrī and al-Nābulusī, did not use the same word in their writings. Hence, this term will be of marginal importance in this study and further research would be required to better understand its historical significance. However, mentioning this term and its usage was important to fulfil the aim of documenting all the terms that the writers of this period used when referring to the areas of Damascus in which recreational gatherings were held.

of their writings, in which they provide general accounts of their experiences in numerous gardens. However, specific details regarding individual gardens are somewhat limited and are only provided in the case of a few gardens, which the authors considered more famous, well equipped, and as a result frequented more regularly.<sup>124</sup> The gardens that were equipped with the widest variety of urban amenities were considered, by these historians and writers, as the most popular gardens and therefore their preferred destinations.<sup>125</sup> In order to create an accurate picture of the urban amenities which were found within the recreational gardens of this period of history and to better understand their purpose, use and how they contributed to the development of the culture of recreation and entertainment, textual analysis is undertaken with regards to the most well equipped gardens, namely al-Rabwa, Qaṭya, al-Jabha, al-Nayrab, and Bayn al-Nahrayn.

A variety of urban amenities could be found inside these gardens. Religious buildings, such as mosques and schools were parts of the gardens' urban facilities.<sup>126</sup> In addition, the gardens also had public baths,<sup>127</sup> places for storing livestock,<sup>128</sup> coffeehouses (referred to as canteens (*maqāṣif*), before the introduction of coffee in the sixteenth century),<sup>129</sup> and halls with additional rooms upstairs, which served as a location for a variety of activities.<sup>130</sup> Texts also describe the presence of markets, or small bazaars, where a wide selection of essential goods was available for sale, along with a variety of shops providing food for visitors.<sup>131</sup> Some of the recreational gardens, including al-Shaqrā,<sup>132</sup> had their own mills. Some gardens contained —shaded trellises built without mud,” such

<sup>124</sup> Here the focus is on recreational gardens and their amenities, which are seen as a part of urban landscape.

<sup>125</sup> See for instance the most frequented gardens by historians, such as Qaṭya, al-Jabha, al-Nayrab, and Bayn al-Nahrayn. Description of these gardens is mentioned later in this study.

<sup>126</sup> For instance: *madrasat al-khānūtiyya* in the garden of al-Munaybi, Al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 78.

<sup>127</sup> For instance: *ḥammām* al-Nuzha in the garden of al-Jabha, Al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 80; Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 227-228.

<sup>128</sup> See the description of al-Jabha garden in: Al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 79; Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 222-223.

<sup>129</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya*, 36.

<sup>130</sup> For an example of the existance of *qa''ā* and *ṭibāq*. See *maḥallat* al-Rabwa in: al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 83-89.

<sup>131</sup> As, for instance, the market in the recreational garden of al-Rabwa. See al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 83-89. Similar markets were also found in other recreational places, such as *Sāḥat Taḥt al-Qal'a*, literally the square under the citadel, famous for its markets, wherein merchants sold fur, cloaks, cloth, copper, sieves, glass ware, fruits, vegetables, meats, and nuts, and provided a location for carpenters and tailoring shops to conduct business. Al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 66-67; Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 247. See also *maḥallat* al-Rabwa in: Al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 83-89.

<sup>132</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 254.



as those described in al-Jabha.<sup>133</sup> Al-Jabha also had a *khān*,<sup>134</sup> which was a place for travellers to relax and recover from their journey. *Khāns* were also used as places for commercial exchange, business, and social networking. These recreational gardens were concentrated outside of the walled city and the majority were situated on the Baradā river bank. These gardens in particular proved to be especially popular with children, as they were able to swim and play in the river.<sup>135</sup>

The facilities found within these gardens provided vital commercial services and were an important factor in these garden areas enabling them to become an essential part of the social fabric of Damascene life. These urban facilities were an architectural and urban display, which was enjoyed by both the elite classes and ordinary people. Canteens, for instance, were equipped with lamps and chandeliers and were furnished to meet the needs of all visitors, including accommodation,<sup>136</sup> food, leather mats/tablecloths, plates, eating utensils, pillows, quilts, blankets, and cloaks for overnight visitors.<sup>137</sup> There were cooks, beverage and fruit vendors as well as waiters who were prepared to assist guests with all their needs. These commercial places were equipped with all the provisions required for visitors staying overnight to enjoy the nocturnal activities offered at these gardens.

Beside coffee, the serving of food in Damascene gardens was, of course, a necessity.<sup>138</sup> The al-Rabwa garden, for instance, was well known for its bazaars, with shops offering fried fish, *tannūrī* bread, fruit vendors, and cooks. Also, a wide variety of fresh produce was available for purchase at cheap prices. In addition to the meats that were brought in from the city, fifteen sheep were slaughtered at the site daily.<sup>139</sup>

The numerous facilities and amenities that were found at these gardens were designed in

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<sup>133</sup> Al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 79. There is scant information about the materials used to build the structures in the gardens. Perhaps we could assume that the canteens were constructed using light materials, such as thatch. These light structures were probably temporary and used to construct coffeehouses in spring and then demolished in autumn and winter, when the gardens were returned to agricultural land. Alternatively, it could be interpreted that the owner of the garden rented their places to the *maqāsifī* in the spring and summer, when the recreational gathering (*tanazzuh/sīrān*) took place. These are unanswered questions and require further research.

<sup>134</sup> A *Khān* was only mentioned in al-Jabha garden. See Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 222-28.

<sup>135</sup> Al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 83-89.

<sup>136</sup> Al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 86.

<sup>137</sup> See al-Jabha: Al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 79; Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 222-223. See also Qaṭya garden in: Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 229-230.

<sup>138</sup> See for information James Grehan, *Everyday Life and Consumer Culture*.

<sup>139</sup> Al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 83-89.

a way to encourage visitors to stay for as long as possible. Visitors would sometimes stay for as long as a month. Al-Badrī wrote that —This phenomenon does not exist in any other country in the world.»<sup>140</sup>

The variety of urban amenities that existed in the recreational gardens, encouraged people to visit more often, and importantly, spend extended periods of time, often days or weeks at a time, within the pleasurable environment of the city's gardens. Furthermore, such amenities enabled people from different areas of Damascus, or visitors from outside of Damascus, to visit these gardens. As a result, the growing trend of the establishment of a culture of entertainment, focused around gardens, was able to bloom. Thus, we are able to observe how this phenomenon of the recreational culture could participate in the development of Damascus as a city.

The development of the city and the city's economy can be seen in the growth of businesses which focused on providing the services and amenities to garden visitors. Renters, owners, or administrators (*mutawallī*) of a pious endowment (*waqf*) could establish businesses by investing in a coffeehouse or a restaurant. These new businesses would therefore provide more spaces and opportunities for visitors to interact and encourage a growth in communication. In the law-court archives, a case dated to the 17th of November 1752 (14th of Muḥarram 1166), shows a rental document for a coffeehouse and its surrounding recreational areas (*maṣyaf*). This land was classified as a pious endowment of Sinān and the rental agreements show that a three year lease was granted to the proprietor of the coffeehouse. The tenant was granted the full legal right to use the coffeehouse and its surrounding land, used for recreation, as his investment and for his financial benefit (*intfā*,).<sup>141</sup>

In conclusion, to create a successful hub of entertainment,<sup>142</sup> two important elements were required. Firstly, suitable natural features. Specifically, in the case of Damascus, the Baradā river, the Qāsyūn mountain, and the Ghūṭat Dimashq, all of which were complemented by the favourable Mediterranean weather. Secondly, urban amenities,

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid, 80-81.

<sup>141</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 137, document no. 40, case dated to 1112.

<sup>142</sup> Terry Nichols Clark, ed. *The City as an Entertainment Machine, Research in Urban Policy* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2004).

religious and recreational, were required. With regards to Damascus, both these requirements were incorporated. A society of consumption, entertainment and recreation flourished, as a result of the Damascene people's desire for leisure, providing the catalyst for increased urban development and economic growth.

### ***Takht, Maq'ad, Maqşūra, Nā'ūra / Dūlāb***

#### ***Takht***

Ibn Kannān, quoting an anonymous historian, claimed that al-Rabwa had a hundred structures, named *takht* (pl, *tukhūt*), dedicated to recreational purposes.<sup>143</sup> These structures were found within other gardens of Damascus too. There has been some debate as to the true meaning of *takht*. Muḥammad Duhmān, a twentieth-century historian and editor, who focuses on the Ottoman period, in his analysis of *al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya* and *al-Qalā'id al-Jawhariyya*, states that a *takht* refers to one of al-Rabwa's recreational places. It was his contention that a *takht* may refer to a palace (*qaşr*), built above ground level, with a hall surrounded by rooms (similar to an *īwān*). Duhmān believed that the *takht* may refer either to the wooden hall, owned by Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd Zinkī, who built the *tukhūt* at al-Rabwa for the sake of the poor people,<sup>144</sup> or alternatively, a *takht* may refer to the domed rotunda of the al-Daylamī Mosque.<sup>145</sup>

However, the assumption of Duhmān that the *takht* is a palace, a hall or domed rotunda is not compatible with the statements of Ibn Kannān, who wrote that one-hundred *tukhūt* could be found at al-Rabwa. It would not be reasonable to consider the possibility of this area housing one hundred structures, and therefore we should question the validity of Duhmān definition of this word.

According to this study, the term *takht*, which in Arabic literally translates to “beds raised above the ground,” refers to “benches” or “seats.” The word *divan*, meaning benches/seats is found in Turkish language, where it retains the same meaning of *takht*. Cross examination of historical sources of the period supports this proposition.

<sup>143</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 301.

<sup>144</sup> Nūr al-Dīn Maḥmūd Zinkī ruled Damascus between 594/1154 and 569/1173.

<sup>145</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 289, footnote no 7. See also Aḥmad Duhmān introduction in *al-Qalā'id al-Jawhariyya*, 11.

In the chronicle of Ibn Kannān, the term *tukhūt* was mentioned in the celebration of the safe return of the pilgrimage procession. Among the pilgrims, there were elites, notables, and camels decorated luxuriously with velvet and silk. Along the procession there were *tukhūt*, from which young children were able to watch.<sup>146</sup>

Examination of the Ottoman law-court records dealing with rent, sale, and purchase of coffeehouses adds further support. These records list in detail the contents of coffeehouses, including items such as tables, cups, seats and *tukhūt*.<sup>147</sup> A study by Alan Mikhail, regarding coffeehouses in Istanbul, shows that —most café patrons spent most of their time sitting on small wooden chairs or slightly raised *divans* [benches] with their coffee and water pipe.”<sup>148</sup> He added that the top bench is situated in the opposite corner to the oven, —where local notables and distinguished men of the neighbourhood would sit.”<sup>149</sup> Furthermore, the term *tukhūt* is also used to describe the benches which would be found in the public baths of Damascus.<sup>150</sup> This adds further weight to the assumption that the term *tukhūt* refers to benches, rather than the palaces or domes as Muḥammad Duhmān believed.

### ***Maq‘ad***

There is a reference in Ibn Kannān’s account to the existence of *maqā‘id* (sing. *maq‘ad*) in the recreational gardens. Linguistically, *maq‘ad* comes from the verb *q.,.d.*, meaning to —sit down.” According to Arab lexicographers, *maq‘ad* refers to a —place where people can sit on benches or seats.”<sup>151</sup> However, the linguistic meaning does not match with the description of *maqā‘id* found in the historical writings of this period. Historical writings do not refer to *maq‘ad* as simple furniture, such as a seat, but rather as a more substantial

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<sup>146</sup> Ibn Kannān, *Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya*, 156. Furthermore, the term *tukhūt* is still used in other cities in Syria such as amāh. According to the citizens of Ḥamā, it refers to benches or seats that were historically found in gardens.

<sup>147</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 142, document no. 8, case dated to 1167; LCR, Damascus, vol. 190, document no. 158, case dated to 1184; LCR, Damascus, vol. 177, document no. 262, case dated to 1179.

<sup>148</sup> Alan Mikhail, —The Heart’s Desire: Gender, Urban Space and the Ottoman Coffee House,” in *Ottoman Tulips, Ottoman Coffee: Leisure and Lifestyle in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Dana Sajdi (London; New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007), 149.

<sup>149</sup> Alan Mikhail, —The Heart’s Desire,” 149.

<sup>150</sup> Jean-Paul Pascual and Georgina Hafteh, —Les Ustensiles Du Hammām, Damas, Hama, Alep au XVIIIe Siècle,— in *Balnéorient Conference* (Damascus: November 2009).

<sup>151</sup> See the root *q.,.d.*: Al-Farāhīdī, *Kitāb al-‘Ayn*; Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab*; Al-Zabīdī, *Tāj al-‘Arūs*, 9: 42-62.

urban facility. For instance, the *maq'ad* of al-Nawfara, is described as an urban structure, containing wooden benches, which served either as seats or tables, and wooden windows which overlooked the Banyās river.<sup>152</sup>

The *maq'ad* is a “structure” that offers visitors a space for entertainment, both during the day and night. Typically *maqā'id* seemed not to be furnished. In Ibn Kannān's description of the *maq'ad* of al-Nawfara, he accounted that the *maqā'id* did not provide the leather mats which were typically provided at coffeehouses. He added that on recreational days people would bring all necessities with them, including quilts, covers, leather mats, and even plates, spoons and eating utensils.<sup>153</sup>

Al-Badrī did not use the term *maqā'id* in any of his writings. However, Ibn Tūlūn, during the late Mamlūk period, mentioned that in the al-Dahsha garden there was a structure with windows overlooking the water in four directions.<sup>154</sup> Ibn Tūlūn's observations bare a strong similarity to Ibn Kannān's description of *maqā'id*. We can assume that these *maqā'id* were kiosks or pavilions. This assumption is strengthened by examining records from the 23rd of May 1831, written by the French travellers, Michaud and Poujoulat, who described the Damascene people spending entire days in garden kiosks alongside the Baradā river. These kiosks were similar to the ones which existed in Istanbul along the banks of the Bosphorus.<sup>155</sup>

It can be assumed that some of those *maqā'id* could be rented by the strolling visitors, while others were privately owned. Based on Ibn Kannān's notes, there were private *maqā'id* such as *maq'ad* Ḥusayn Afandī Ibn Qarnaq on al-Qanawāt river, while he also recorded the existence of others, available to the general public, in al-Rabwa.<sup>156</sup> As Ibn

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<sup>152</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 307, footnote no: 2.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid*, 1: 307.

<sup>154</sup> Ibn Tūlūn, *Quḍāt Dimashq: al-Thughr al-Bassām fī Dhikr man Wulliya Qaḍā' al-Shām*, ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid (Dimashq: Maṭbū'āt al-Majma' al-'Ilmī al-'Arabī, 1956), 313.

<sup>155</sup> M. Michaud and M. Poujoulat, *Correspondance D'orient 1830-1831* (Paris: Ducollet, 1833), 201-202.

<sup>156</sup> Ḥusayn Afandī Ibn Muṣṭafā Ibn Ḥasan, known as Ibn Qarnaq al-Dimashqī (d.1090/1679), was famous for his skills in enchantment, sorcery, magic, witchery and other occult sciences. He became a wealthy man who had many properties and built a palace and a hall (*qā,,a*) in al-Ṣāliḥiyya. He held a high financial position in the province and managed many important *waqf*, such as al-Salīmiyya, al-Sulaymāniyya, al-Ḥaramayn al-Maṣriyyīn and Umayyad mosque. He travelled twenty times to al-Rūm in the capital. He was chosen by the pilgrim elites (*a,yān al-ḥujjāj*) to become the *amīr al-ḥajj* (the military official, in charge of conducting the pilgrim caravan), after the death of the existing official during a pilgrimage. He travelled

Kannān also mentioned, there were separate *maqā'id* reserved for notables (*akābir*) in western al-Rabwa.<sup>157</sup> It appears that *maqā'id* were largely segregated: the elites would visit certain *maqā'id* and the common people would patronise other *maqā'id*.

### ***Maqṣūra***

Ibn Kannān indicates the existence of several urban structures that contributed to the shaping of the urban fabric of the city's landscape during the Ottoman period. For instance, the *maqāṣīr* (sing. *maqṣūra*) in al-Bahnasiyya garden.<sup>158</sup> Linguistically, *maqṣūra* means —a spacious fortified house.<sup>159</sup> This definition could be compatible with the meaning used by Damascene writers in their historical accounts. The *maqāṣīr* could be assumed to have been houses which served as entertainment venues for visitors. They were interspersed with trees, fruits, flowers, and water basins.<sup>160</sup>

### ***Nā'ūra / Dūlāb***

*Nā'ūra / dūlāb*, —waterwheels,” although used primarily for agricultural purposes, were urban elements that gathered a considerable degree of attention in recreational settings. Historians would write accounts of the pleasing ambience of the waterwheels and their admiration by the Damascenes. Even entire poems were dedicated to these garden features.<sup>161</sup>

Waterwheels became an increasingly important component of the landscape, especially on all the branches of the Baradā River. While waterwheels obviously served agricultural purposes, their use for bringing water into gardens, palaces, mosques, and religious schools increased. The development of waterwheel technology was seen as an Islamic success, both in areas of agriculture and in the pursuit of beautifying the landscape with the introduction of flowing water within urban areas. Waterwheels consisted of hinged

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one more time to al-Rūm and took responsibility for tax-farming in Ba<sub>l</sub>labakk. He possessed many slaves, female, male, and even children. See al-Muḥibbī, *Khulāṣat al-Athar fī A'yān al-Qarn al-Ḥādī 'Ashar*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥasan Ismā'īl (Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 2006), 2: 118-120.

<sup>157</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 307.

<sup>158</sup> The location of Al-Bahnasiyya was east of al-Rabwa al-Ṣālihiyya neighbouring al-Dahsha and the bridge (*Jisr*) Ibn Shawwāsh, which still exists near the mill of Kīwān land. (See the attached map and the list of gardens in chapter 4).

<sup>159</sup> Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab*, the root *q.ṣ.r.*

<sup>160</sup> Al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 81-82; Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 230-231; Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab*, the root *q.ṣ.r.*

<sup>161</sup> Al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 166.

compartments that carried the water from the river to the top of the wheel, where it could then be discharged into channels that crisscrossed the gardens.<sup>162</sup> Waterwheels were not only seen as a functional part of the garden, but were also seen as an attraction and visually enjoyable element of the garden, which therefore encouraged more and more people to spend extended periods of time in the Damascene gardens.

## 2.3 Gardens and Urban Development

### 2.3.1 Elite Palaces: Architecture and Landscape

By the time of Ottoman rule in Damascus, recreational buildings and urban facilities had extended from the walled city into the spacious landscape overlooking the Baradā River outside the walled city. Small houses, pavilions, kiosks, and benches had multiplied along the river bank and pompous palaces proliferated within the gardens. Al-Nābulusī and Ibn Kannān, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, mentioned a number of *quṣūr al-muzha*, literally “recreational palaces,” such as the palace of Shīd,<sup>163</sup> Karīm al-Dīn,<sup>164</sup> al-Imādī,<sup>165</sup> and al-Bakrī.<sup>166</sup>

Detailed architectural designs of the palaces are absent from the numerous historical sources and firsthand accounts of travellers. However, from analysis of the law-court records, some valuable information regarding the architectural design of these palaces and their surrounding gardens, landscapes, and urban facilities can be gained. The cases in the Ottoman courts predominately dealt with disputes regarding the rent and sales of property, the majority amongst the elites. For instance, the conspicuous palace of Abd al-Raḥīm Afandī was rented by ʿAmr Āghā, a notable, for 90 piasters a year over a three year period.<sup>167</sup> The palace had a unique entrance with ascending stone stairs which overlooked the river in the garden of al-Marja.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> For information about the waterwheel system in irrigating see Fairchild Ruggles, *Islamic Gardens*, 21-26-72.

<sup>163</sup> Al-Nābulusī, *Burj Bābil*, 91. I did not find any information about the palace of Shīd and its location remains unknown.

<sup>164</sup> It is located in al-Šāliḥiyya, in the al-Dahsha garden; See chapter 4 and the map provided for the location of these gardens; See also Al-Nābulusī, *Burj Bābil*, 259; Ibn Kannān, *Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya*, 222.

<sup>165</sup> This palace might be located in the al-Imādiyya garden. Al-Nābulusī, *Burj Bābil*, 259; Ibn Kannān, *al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya*, 36.

<sup>166</sup> This palace was overlooking the Thawrā river in al-Jisr suburbs. See Ibn Kannān, *al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya*, 36; Al-Nābulusī, *Burj Bābil*, 290.

<sup>167</sup> Piaster is a unit of currency.

<sup>168</sup> Law-court records (LRC), Damascus, vol. 25, document no. 151, case dated to 1112.

Commonly, all palaces were built in the heart of the gardens, surrounded by running water, an abundance of trees and urban recreational facilities. Garden Palaces were generally the most opulent, costly, and expensive architectural buildings of the Ottoman period. Ibn Kannān expresses his wonder at unprecedented expenditure on the materials that were used to build these palaces. Ibn Kannān recalls the differences between his period and earlier years, where the most extravagant architecture and building materials were reserved only for mosques and religious school.<sup>169</sup> What Ibn Kannān was observing was a change in social views regarding the importance of recreation in Damascene society. In particular, how people no longer viewed dedicating increasingly large amounts of resources to building large palaces for the pursuit of recreation as inappropriate.

Ottoman vanity could be seen in the way that they describe their palaces. Ibn Kannān described the palaces found within the gardens as recreational palaces (*quṣūr al-nuzha*). From this description, we can see clearly that the primary purpose for these palaces was to serve as a site for social and leisure activities. For instance, the al-Turkumān palace, set up as an endowment to al-Azbakī, was located in the suburb of al-Jisr al-Abyaḍ. It was surrounded by gardens where different species of fruits, citrus, cypress, and flowers flourished. The law-court documents reveal the spectacular architecture of the palace. When arriving at the palace, one would enter through doors, ornament with stones, which lead to a narrow corridor (*dihlīz*). In this corridor there was a window with a metal grid overlooking the entrance, a room with three windows with metal grids that glance over the south, and a kitchen with water storage facilities (*maṣna,, mā'khazzān*). After passing through this corridor, one can access a vast courtyard with a fountain in the middle, which derived its water from the Yazīd river. Furthermore, there was a vaulted hall (*īwān*), closed from three sides and opened entirely from the forth, with the open stone arch facing toward the courtyard. Another *īwān* was located on the eastern side of the palace. A kiosk-shape public fountain (*sabīl*) and a hall with two *īwān* were accessible from the courtyard. Additionally, the lower courtyard led up to a reception hall that was located in the upper level of the palace, where six wide windows with metal grids afforded a brilliant view toward the courtyard. There were also two rooms, one of which

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<sup>169</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 249.



has a fireplace. There were two flights of stairs, one made of wood and the other from stone, both of them leading to the *mashraqa*, which is the highest room in the palace.<sup>170</sup>

Another spectacular example of opulent design was also recorded in the law-court documents. The palace of Banī al-Safarjalānī, in al-Şālihiyya, and its surrounding landscape was designed elaborately, for the purpose of hosting a wide variety of functions. The palace and its land were bordered by the palace of Karīm al-Dīn on its southern and eastern sides. The palace has two private doors. The first door was for accessing a narrow corridor, whereas the second door was accessible from the corridor and linked to a stable (*iṣṭabl*), adjacent to the Yazīd river, where horses and mules were kept. Inside the palace was a kitchen, a tiled courtyard with a fountain in the middle, southern *īwān*, eastern and western squared rooms (*murbba'ayn*), and other amenities. From the courtyard there was a stoned staircase which was used to reach the roof of the *īwān* and *murbba'ayn*.<sup>171</sup> Not only the inside of the palace was elaborately designed, the gardens and the palace were also designed with attention to detail and immaculately maintained. The landscape of the palace housed a range of facilities for recreation. The facilities which were found in the palace's garden were entirely similar to those found in the recreational gardens of this period. For instance, the palace of Banī al-Safarjalānī had lively recreational areas, stone benches (*maṣātib*), fireplaces for making coffee, and a kiosk on the Yazīd river. In the property, there were wooden kiosks, contained public fountains, where visitors could sit and relax. Moreover, the garden contained a *sabīl*, best described as a larger ornamental structure containing a drinking fountain, but no place for visitors to sit. The irrigation system was provided through the use of waterwheels, which were constructed on the banks of the garden's river. The palace's garden had also a northern hall with a tiled room and several windows. All of these urban facilities were embedded within the spacious garden landscape and surrounded by small ornamental streams of water.

A third example is the palace of Sinān in al-Şālihiyya, where some Damascene people would visit for excursions. The palace was assigned to the *waqf* of the two holy mosques. It was located to the west of the palace of Karīm al-Dīn. Its gardens grew pomegranates,

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<sup>170</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 62, document no. 114, case dated to 1141, when S\_ūd al- Aqrabānī bought a half share (twelve *qīrāt*) of the Palace.

<sup>171</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 147, document no. 483, case dated to 1170.

bitter orange trees, and a variety of different plants. The design of the palace included two courtyards. The entrance to the first courtyard had a stable, through which you would proceed to reach a path, like a corridor (*dahlīz*), to access the second courtyard via a door. In the second courtyard there are fountains surrounded by tiled ground, with a fountain head spraying water (*fusqīyya*), a southern *īwān*, a hall, and a kitchen with several traditional ovens closely resembling the wood burning ovens located inside a wall (*kawanīn*). The palace also had an underground store room (*kīlār*) and a square room with alcoves, covered with a dome (*qubba*).<sup>172</sup>

With regards to all these palaces, nowhere do the archives explicitly refer to the shape or quantify the size of the gardens. Therefore, we do not have any evidence as to whether any architectural measures were taken to design the surrounding landscapes and gardens of these palaces. We also do not have a clear indication of whether these gardens and palaces were visited by common people, as was the trend in eighteenth century Istanbul, where the gardens of the royal palaces were often opened to the general public.<sup>173</sup>

From the previous descriptions of the lavish architectural designs of the recreational palaces, we can infer that in the seventeenth–and eighteenth–century Damascus, the extravagant structure exhibited in the construction of elites’ palaces can be linked to the increasing popularity of a culture of entertainment and leisure. The elites’ indulgence in luxurious palaces can be seen as an expression of a recreational culture that started to expand in the public life of the city.

### **2.1.2 Gardens and Urban Development: Ibn Kannān’s Observations**

While the construction of recreational palaces spread in certain areas of the Damascus landscape, several urban gardens were developing and changing. The landscape of Damascus experienced significant change from the late Mamlūk period continuing through the Ottoman period. Examination of how the landscapes, including suburban gardens and recreation gardens contributed to the change of the urban fabric of the city is based on Ibn Kannān observations of Damascus. Ibn Kannān (d. 1135/1740) cited several

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<sup>172</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 60, document no. 818, case dated to 1140; LCR, Damascus, vol. 146, document no. 603, case dated to 1170.

<sup>173</sup> Alan Mikhail, —Th&Heart’s Desire,” 140.

descriptions of gardens from al-Badrī's (d. 894/1498) writings and recorded the changes that occurred to the Damascene landscape since al-Badrī's time.

While, in the aforementioned accounts, descriptions were provided about a number of the most frequented gardens, limited details were given about a wide variety of private gardens. Thus, in order to describe and create an accurate image of the changes the city's gardens underwent throughout the centuries, this chapter analyses the gardens most frequently referenced in the selected accounts; namely al-Rabwa, Qaṭya, al-Jabha, al-Nayrab and Bayn al-Nahrayn.

By the time Ibn Kannān wrote his account, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, the number of recreational gardens that were fully equipped with the urban facilities necessary for the recreational purposes of strollers appeared to have reduced in number and concentrated only in two main suburbs al-Ṣāliḥiyya and al-Jisr. Prior to this change in the Damascene landscape, Damascus as a city could be easier to divide and classify into natural landscape and urban landscape. The urban landscape, concentrated within al-Ṣāliḥiyya and al-Jisr, continued to serve as the centre of recreation. The natural landscape continued as the primary site for agricultural cultivation, but was also visited by those wishing to enjoy the beauty of nature.

Urban development and transformation of various suburbs in Damascus played an important role in the growth of the city. The recreational gardens in al-Ṣāliḥiyya and al-Jisr continued to prosper, by offering facilities for leisure, commerce and religion. Public recreational places, coffeehouses, recreational palaces (*quṣūr al-nuzha*), public baths, mosques and religious schools were available to meet the social and recreational needs of the Damascene people.

By this period, the remnants of the numerous gardens which were found throughout Damascus had been largely returned to the natural landscape, void of buildings, referred to as *basātīn*. Al-Sahm, Maqrā, al-Mayṭūr, al-Lubbād, al-Dahsha, al-Jabha, and al-Khalkhāl were, at the time of Ibn Kannān, merely —rins and names.”<sup>174</sup> He reported that

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<sup>174</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 289-290.

it was rare to find a —kiosk (*ḥaq‘ad*) for strollers.”<sup>175</sup> These gardens were neglected and dilapidated (*khurribat*), and over time blended back within the natural landscape (*janā‘in*).<sup>176</sup> Furthermore, the gardens of al-Sharafayn and Ṣadr al-Bāz were transformed into places of agriculture, but in each garden remained palaces, visited by the notables and elites, especially during the summer time.<sup>177</sup>

Ibn Kannān portrayed a picture of the changes that took place in al-Rabwa during the late seventeenth century. He recorded the destruction of kiosks in 1080/1669, the neglect and disappearance of all buildings from al-Rabwa. The site changed into a place devoid of buildings and —the only remnants were meadows (*murūj*) and *basātīn* on the river bank, owned by people in Dummar and al-Mazza.”<sup>178</sup> By the end of this period the suburb of al-Rabwa was no longer recognisable as an urban landscape, nature had begun to dominate the valley and the area became a part of the Damascene natural landscape once again.

Ibn Kannān added that the urban centre of Bayn al-Nahrayn had been completely destroyed, with the only remnant of prior development being two waterwheels, the so-called al-Mawlawiyya and Bāb al-Hawā waterwheels. In 1117/1705 the site and buildings appear to have been refurbished, when governor Muḥammād Bāshā Ibn Bayram initiated the building of a new religious school for the public.<sup>179</sup>

The garden and urban facilities of al-Nayrabayn, a popular Mamlūk suburb, inhabited by many elites and leaders, located east of al-Rabwa on the slope of mount Qāsyūn,<sup>180</sup> were neglected during the period of Ottoman rule. Records date the destruction of the al-Zumurrud public bath and another unidentified garden to 1115/1703.<sup>181</sup> Despite the abandonment of the garden of al-Nayrabayn, this period was not devoid of development.

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<sup>175</sup> Ibid, 1: 274.

<sup>176</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya*, 35.

<sup>177</sup> Ḥusayn Bāshā (d.1094/1682), a famous vizier in Damascus, built his palace at al-Khātūniyya, in al-Sharaf. On the site of the palace, various types of plants and trees were cultivated, including both native Damascene flora and imported varieties. See al-Muḥibbī, *Khulāṣat al-Athar*, 2: 124.

<sup>178</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 291-307.

<sup>179</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 247. Ḥikmat Ismā‘īl, the editor of this book, referenced Muḥammād Bāshā Ibn Bayram, an Ottoman vizier who ruled Damascus on two occasions. Firstly, from 1114/1702 to 1115/1703 and secondly from 1117/1705 to 1118/1706.

<sup>180</sup> Al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 82-83. Al-Nayrabayn was divided into two parts: Firstly, al-Nayrab al-A‘lā, which was situated between the Yazīd and Thowrā rivers. Secondly, al-Nayrab al-Adnā, which was located between the Thawrā and Baradā rivers.

<sup>181</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 231. See also: Ibn Kannān, *al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya*, 66.

Ibn Kannān writes of the construction of a number of *maqāṣīr* within al-Bahnasiyya, a section of the al-Nayrab suburbs, where the new dwellings were surrounded by fruit trees, flowers, and water basins.<sup>182</sup>

Al-Ṣaṭrā had also been transformed from a place with numerous buildings to land dedicated to agriculture, *basātīn* and *ḥadā'iq*.<sup>183</sup> Similarly, al-Sahm suburb underwent transition from a place full of adjoining houses to agricultural gardens with an abundance of trees and fruits. The changes that al-Ṣaṭrā and al-Sahm underwent were accounted in the chronicles of Ibn Kannān, when he wrote: —aṢahm and al-Ṣaṭrā were suburbs in Damascus, but now they have become a number of *ḥadā'iq* and *basātīn* with abundant water and opulent trees and fruits.”<sup>184</sup>

Ibn Kannān recorded the abandonment of another Mamlūk garden, named al-Munaybi‘,<sup>185</sup> during the Ottoman period. Though, he writes that it was possible for this garden to have been transformed and renamed as al-Zuhrābiyya and therefore not completely destroyed.<sup>186</sup>

This trend of changes and development began to affect the surrounding villages of al-Mazza, Dummar, Ḥarastā, Mnīn, and Barza. As in the suburbs of Damascus, the gardens in these villages were also less frequented by visitors and the areas were instead used for agricultural purposes.<sup>187</sup>

As observed by Ibn Kannān, the changes in the distribution of gardens, within the Damascene city landscape, made a large impact on the physical fabric and appearance of the city, in particular the evolution of the city’s landscape, physical shape and form. Unfortunately, Ibn Kannān did not state the reason why such dilapidation happened to these gardens. It could be assumed that these gardens were neglected by the state official.

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<sup>182</sup> Al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 81-82; Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 230-231. For the definition of *maqāṣīr*, see the previous section.

<sup>183</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 285.

<sup>184</sup> Ibn Kannān, *Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya*, 479.

<sup>185</sup> Al-Munaybi‘ was watered by Bānyās river and paralleled by al-Qanawāt to the south.

<sup>186</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 270. Al-Zuhrābiyya was known as a residential area commonly inhabited by Turks. Within this area was the al-Barāmika cemetery, where the tombs of the elites, including that of Ibn Ṭaymiyya, resided.

<sup>187</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 275.

Further investigation into any major natural catastrophes which struck the city, could be conducted. For instance, at the same period, specifically in 1080/1669-1670, Ibn Jum‘a al-Maqqār, a historian from the late seventeenth to early eighteenth centuries, stated that Damascus was devastated by a severe plague which resulted in huge damage to property and —a thousand funerals in one day.”<sup>188</sup> Whether any links can be drawn between the political, natural, or social events of the time, and the trend of the abandonment of gardens requires further investigation and research.

## **2.4 The Coffeehouse: A New Form of Recreation**

The introduction of coffee consumption, as a popular social activity and pastime, is first recorded in the sixteenth century. The popularity of coffeehouses, which spread throughout the Damascene gardens and the city in general, encouraged more regular social gatherings and contributed to the rise of the Damascene public sphere. Before examining the cultural practices surrounding the consumption of coffee, a brief overview of the history of this new social institution, of the form and function of its architecture, and of its role in the city is necessary.

### **2.4.1 The Introduction of Coffee in Damascus**

During his visit to Damascus in 941/1534, Badī‘ Ibn al-Ḍiyā‘, the custodian of the two holy mosques tried coffee with a sheikh and his friends near al-‘Afif Mosque, in al-Ṣāliḥiyya. —I do not know if it was drunk in our city of Damascus before that time,”<sup>189</sup> narrated the seventeenth century historian, Najm al-Dīn al-Ghazzī, from Ibn Tūlūn’s chronicles. This could be the first recorded event of coffee being consumed in Damascus and was nearly one century earlier than the introduction of coffee in Europe.<sup>190</sup> Another of the first recorded events of coffee consumption dates back to 947/1540, when sheikh ‘Alī Ibn Muḥammad al-Shāmī Ibn ‘Arrāq visited Damascus. Although his father was

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<sup>188</sup> Al-Maqqār, —al-Bāshāt wa-l-Quḍāt fi Dimashq,”40. Analysis and examination of historical sources, from this period of history, do not contain the level of information and detail necessary to gain a full understanding of the changes which occurred to the landscape of Damascus. Though, the construction of an approximate record, based on observations of historians, is still valuable, in the respect that it will identify areas for further research.

<sup>189</sup> Al-Ghazzī, *al-Kawākib al-Sā‘ira*, 2: 126-127.

<sup>190</sup> For information about the emergence of coffee see Ralph Hattox, *Coffee and Coffeehouses: The Origins of a Social Beverage in the Medieval Near East* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1985); Jean-Paul Pascual, —Cafet caf s a Dam as: Contribution à la chronologie de leur diffusion au XVIème siècle,” *Berytus Archaeological Studies* 42 (1995-6), 141-156.

against drinking coffee, Ibn ʿArrāq not only drank coffee, but in fact was credited as encouraging the growing trend of drinking coffee. From this period the number of coffeehouses increased significantly and would be found in many Damascene gardens and suburbs.<sup>191</sup>

#### 2.4.2 The Emergence of the Coffeehouse

Before the popularity of coffeehouses (*maqāhī*), people used to gather at canteens (*maqāsif*), which served primarily as a public space and urban institution where the idle or unemployed people (*baṭṭālīn*) could go to spend time and relax.<sup>192</sup> In the Ottoman period, almost all canteens transformed into coffeehouses, flourishing both inside and outside the walled city of Damascus, along the banks of the Baradā river. The coffeehouses formed the most important urban facility that attracted visitors to spend time visiting the Damascene gardens.

In Ibn Kannān's account, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, it was only the coffeehouse of Qatya which was specifically mentioned. Instead of coffeehouses, Ibn Kannān used to point out the canteens. The recreational garden in Qatya,<sup>193</sup> consisted of a small village (*qaṣaba*),<sup>194</sup> a boutique (*ḥānūt*) with an upper floor of four rooms,<sup>195</sup> and the popular coffeehouse, with a number of waterwheels on the site. The coffeehouse had table mats, plates, eating utensils, and even covers, used for shelter when visitors stayed overnight. Ibn Kannān notes that —his was not seen in any city other than Damascus.”<sup>196</sup>

In addition to Ibn Kannān's observation in the eighteenth century, one of the earliest descriptions of a place where coffee was sold was found in *waqfiyyat* of Murād Bāshā in 1594. The Bāshā built a place for the preparation and sale of coffee (*ṭabkh al-qahwa wa*

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<sup>191</sup> Al-Ghazzī, *al-Kawākib al-Sā'ira*, 2: 196. For information about coffee in the early sixteenth century see Ibn Ṭūlūn, (d 953/1529), *Ḥawādith Dimashq al-Yawmiyya Ghadāt al-Ghazū al-'Uthmānī li-l-Shām 926-951h*, ed. Aḥmad Ībish (Dimashq: Dār al-Awā'il, 2002).

<sup>192</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 229-230.

<sup>193</sup> The recreational garden of Qatya was located near Zāwiyat al-Ḥarīrī, southern al-Sharaf and eastern al-Rabwa, on the path of the al-Qanawāt river, and adjacent to the Baradā river.

<sup>194</sup> Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, the root *q.s.b*. Ibn Manzūr mentioned many definitions of *qaṣaba*: a recently excavated well, or a *qaṣaba* of a location means its city, or a *qaṣaba means a village... etc*. Here, the interpretation of *qaṣaba* as a small village is viable in the context.

<sup>195</sup> In Arabic dictionaries the word *ḥāna* pl, *ḥānūt* means a place for drinking wine or a winery. See Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, the root *ḥ.n.t*. However, the meaning of *ḥānūt* in this context is a shop or boutique, which was derived from the court records of the same period. The meaning of *aṭbāq* or *ṭibāq* is: layers situated above each other, Ibn Manzūr, *lisān al-ʿArab*, the root *ṭ.b.q*.

<sup>196</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 229-230.

*bay'uha*) at the market of Tawāqiyat al-Arwām, west of Bāb al-Barīd. The coffee store was a large complex, consisting of two floors. The ground floor had a few *īwān*, stone benches and fireplaces and a fountain, with water supplied from the al-Qanawāt river. Stone stairs led to the upper level, where there were arcades (*arwiqa*) that overlooked the markets downstairs.<sup>197</sup>

The French diplomat, physician and magistrate, Balthasar de Monconys, is one of the first foreigners to describe the early Damascene coffeehouses in his journal published in the seventeenth century. Written while visiting Damascus on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May, 1647, his diary depicts the coffeehouses: ~~they~~ they are all covered, with panes of glass in the middle; there is a beautiful fountain with several jets of water falling into a large square basin; all the benches are covered with rugs and there are theatres where drinkers are entertained by cantors and players of instruments.”<sup>198</sup>

These written documents by travellers and historians were enhanced in the nineteenth century by the works of art, predominately engravings, created by European travellers. For instance, the British traveller and artist William Henry Bartlett visited Damascus in 1840 and represented the city's topography in many famous drawings. One of them (Fig 2.1) depicted a variety of coffeehouses on the bank of the Baradā river, opened from all sides, and populated by groups of people sitting beneath canopies providing shade. These roofs, which block out the sun, were built from light materials such as thatch and were supported by slender columns of wood. This drawing also shows people drinking coffee and smoking, whilst appreciating the ambience of the riverside location.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> Jean-Paul Pascual, *–Damas à la fin du XVIème siècle: Trois actes de waqf Ottomans,* 2 vols, Arabic text (Universite de Provence (Aix-Marseille II), 1981), 2: 78.

<sup>198</sup> Balthasar de Monconys, *Journal des voyages de Monsieur de Monconys*, (Lyon, 1665), 345. The translation is done from the original French publication, by author David Radzinowicz. See Gérard Degeorge, *Damascus*, trans. David Radzinowicz (Paris: Flammarion, 2004), 176.

<sup>199</sup> Bartlett, Purser, and Carne, *Syria, the Holy Land, Asia Minor*.



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**Figure 2.1** Coffeehouse in Damascus. The illustration was drawn by Bartlett in the nineteenth century.  
(Source: Bartlett, *coffeehouses in Damascus*, engraved by S. Smith. 1836). ([www.antique-prints.de](http://www.antique-prints.de))

### 2.4.3 Form and Function

None of the aforementioned historical descriptions provide details about the architectural design of the coffeehouses. The law-court documents of the Ottoman period reveal, however, that generally the coffeehouses that were established overlooking a river consisted of an indoor area (*juwwānī*), an outdoor area (*barrānī*). The site of the coffeehouse also had another outdoor recreational area (*maṣyaḥ*) overlooking the river. Examples of such coffeehouses were found at al-Khrīzātiyya, al-Sukkariyya, al-Shirābī and al-Manākhliyya,<sup>200</sup> all of which were assigned to different pious endowments and rented for several years. Al-Manākhliyya coffeehouse provides an example of the design and contents of a typical Damascene coffeehouse.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> November 1752 (10<sup>th</sup> of *Muḥarram* 1166), the law-court records state that land located outside of the Damascene wall was rented from the *waqf* of Sinān Āghā, for

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<sup>200</sup> The location of Khrīzātiyya coffeehouse was inside the walled city of the Sūq al-‘Ubī in Bāb al-Jābīya suburb. It was bounded by Khān al-Hamāshina (khān Sulaymān Bāshā al-‘Azm): LCR, Damascus, vol. 137, document no. 04, case dated to 1167. Whereas, the location of al-Sukkariyya is in al-‘Ubī Market, see LCR, Damascus, vol. 137, document no. 91, case dated to 1210.

the purpose of the business of a coffeehouse. The land consisted of two parts the al-Manākhliyya coffeehouse and an adjacent recreational space, known as a *maṣyaf*.<sup>201</sup> The coffeehouse had covered seating (*dākhil musaqqaf*) with raised platforms and a fireplace to roast, serve and sell coffee. It also had open air seating (*khārij*). The adjacent recreational space overlooked the river from both sides al-‘Aqrabānī river and the Citadel’s moat, from the south; and Baradā river from the north. To reach the recreational space one would have to enter through the main coffeehouse, and use an entrance which had balustrades.<sup>202</sup> It might be assumed that the differences between the open air seating and the adjacent recreational space is that the latter is an exposed area without any covered ceiling, surrounded by balustrades, and directly overlooking the river, whereas, the open air section, adjacent to the inside, was a covered section with a lightly constructed ceiling supported by several columns. These design characteristics were common in coffeehouses situated in gardens overlooking the river.

Numerous coffeehouses were well known for their open exterior space, while others were known for their fountains. An example is the al-Nawfara coffeehouse, literally the —Fountain coffeehouse,” which was one of the most popular coffeehouses in Damascus and still continues to run today. Ibn Kibrīt, a traveller and historian from Medina, who visited Damascus in the seventeenth century, described the fountain at al-Nawfara coffeehouse as a Damascene beauty. He was astonished by the height of the fountain water pump and by the ambience that it brought to the surrounding area.<sup>203</sup> The fountain’s water was transported from the branches of the Baradā river, to a water tank in the coffeehouse, and then to the fountain. Another example is the al-Ḥammām coffeehouse, literally the —Bath coffeehouse,” which was famous for its two fountains, water for which was also supplied from the Banyās river.<sup>204</sup> Also, Jean de Thévenot, a European traveller

<sup>201</sup> Al-Budayrī visited al-Manākhliyya coffeehouse, in January 1747 (*Muḥarram* 1160), after a major flood ripped through Damascus. This flood caused widespread damage to the markets and houses, and an inundation of al-Marja square and the citadel. The raised platforms in the coffeehouses were completely covered by water. Many people drowned in the flash flood, in addition to bearing a significant financial loss. See al-Budayrī, *Ḥawādith Dimashq*, 151.

<sup>202</sup> The coffeehouse land was bound by the street from the south, where the entrance was located, while there was al-Sināniyya mosque and an exterior place (*maṣyaf*) from the west. See LCR, Damascus, vol. 137, document no. 04, case dated to 1166.

<sup>203</sup> Muḥammad Ibn ‘AbdAllāh al-Ḥusaynī al-Mūsīmī Kibrīt, (d.1069/1659), *Rihlat al-Shitā’ wal-Ṣayf*, ed. Muḥammad Sa‘īdal-Ṭanṭāwī (Bayrūt: Manshūrāt al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1969), 217.

<sup>204</sup> Al-Ḥammām coffeehouse was assigned to *waqf* of Alī Katkhuda al-Ḥūṭī, see LCR, Damascus, vol. 836, document no. 360, case dated to 1165; LCR, Damascus, vol. 139, document no. 34, case dated to 1166.

who visited Damascus at the beginning of eighteenth century, mentioned the importance of the fountain in the coffeehouses. He noted that the famous coffeehouses have special decorative and natural features, including a courtyard with a fountain in the middle, surrounded by trees, providing shade, and flowers with lovely fragrances.<sup>205</sup>

### Utensils and Tools

From a wide range of Arabic sources, only the law-court records present original and accurate information regarding the utensils and tools Damascene coffeehouses used. The law-court archives show that similar utensils were used in many of the coffeehouses, scattered throughout various locations, both inside and outside Damascus. Though, coffeehouses did try and differentiate themselves from their competitors through the use of different utensils and it was often the uniqueness of the utensils that resulted in the popularity of one coffeehouse over another.

To learn more about some of the common utensils found in coffeehouses from this period, the law-court records relating to many popular coffeehouses were examined: Sārūja, al-Manākhliyya and Nawfara.<sup>206</sup> The utilities and tools of a coffeehouse can be divided into two categories: stationary and movable tools.<sup>207</sup> Stationary tools include fireplaces, which were used for roasting coffee;<sup>208</sup> whereas, moveable tools, known as *al-kadak* or *'iddat al-qahwa*, can be classified within different groups. Firstly, copper jugs used for making coffee, large copper containers, medium-sized copper jugs, perfect China cups,<sup>209</sup> imperfect China cups, and second-hand cups. Secondly, charcoal braziers,

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<sup>205</sup> Randi Deguilhem, —“Qahwa fī Dimashq,” 117; see also: Jean de Th venot, *suite du voyage de Levant* (Paris: C. Angot, 1674).

<sup>206</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 171, document no. 718, case dated to 1178.

<sup>207</sup> See the utensils in; LCR, Damascus, vol. 171, document no. 718, case to 1178; LCR, Damascus, vol. 95, document no. 477, case dated to 1159. Most of the Arabic terms that are listed as coffeehouse utensils are not common words in Damascene language today. Nevertheless, the use of Arabic dictionaries was of great help in assessing the uses of these coffeehouse tools. The old city still has plenty of coffeehouses, although their characteristics have changed significantly. Several visits to the coffeehouses were important for better understanding of the Arabic terms from the dictionaries. See Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*; Muḥammad ʿAlī Al-Unsī, *Qāmūs al-Lughā al-ʿUthmāniyya: al-Darārī al-Lāmi, ʿā fī Muntakhabāt al-Lughāt* (Bayrūt: Maṭbaʿat Jarīdat Bayrūt, 1318); A. Barthélémy, *Dictionnaire Arabe-Français, Dialectes De Syrie : Alep, Damas, Liban, Jérusalem* (Paris: Librairie orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1935).

<sup>208</sup> *ʿUjāq* is assumed to be similar to *ocak* in Turkish. It means the small furnace where the coffee was brewed.

<sup>209</sup> The cups that were found in the coffeehouses are described as being made of China (*ṣīnī*), some of them made of Chinese faience or even porcelain (soft-paste). Other cups, called *ṣīnī farṣūrī* were better quality and more expensive than the simple *ṣīnī* cup. See Isin Ektem, —“Coffeehouses as Places of Conversation,” in

flat wooden shelves, metal heating urn, large tongs used for grasping coal, firewood, and metal trivets with three legs, used for holding containers above the fire. Thirdly, *al-kadak* also includes kilim (*buṣṭ*), mats (*ḥuṣr*), chairs, small low tables, seats/benches,<sup>210</sup> wicker stools, lecterns or book stands for story-telling, glass chandeliers, and lanterns. The last group includes the coffee container, wooden box, scale, measuring cup, basin, and cashbox.

#### 2.4.4 Expansion and Renovation

The popularity of the coffeehouse culture spread quickly throughout Damascus. Renting, purchasing, or even establishing new coffeehouses had taken a place in Damascus mostly during the eighteenth century. In 1169/1755, the governor As‘ad Bāshā al-Azm established the al-Shāghūr coffeehouse, two coffeehouses in Bāb al-Sarīja, and one near to Bāb Muṣallā.<sup>211</sup>

In other cases, several coffeehouses were renovated, such as al-Shirābī coffeehouse. It was located outside Damascus in Bāb al-Sarīja near to the Zāda mosque. The coffeehouse had indoor and outdoor sections, in addition to the exterior recreational space. It also contained a workbench, round platforms, a fireplace, and lockable doors. On the 4th of December 1753 (9th of Ṣafar 1167) the tenant of the al-Shirābī coffeehouse, completed an essential reconstruction and restoration of the coffeehouse and its exterior recreational space. This rehabilitation included the reconstruction of the platform, the structural wall, and the restoration of the ceiling, through the addition of new plaster and lime/calcimine. To do this, a variety of building tools were used, to the cost of one-hundred and twenty piasters (*ghursh*).<sup>212</sup>

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*The Illuminated Table, the Prosperous House: Food and Shelter in Ottoman Material Culture* ed. Suraiya Faroqhi and Christoph K. Neumann (Würzburg: Ergon in Kommission, 2003), 195.

<sup>210</sup> See the definition of *tukhūt* in the same chapter.

<sup>211</sup> Al-Budayrī, *Ḥawādith Dimashq*, 234. According to law-court records in Istanbul, the establishment of the coffeehouse might be within a building with multiple functions. A case showed a hotel that had extra room in the upper level which served as a coffeehouse. Another case mentioned a man who had a lodge in a mill and a coffee shop in the basement. Similarly, a record presented permission for transferring a room located underneath a prayer hall to a coffeehouse. Selma Akyazici Özkoçak, “Coffeehouses: Rethinking the Public and Private in Early Modern Istanbul,” *Journal of Urban History* 33:6 (September, 2007), 968.

<sup>212</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 142, document no. 124, case dated to 1167.

Another example of the rehabilitation of a coffeehouse can be seen in the *waqf* of Sībāy coffeehouse, which was located beside the Sībāy mosque. The tenant reconstructed the necessary parts of the coffeehouse using building tools such as wood, round beams (*asāṭīm*), boards (*dufūf*) – which were nailed above *asāṭīm*, red clay soil and ash, as a water-proof layer for insulation.<sup>213</sup> This architectural work aimed to prepare the coffeehouse to serve as a recreational centre.

The popularity of coffeehouses encouraged *al-qahwajī*, owners or tenants of the coffeehouse,<sup>214</sup> to broaden their business horizons and widen their investments. For instance, a case dated to the 25th of April 1746 (4th Rabīʿ II 1159) recorded a purchase of coffeehouse utensils by al-Ḥāj Ḥammūd al-Baḥṣalī al-Qahwajī, who bought all of the storage utensils in al-Darwīshiyya street near al-Akḥṣāsiyya mosque. The purchase of these utensils cost him one-hundred silver piasters (*ghursh*).<sup>215</sup> Another instance was the purchase of the *kadak* of the Ibn al-Nuṭṭ coffeehouse in al-Quṭun market, which cost fifty silver piasters.<sup>216</sup>

In addition to cases that deal with the rent, purchase, development and establishment of coffeehouses, there were cases relating to pious endowments and business conflicts. For instance, a case documented on the 10th of December 1764 (the 16th of Jumādā II 1178) recorded that a woman set up her properties to be financially a part of a pious endowment. One of which was a place for preparing and selling coffee, located in Sūq Sārūjā.<sup>217</sup> An example of a court case that dealt with business conflict regarding coffeehouses is dated from the 13th of February 1753 (the 9th Rabīʿ II of 1166). The documents state that a woman, who owned half of the utensils used in Sūq Sārūjā coffeehouse, had claimed that the tenant using her utensils had neglected to make payment for a year and a half. Her share of the utensils included: —~~ten~~ seven copper jugs, thirty China cups, five benches, fifty-one wooden chairs, twenty-one kilim, six mats, fifty

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<sup>213</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 92, document no. 682, case dated to 1151.

<sup>214</sup> Al-Qāsimī, *Qāmūs al-Ṣināʿāt al-Shāmiyya*, 367.

<sup>215</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 95, document no. 477, case dated to 1159.

<sup>216</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 249, document no. 140, case dated to 1152.

<sup>217</sup> The coffeehouse bounded by the al-Sultānī road from the south, the shrine of sheikh ʿUthmān and al-Jawza public bath from the east, the house of Muḥammad al-Muqābiljī and ʿAbd al-Raḥman Āghāʿs inheritors from north and west, respectively. See LCR, Damascus, vol. 171, document no. 718, case to 1178.

glass lanterns, two boxes, two coal tongs, four charcoal braziers, a basin, one coffee box, one copper scale, and a cashbox.”<sup>218</sup> Six days later, on the 19th of February 1753(15th of Rabīʿ II 1166), the judge opened another case in order to solve this dispute. The result of which was that the tenant of the Sūq Sārūjā coffeehouse had to buy all the coffeehouse utensils, from the woman, for forty piasters.<sup>219</sup>

#### 2.4.5 Proximity to the Mosque

The coffeehouse was one of the popular commercial enterprises that the city and its recreational gardens had to offer. Most commonly they were located either alongside the buildings of the city or found within gardens, the areas surrounding mosques, public baths, or local markets. The placement of coffeehouses in locations near mosques, inside gardens and in other locations where people would visit regularly was a conscious decision, which took advantage of the high number of people regularly visiting these areas. In 999/1590, Sinān Bāshā built al-Sināniyya mosque outside the walled city near al-Jābiya Gate.<sup>220</sup> Following the construction of the mosque, a compound was built, which housed the al-Manākhliyya coffeehouse, a market, an orphanage, and a public bath. Another example of a coffeehouse being situated in direct proximity to a mosque can be seen in the al-Shirābī coffeehouse, in Bāb al-Sarīja, built near the Zāda mosque, where both the mosque and the coffeehouse were under the *waqf* of sheikh Zāda.<sup>221</sup> Also, Sībāy coffeehouse, which was set up to Sībāy *waqf*, was located beside the Sībāy mosque.<sup>222</sup> The same placement of coffeehouses was observed in Ottoman Istanbul, as people came to the suburbs not only to pray, but also to visit the entertainment facilities. For instance, in sixteenth century Istanbul, coffeehouses became extremely popular and were so packed with people that it was hard to find a place to sit or stand: —It reached a point where no one was going to the mosque anymore.”<sup>223</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 137, document no. 142, case dated to 1166.

<sup>219</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 137, document no. 173, case dated to 1166.

<sup>220</sup> Al-Maqqār, —al-Bāshāt wa-l-Qudāt,” 20.

<sup>221</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 142, document no. 124, case dated to 1167.

<sup>222</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 92, document no. 682, case dated to 1151.

<sup>223</sup> Alan Mikhail, —The Heart’s Desire,” 139..See also Özkoçak, —Coffeehouses: Rethinking the Public and Private in Early Modern Istanbul,” 971.

The trend of placing coffeehouses in direct proximity to mosques also spread to Egypt.<sup>224</sup> By examining how coffeehouses were placed, specifically as a result of the flow of people between certain areas of the city, we can see the significant role that the placement of coffeehouses had on the development of the city's urban landscape.

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<sup>224</sup> M. Cengiz Yıldız, "Coffeehouses as an Informal Education Institution and Coffeehouses of Egypt," *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 9 (2010), 1356.

## Chapter 3: Gardens, Coffee Drinking, and Public Recreation

### 3.1 Garden Culture and Entertainment

Primary Arabic sources show that the people of Damascus continued to partake in garden-based recreational activities during the Ottoman period and that the society's demand for entertainment and leisure also continued into this era. The sources show that in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the location where these activities took place expanded beyond traditional indoor gatherings within the houses, public baths, and coffeehouses of the walled city and spread to the rich land of al-Ghūṭa. As a result, the Ghūṭa was developed to serve as a place for recreation, leading to the proliferation of a series of gardens, located side by side along the Baradā river.<sup>225</sup>

#### 3.1.1 Seasonal Recreation: The Days of Roses

In seventeenth–and eighteenth–century Damascus, gathering, strolling, engaging in picnics, and taking excursions to gardens became a popular activity. In *Khamrat Bābil*, which features a compilation of poems about recreational gatherings in Damascene gardens, al-Nābulusī writes that most of the gatherings with his beloved friends took place during spring.<sup>226</sup> Also, in the chronicle of Ibn Kannān, it was recorded that gardens received the most visitors on Tuesdays and Saturdays, when the roses began to blossom in spring, during what came to be known as the days of roses (*ayyām al-ward*).<sup>227</sup> The chronicle shows that as this season approached, Damascene people of all ranks prepared to leave the boundaries of the walled city and to venture into the vast plain of gardens in the surrounding landscape for the purpose of social gatherings.

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<sup>225</sup> Historians from the Ottoman period such as al-Nābulusī, Ibn Kannān and Ibn al-Rā'ī wrote in their accounts that Damascene gardens proliferated along the Baradā river. Recent studies also show the numerous gardens of the land of al-Ghūṭa including al-Šāliḥiyya, see Muḥammad Duhmān, *Fī Riḥāb Dimashq* (Dimashq: Dār al-Fikr, 1982); Šaffūh Khayr, *Ghūṭa Dimashq* (Dimashq: Wizārat al-Thaqāfa, 1966); Muḥammad Kurd Alī, *Ghūṭat Dimashq* (Dimashq: Maṭbū'āt Majma' al-Lugha al-ʿArabiyya bi-Dimashq, 1949); Muḥannad Mubayḏīn, *Thaqāfat al-Tarfīh*.

<sup>226</sup> See for instance the gathering in Al-Marja at spring time: Al-Nābulusī, *Burj Bābil*, 15. See also the poems that were composed to welcome spring as a season for play and enjoyment, al-Nābulusī, *Burj Bābil*, 19, 114.

<sup>227</sup> The reason behind choosing Saturday and Tuesday as recreational days in gardens is obscure. Further research needs to be undertaken in this area. For example see the social gatherings during the days of roses, took place at the palace of al-Bakrī on a Saturday in 1147, Ibn Kannān, *Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya*, 463. See also the gathering in Saqbā village, which started on a Saturday in 1149 and went for five nights, Ibn Kannān, *Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya*, 478.



The increasing eagerness of the city's population to experience such worldly pleasures during spring is also referenced in *Khamrat Bābil*. Al-Nābulusī wrote that gardens were a place for the composition of poems, singing, and smoking, during spring time.<sup>228</sup> The growing tendency toward the pursuit of pleasure and entertainment, rather than a single minded focus on spirituality can be perceived in many of al-Nābulusī's poems.<sup>229</sup> One such poem took the form of the following invitation:

Respond to the callers for youthful pleasure and stay with the group,  
and replace abstention from love with impious recreation.  
And adhere to excessive desires and burning passion, and leave  
behind the words of guidance, and stop listening to them.  
Only the brave wins the pleasure, while fail  
to reach it the coward and the hesitant.  
Don't think that happiness will last, nor  
will sadness, endless as it may seem, it will come to an end.<sup>230</sup>

The writing of poems was not restricted to the elites and notables. Al-Budayrī, for instance, was a barber from the common class, who regularly composed and recited *mawāliyyā* (vernacular poems and songs) in his chronicle about Damascus.<sup>231</sup>

Over time, the Damascene people's interest in pursuing leisure activities was no longer limited exclusively to springtime. Ibn Kannān indicates that Damascene people would also meet in the recreational garden of al-Laylakī, located in the Eastern Valley (al-Wadī al-Sharqī), during the blossom of quince. They would pitch their tents, light fires inside the skins of sour oranges (*nārinj*), and relax.<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>228</sup> Al-Nābulusī, *Burj Bābil*, 114, 18, 260.

<sup>229</sup> For further information on this point, see Akkach, —“The Wine of Babil.”

<sup>230</sup> Al-Nābulusī, *Burj Bābil*, 21. The translation from the origin in Arabic is done by author Samer Akkach. See Akkach, —“The Wine of Babil,” 111-112.

<sup>231</sup> Al-Budayrī, *Ḥawādith Dimashq*, 193-195.

<sup>232</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 390.

### 3.1.2 Recreational Culture of the Elites

#### *Recreational and Educational Gatherings*

Urban institutions and facilities, such as coffeehouses and leisure gardens, became the background for the elites' social activities. Even the landscape surrounding the city of Damascus was altered to serve this flourishing culture of recreation. For instance, going back to the late Mamlūk period, the Great Judge of Damascus, Aḥmad Ibn al-Farfūr, renovated a bridge that was constructed from two arches on the Yazīd river. He reduced the arches to only one in order to have an appropriate space for his boat to pass under the bridge, when travelling from the al-Dahsha garden to al-Nuḡayba in al-Rabwa.<sup>233</sup>

Another instance of the elites' indulgence and pursuit of pleasure is seen in 1139/1726, when al-Nābulusī constructed a movable pavilion (*qaṣr*), with a distinguished architectural style, which could be moved from one location to another, by a team of 10 mules. Al-Nābulusī's pavilion was not built from stone, as was popular at that time, but rather was made of wooden pieces with steel joints, whereby the wooden pavilion could be quickly disassembled and moved from one garden to another. The 10 mules would carry the pavilion when al-Nābulusī wanted to change locations and move to a new recreational garden.<sup>234</sup>

The pavilion of al-Nābulusī can be considered as a landmark of the growing culture of garden recreation. On the 26 August 1727 (9th of Muḥarram 1140), according to one account, al-Nābulusī's wooden pavilion was assembled for a *sayrān* (recreational picnic) in the land of Kīwān, in the al-Shaqrā valley. A number of elites and notables from Damascene society were invited. A couple of Damascene people heard about the al-Nābulusī's picnic and decided to join the day of recreation so that they might meet al-Nābulusī. As a gift they took two pounds of coffee. At their arrival at the park of Kīwān from the eastern side of al-Marj al-Akhḍar, the visitors were surprised by the grand scale of the festivity. At first glance, they thought that the governor of Damascus (*kāfīl Dimashq*) was having an event with his soldiers. However, they discovered that the garden was organised and prepared for the picnic of al-Nābulusī. Al-Nābulusī was sitting

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<sup>233</sup> Ibn Ṭūlūn, *Quḍāt Dimashq*, 313.

<sup>234</sup> Samer Akkach, *Intimate Invocations: al-Ghazzālī's Biography of „Abd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī (1641-1731)* (Netherlands: Brill, forthcoming 2012).

like a king in his pavilion, which was erected on the bank of the Baradā river and surrounded by a large camp, including several large tents. One of these tents was used as a place for serving coffee, where the visitors headed to give their gift to the person in charge of the coffee tent (*al-qahwajī*). They were surprised to find the coffee tent was already stocked with more than 50 pounds of coffee. The picnic lasted for three days. People came to witness the spectacle and enjoy the recreational atmosphere and activities, which included singing and the playing of musical instruments.<sup>235</sup>

From this account we can see how, in eighteenth-century Damascus, the desire for an active social life resulted in the preparation of gardens to serve this need. Furthermore, we can see how social communication and the consumption of coffee had become integral features of this new culture of garden recreation.

The elite's culture of garden recreation did not only provide opportunities for socialisation, but also provided a suitable environment for intellectual pursuits. Ibn Kannān attended many intellectual meetings, one of which took place at the time of grapes and figs (*ayyām al-'inab wa-l-tīn*) on a Saturday in 1138/1726. This gathering was located in the garden of a retired member of the city's elite, near al-Rabwa, in one of the areas of land which Kīwān inherited (Fig 3.1).

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<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

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**Figure 3.1** Recreational gathering and a coffeehouse in al-Rabwa in the nineteenth century.

(Source: al-Ibish and al-Ḥajjār, *Dimashq al-Shām*, 164).

The primary aim of the gathering was to hear a lecture and read religious texts. The event ended by citing poems from the work of a notable sheikh. After the session had finished there was an opportunity for strolling and recreation in the garden during sunset.<sup>236</sup>

Another gathering took place in 1129/1717, on the day of berries and apricots (*ayyām al-tūt wa-l-mushmush*), when Ibn Kannān and other Damascene elites invited the Sufi Master ʿAbd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī to accompany them to the garden of al-Baḥrāt, near to al-Nābulusī’s house, which was located in a suburban garden known as al-Sahm al-A‘lā, east of the al-‘Umariyya school.<sup>237</sup>

Ibn Kannān indicated that he would not only visit gardens in the company of friends for leisure or education, but also for the purpose of isolation and retreat, as he did on the 2nd of April 1738 (12th of Dhu al-Ḥijja 1150) in the garden of al-Adawiyya.<sup>238</sup>

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<sup>236</sup> Ibn Kannān, *Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya*, 367.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid, 296.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid, 498.

### ***Social Gatherings and Soirées***

According to Hamadeh, in 1703 in Ottoman Istanbul over 300 palaces were built for monarchs, state officials, and imperial household members along the suburban bank of the Bosphorus channel. These palaces were —one of the most ostentatious architectural displays to that date.”<sup>239</sup> Sa\_dabad was located near a famous public garden named Kağithane,<sup>240</sup> and was one of the most celebrated palaces built in 1721.

In Damascus during the eighteenth century, the popularity of garden based recreation flourished, especially within the palaces’ gardens. In 1147/1735, during spring and the days of roses, Ibn Kannān and his friends went to a recreational gathering at the palace of al-Bakrī. This gathering lasted the whole day and the host, Sheik Bakrī Ibn Muṣṭafā Ibn Sa’d al-Dīn al-Mīdanī, displayed extreme generosity towards his guests.<sup>241</sup>

The construction of palaces by the elites show the importance the elites put on having a suitable location for leisure activities. These palaces were defined by Ibn Kannān as palaces of recreation (*quṣūr al-nuzha*). He wrote that the recreational palaces in the al-Sharafayn garden, located in the suburb of al-Ṣālihiyya, were owned by the elites.<sup>242</sup> The palace of al-Turkumān, located in the suburb of al-Jisr,<sup>243</sup> and the palace of Sinān, (assigned as a pious endowment to al-Ḥaramayn al-Sharīfayn) located in the suburb of al-Ṣālihiyya,<sup>244</sup> are examples of palaces of recreation.

These palaces were a subject of interest for European travellers, who wrote about them. Laurent d’Arvieux, a French traveller and diplomat who visited Damascus in the seventeenth century, wrote: —Most of the elites in al-Ṣālihiyya own houses for the purpose of visiting and recreation.”<sup>245</sup> These same houses (palaces) are mentioned by Monconys: —We went with our hosts to a village called Salaié, on the slopes of the

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<sup>239</sup> Hamadeh, *The City’s Pleasures*, 17.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid, 25.

<sup>241</sup> Ibn Kannān, *Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya*, 463.

<sup>242</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 249-253.

<sup>243</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 62, document no. 114, case dated to 1141. See also chapter 2 for the architectural description of the palace.

<sup>244</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 60, document no. 818, case dated to 1138. See also chapter 2 for the architectural description of the palace.

<sup>245</sup> Laurent d’Arvieux, *Mémoires du Chevalier d’Arvieux, envoyé extraordinaire du Roy à la Porte, Consul d’Alep, d’Ager, de Tripoli, & autres Echelles du Levant* (Paris: Jean-Baptiste Labat, 1735), 2: 458.

mountain close to Damascus [...] we had an excellent view of the city and the whole countryside. We were in a delightful garden with trees, streams, and a beautiful view. In fact, this village has country houses in which the most important people in the city reside.”<sup>246</sup>

Changes in architecture and building materials, as mentioned in chapter two (section 2.3.1), were recorded in the seventeenth century. Ibn Kannān claimed that in the past, expensive architectural materials were used only in mosques and religious schools. However, in his period, the palaces of recreation were renovated with the use of expensive materials, similar to those used in the past for the construction of religious institutes.<sup>247</sup>

In Ibn Kannān’s accounts from the beginning of the eighteenth century, he wrote about evening parties or soirees (*sahrāt*), which the notables attended. One evening party took place at Sheikh Muḥammad Bilbān’s house in the al-Amīr al-Muqaddam suburb in al-Ṣāliḥiyya, on the 9th of February 1719 (19th of Rabī‘ I 1131). At this gathering was Ibn Kannān, the jurist Ṣādiq Ibn Hadāyāt, the jurist Aḥmad al-Shūwaykī al-Ṣāliḥī, the jurist Abd al-Waḥḥād al-Ṣāliḥī al-Ḥanbalī and other notables from al-Ṣāliḥiyya. The assembly of dignitaries took place in a lavish and luxurious room, with large picture windows that framed the outside landscape, an opulent interior with white walls decorated with ornaments, and an engraved ceiling. The evening lasted for eight hours and two sheiks sung poems to the delight and elation of the other visitors.<sup>248</sup>

Additionally, Ibn Kannān wrote about another evening party, on the 25th of March 1736 (12th of Dhū al-Qa‘da 1148), which was devoid of any leisure, fun or play (*al-lahū, al-harj wa-l-marj*). There was no singing or playing of chess, as —was the habit among Damascene residents.” This gathering was exclusively for religious purposes, specifically remembering the saints (*al-awliyā’*), and pious individuals (*al-ṣāliḥīn*).<sup>249</sup>

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<sup>246</sup> Balthasar de Monconys, *Journal des voyages de Monsieur de Monconys*, 343. The translation from the original French was completed by the author and reviewed by Jean-Paul Pascual.

<sup>247</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib Al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 249.

<sup>248</sup> Ibn Kannān, *Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya*, 295-296.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid, 070-074.

## 3.2 Coffeehouses and the Rise of the Public Sphere

### 3.2.1 Coffeehouse Polemics: Permission and Prohibition

During the Ottoman period, the consumption of coffee and the popularity of visiting coffeehouses were affected by periods of prohibition and variation in legal regulations. According to Cengiz Yıldöz, citing Ralph Hattox,<sup>250</sup> in his article —Coffeehouses as an Informal Education Institution and Coffeehouses of Egypt,” the first prohibition of coffee took place in Mecca, in 1511, when it was claimed that social gatherings associated with coffee drinking encouraged gossip and lead to social disharmony.<sup>251</sup> The belief that the consumption of coffee resulted in a similar effect to the consumption of wine was used as a reason to push for prohibition. As a result, coffee was seen by some jurists as a prohibited beverage under Islamic law.<sup>252</sup>

In Damascus, the first ban of coffee was announced by the chief judge in response to the wide spread habit of coffee drinking in 950/1544. This ban was later strengthened through the issue of a *fatwa* by the Ḥanafī *mufī* of Damascus. However, people continued drinking coffee until a new chief judge came to Damascus in 952/1544, and again issued a ban, this time with the support from the '*ulamā*' (religious scholars) and sheiks.<sup>253</sup> Similarly in Istanbul, under pressure from the influential local '*ulamā*', an imperial law declared the prohibition of coffee in 953/1546.<sup>254</sup> In sixteenth-century Istanbul, coffeehouses were labelled as a nest of corruption, because of the liberal atmosphere found within these social institutions.<sup>255</sup>

In Damascene society, people were divided over the legality of coffee drinking, with some supporting prohibiting (*ḥarām*), while others were in favour of permission (*ḥalāl*). The supporters of coffee drinking espoused the virtues and benefits of coffee. For instance, a jurist and a *mufī* named Abū al-Faḥ al-Mālikī would drink coffee openly

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<sup>250</sup> Ralph Hattox, *Coffee and Coffeehouses: The Origins of a Social Beverage in the Medieval Near East* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1985): 46.

<sup>251</sup> M. Cengiz Yıldöz, —Coffeehouses as an Informal Education Institution and Coffeehouses of Egypt,” *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences* 9 (2010), 1364.

<sup>252</sup> Hattox, *Coffee and Coffeehouses*, 46.

<sup>253</sup> Jean-Paul Pascual, —Cafet caf s a Damas: contribution à la chronologie de leur diffusion au XVIème siècle,” *Berytus Archaeological Studies* 42 (1995-6), 146,147-150.

<sup>254</sup> Pascual, —Cafet caf s a Damas” 146,147-150.

<sup>255</sup> Yıldöz, —Coffeehouses as an Informal Education Institution,” 1364.

amongst commoners and write poetry about the virtues of the beverage.<sup>256</sup> Debate regarding the suitability of coffee as a drink continued and a ban from the governors (*ḥukkām*) was issued in 961/1553. Nevertheless, many people from both the elite and common classes continued to drink coffee.<sup>257</sup>

In seventeenth-century Istanbul, the debate over coffee consumption, smoking, and coffeehouses became a more serious subject with increasing legal consequences. When Sulṭān Murād, who took power in 1032/1624, was away from Istanbul, it was reported that the *muftī* and a group of '*ulamā*' were planning to oust him from power. Upon his return, he learned of the plot, killed the *muftī*, and placed a ban on coffeehouses and smoking of tobacco in the city.<sup>258</sup> From this, it seems that the reason for banning coffee was based more on the fact that the consumption of coffee was leading to a greater level of social interaction and a greater potential for political unrest.<sup>259</sup>

The government's concern about the consumption of coffee becoming a part of everyday life in Istanbul was mirrored in Damascus and continued to be an issue throughout the eighteenth century. In 1162/1749, al-Budayrī al-Ḥallāq recorded in his diary that —on Monday, at the beginning of Rajab this year, the governor As'ad Bāshā [ordered] the crucifixion and hanging of all [coffee] drinkers. He also announced the closure of the coffeehouses and all shops that sold coffee."<sup>260</sup> Al-Budayrī added —thus, coffee drinking became one of the greatest misfortunes in Damascus. It was drunk by men and women, and even by young girls."<sup>261</sup> However, it seems that Damascene people of all ages and genders did not agree with the strictness of these new laws and protested against them by continuing to consume coffee.

Eventually, some acceptance of coffeehouses and coffee consumption was granted by the government and the laws changed to reflect this fact. An example of this shift in attitude can be seen in the law-court records, where examples were found showing that

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<sup>256</sup> This information was summarised from: Jean-Paul Pascual, —Caf' etcaf' s a Damas," 146,147-150.

<sup>257</sup> Pascual, —Cafet caf' s a Damas", 146,147-150.

<sup>258</sup> Al-Muḥibbī, *Khulāṣat al-Athar*, 4: 337-340.

<sup>259</sup> For more information regarding the controversial discussion over permission and prohibition of coffee see Muḥannad Mubaidīn, *Thaqāfat al-Tarfīh*, 118-133.

<sup>260</sup> Al-Budayrī, *Ḥawāḍith Dimashq*, 185.

<sup>261</sup> *Ibid*, 185.



coffeehouses were assigned to pious endowments, and therefore recognised legally as legitimate businesses. Another acceptance of coffeehouses, by the governor, can be found in al-Budayrī's chronicle. In 1169/1755, As\_ ad Bāshā al- \_Az̄m allowed the construction of the al-Shāghūr coffeehouse, the Bāb Sarīja coffeehouse, and another coffeehouse close to Bāb al-Muṣallā.<sup>262</sup>

James Grehan, in his book *Everyday Life and Consumer Culture in Eighteenth Century Damascus*, wrote that “no other establishment could rival the coffeehouse as a hub of social life. Since its first appearance in the sixteenth century in towns throughout the Middle East, it had become the bastion of an unapologetic culture of leisure and idleness. Popular culture had welcomed the new social opportunities, and by the eighteenth century took them fully for granted.”<sup>263</sup> He added that coffee drinking gained its popularity —among Sufis who appreciated its virtues as a stimulant used during all-night vigils.”<sup>264</sup> Al-Nābulusī, for instance, not only supported drinking coffee and smoking but also wrote about its mental and physical benefits. In his account *Khamrat Bābil*, he composed and cited several poems espousing the importance of coffee and smoking.<sup>265</sup>

From the accounts of Arabic historians such as Ibn Kannān and al-Budayrī, the proliferation of coffeehouses extended to the gardens along the Baradā river. The coffeehouse became a significant urban facility in the gardens of Damascus. The importance and popularity of coffee consumption in various events continued to grow throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The 1820 census reported 122 coffeehouses in the city.<sup>266</sup> While according to al-Qaṣāṭilī, at the end of the nineteenth century, there were 110 coffeehouses scattered throughout Damascus. These coffeehouses varied in both size and popularity. Some were famous, well-decorated, and expensive. Such luxurious coffeehouses were called *kāzīnāt* and could be found in Sūq

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<sup>262</sup> Al-Budayrī, *Ḥawāḍith Dimashq*, 234.

<sup>263</sup> James Grehan, *Everyday Life and Consumer Culture*, 144.

<sup>264</sup> *Ibid*, 135.

<sup>265</sup> Al-Nābulusī, *Burj Babil*, 262,263,293,334. See also for information about tobacco as an important commodity in the early modern period in Damascus: James Grehan, —Smoking and —Early Modern” Sociability, 1352-1377; Grehan, *Everyday Life*, 146-155.

<sup>266</sup> Jean-Paul Pascual, —Boutiques, ateliers et corps de métiers à Damas d’après un dénombrement effectué en 1827-28,” in *Études sur les villes du Proche-Orient, XVIIe-XIXe siècle- Hommage à André Raymond*, ed. Brigitte Marino (Damas: Institut Français d’Études Arabes, 2001), 184. See also for further information: Randi Deguilhem, —Le café et les cafés à Damas et le traité de sayh Jamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsimī,” *BEO (Bulletin d’Études Orientales) IFEAD, Damas* 45 (1993), 21-32.

al-Khayl, al-Marja, and al-Şūfāniyya (Fig 3.3). At a luxurious coffeehouse a cup of coffee might cost up to twenty *bāra* – almost three times that charged at the other coffeehouses in the city. The most famous coffeehouses were al-Manākhliyya, al-Junayna, al-Amāra, al-Jāwīsh, and al-Raṭl, where the price for a cup of coffee was around five *bārāt*.<sup>267</sup>

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**Figure 3.3** The recreational garden and the coffeehouses of al-Sufāniyya, in the nineteenth century.

(Source: webshots website, <http://news.webshots.com/photo/1143218183027618820vOXYwk>).

### 3.3 Damascene Lifestyle in the Ottoman Period

#### 3.3.1 Women and Urban Life

##### *Appearance in Public*

The common belief that Ottoman period was a time of ineptitude, where women played a relatively minor role in society and were rarely involved in social activities seems to be inaccurate.<sup>268</sup> We can assume that Muslim and Arab historians had recorded the activities

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<sup>267</sup> Al-Qaşāṭilī, *al-Rawḍa al-Ghannā*, 109. In 1890, Abd al-Raḥmān Bayk Sāmī mentioned 122 coffeehouses which varied in sizes and the price of the coffee they sold: Abd al-Raḥmān Bayk Sāmī, *al-Qawl al-Haqq fī Bayrūt wa-Dimashq: Riḥla ilā Sūriyya wa-Lubnān fī Awākhir al-Qarn al-Tāsi* ‘, *Ashr* (Bayrūt: Dār al-Rā’id al-‘Arabī, 1981), 93; see also: al-Qāsimī, *Qāmūs al-Şinā’āt al-Shāmiyya*, 368.

<sup>268</sup> For a discussion about the proponents and opponents of the common belief of the Ottoman Empire being an era of decline, ineptitude and weaknesses see Dana Sajdi, —Decline, Its Discontent and Ottoman Cultural

of men during this period in more detail than the activities of women, as their pursuits were considered of more importance. Nevertheless, examples of women's increasing involvement in a more open society and their participation in the popular recreational activities of the time can be found in historical records.

Hamadeh, in her study about *Public Space and the Garden Culture of Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century*,<sup>269</sup> writes that like men females began to express their individuality, wealth, and personality. Women became noticeably present in the public arena, and in particular within the public gardens which were the liveliest venues for recreation.<sup>269</sup> (Fig 3.4)

During the same period in Damascus, al-Budayrī describes a picnic with his friends in his chronicle, which took place on the 26th of February 1750 (1163) in a Damascene garden:

We went out with our beloved friends on an excursion to al-Sharaf al-A'lā, overlooking al-Marjah, on Thursday, the 18th of Rabī' I, when the flowers began to bloom. We sat overlooking al-Marjah and al-Takiyya al-Salīmiyya and we were surprised to see more women than men sitting on the river bank, eating, drinking coffee, and smoking, as men do. This is something that we had never heard or seen of before until we witnessed it ourselves.<sup>270</sup>

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History. See also Virginia Aksan and Daniel Goffman, "Introduction: Situating the Early Modern Ottoman World," 1-12.

<sup>269</sup> Shirine Hamadeh, "Public Space and the Garden Culture of Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century," 278.

<sup>270</sup> Al-Budayrī, *Ḥawāḍith Dimashq*, 193-194. The translation by the author.

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**Figure 3.4** This picture illustrates the garden where al-Budayrī saw the Damascene women in their recreational gathering. This illustration was drawn by Bartlett in the nineteenth century. (Source: Bartlett, *The River Baradā*, engraved by S. Lacy 1936). [www.antique-prints.de](http://www.antique-prints.de)

In his study of public morality, Abdul-Karim Rafeq commented on this event and wrote: —indeed, people in that century were becoming more open to social change than before.”<sup>271</sup>

This description by al-Budayrī reveals the blossoming recreational culture of Damascus as being appreciated by both genders. During the same period in Istanbul, as can be seen in figures 3.5 and 3.6 women enjoyed excursions in the garden of Kağıthane rather than remaining in the private courtyards of their houses. These illustrations, along with Hamadeh’s study and al-Budayrī’s description, provide insight into how women were visible within the public gardens and enjoyed leisure activities, alongside their male counterparts.

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<sup>271</sup> Abdul-Karim Rafeq, —Public Morality in the Eighteenth Century Ottoman Damascus,” *Revue du monde musulman et de la Méditerranée* 55-56, Villes au Levant (1990), 189.

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**Figure 3.5** Anonymous garden scene at Sa‘dabad.  
(Source: Hamadeh, *The City’s Pleasure*, 62).

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**Figure 3.6** An anonymous garden scene (1720s?).  
(Source: Hamadeh, *The City's Pleasure*, 69).

Changes to the permitted activities and freedom of movement of women within the public domain can be traced in historians' accounts. Ibn Kannān' recorded in his diary that in 1125/1713 legislation was passed to stop women from smoking in markets.<sup>272</sup> The fact that women's smoking in public had become a large enough problem to warrant government legislation illustrates how women had begun to act more freely in a society which appeared to be becoming increasingly open. In another example of the newly found freedom of women, a woman stood in court and insulted her defendants with rude words (*lafz qabīh*), crying: —You are promoting prostitution" (*antum tu'arriṣūn*).<sup>273</sup>

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<sup>272</sup> Ibn Kannān, *Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya*, 103.

<sup>273</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 51, document no. 6, case dated to 1136.

On the other hand, in al-Budayrī's chronicle, he records an increase in the number of Damascene prostitutes. Different Arabic terms were used to describe them: *banāt al-hawā*, *al-mūmisāt*, *banāt al-khaṭā*, *shlikkāt al-balad*, or *al-zawānī*. In 1161/1748, al-Budayrī records the story of a prostitute falling in love with a Turkish boy, who later fell ill. She vowed to hold a ceremony (*mawlid*) at Sheikh Arslān's mosque when her boyfriend recovered from his illness. After his recovery, she organised a public ceremony attended by a large number of other prostitutes. They led a procession through the markets, carrying candles, lanterns, and incense, while singing, clapping, and drumming. The celebration included unveiled women with hair exposed at their shoulders. This attracted a large crowd of onlookers. This ceremony took place during the rule of As'ad Bāshā.<sup>274</sup>

In the following year (1162/1748) a group of people met with the governor, As'ad Bāshā al-ʿAzm, to complain about the increasing number of prostitutes within the suburbs, markets, bakeries, and coffeeshouses of Damascus. —Léts find a way to oust them and banish them from Damascus to a place where they do not exceed their boundaries,"<sup>275</sup> the delegation proposed to the governor. However, the governor refused to punish them. His excuse was that he was afraid of their prayers (*du'ā'*) against him. In the same year, permission was granted which allowed prostitutes to work legally in Damascus, under two conditions: first, was the imposition of a monthly fee for each prostitute, and second, the employment of guards (*shūbāṣiyyan*) to escort them and provide security for the city.<sup>276</sup>

Many accusations were brought to the court against the proliferation of prostitution, while As'ad Bāshā al-ʿAzm maintained quite a tolerant view towards prostitution in Damascus and was intent on creating a more open society, not all members of Damascene society shared his view. A widely argued reason why prostitution should be forbidden was —because of their evil doings, improper behaviour, and unlawful dealings (*bi-sabab sharrātihim wa sulūkihim baynahum al-masālik al-ghayr ḥamīda wa-l-ṭuruq al-ghayr*

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<sup>274</sup> Al-Budayrī, *Ḥawādith Dimashq*, 171.

<sup>275</sup> *Ibid*, 148.

<sup>276</sup> *Ibid*, 198.

*sadīda*).”<sup>277</sup> For instance, a case dated in 1142/1729 illustrates a representative group from al-Ḥarīs ally in the al-Qubaybāt suburbs, south of al-Mīdān, who accused a woman and her daughter of improper behaviour (*al-masālik al-ghayr ḥamīda*) and having mischievous dealings (*shirīratān*) that insulted the other inhabitants of the suburb. They accused the mother of allowing men to join her daughter in her house. In this case, the judge (*al-qāḍī*) expelled both of them from their suburb.<sup>278</sup>

It was al-Budayrī’s belief that there was a direct link between the increase in prostitution and the increasing prices of food, goods, and other consumables. —Inflation in the prices of goods, increase in scourge, 6 piasters per (pound-mass) (*raṭl*) for the lowest quality of bread..., 12 piasters for the good quality..., 2 piasters for *ūqiyyat* oil, 35 piasters for a pound of meat. And the prostitutes stroll through the city by day and night, while people are in enormous distress,”<sup>279</sup> Al-Budayrī stated.

### ***Mixing of Genders***

In her study, Hamadeh shows about Istanbul during the eighteenth century that the urban life of Istanbul citizens from both genders tended to show an indulgence in the worldly pleasures of entertainment and recreation. She wrote: —Citizens from all different ranks, of one and the other sex, were sketched, painted, and described as they strolled and sprawled, drank and smoked, sang and danced, feasted, flirted, and entertained in public squares and gardens around the city.”<sup>280</sup> (Figs 3.5, 3.6)

In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Damascus, the fluidity of social activity in public spaces, the increasing appearance of women as a part of society, and the development of public life could be seen as signs of the emergence of the modern secular life that Hamadeh discussed in her study.<sup>281</sup> Examples of this can be seen in the law-court records

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<sup>277</sup> Rafeq, —Public Morality,” 182.

<sup>278</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 61, document no. 339, case dated to 1142.

<sup>279</sup> Al-Budayrī, *Ḥawāḍith Dimashq*, 182.

<sup>280</sup> Hamadeh, *The City’s Pleasures*, 110.

<sup>281</sup> For further information see Max Weber, German sociologist and one of the principle figures in the discipline of modern social science, discussion about modern and secular society. Max Weber, *The City*, trans. Don Martindale and Gertrud Neuwirth (Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press, 1958). For information about recent studies that used Weber’s analysis of modernity, see S.N. Eisenstad, —Public Spheres and Civil Society in Selected Pre-Modern Societies: Some Comparative Observations,” *Comparative Sociology* 5: 1 (2006).



of Damascus, where cases relating to the meeting, mixing, and intermingling of members of the opposite sex in public spaces were brought before the jurists of the time.

In an example of such cases, a group of sheikhs from the al-Sūwayqa suburb brought Muḥammad Ibn Maḥmūd al-Ṭabbākh to court. The accusation was that Muḥammad al-Ṭabbākh, a chef, allowed socialisation and intermingling between men and women in his restaurant (*ḥānūt*). The sheiks argued that this behaviour was not acceptable.<sup>282</sup> Another case was brought forward when a group of men in the al-Khandaq alley were reported to have been drinking alcohol with a foreign woman.<sup>283</sup> Another case took place on the 13th of April 1748 (16th of Rabī‘ II 1160) showed a number of notables (*mu'allimīn, shyūkh and ḥujjāj*) from the al-Qubaybāt suburb filed a complaint against two men who were regarded as “black stones” and in conflict with Muslim beliefs (*sā'iyān fī al-arḍ bi-l-fasād wa muḍirrān li-l-'ibād wa annahumā ḥajarān aswadān fī tarīq al-Muslimīn*). The notables described the men as pimps (*dayyūsān*) who were responsible for promoting prostitution (*al-fāḥisha*) among Muslims in the area. This case ended without the jurist giving any sentence.<sup>284</sup>

These court cases provide insight into the changing views of society, specifically with regards to the mixing of genders and issues of sexuality. These cases illustrate the desire of many in the population to increase their focus on secular pursuits. At the same time, they show that the changes which were occurring in society were being met with hostility by those who, predominately for religious reasons, were not ready to accept an opening of society and an increase in secular activities.

### ***Management of Pious Endowments***

Randi Deguilhem, in her article “Gender Blindness and Societal Influence in Late Ottoman Damascus: Women as the Creators and Managers of Endowments” wrote:

It could be said that a consciousness of self, a female economic power actively existed in the Ottoman infrastructure of Damascene society.

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<sup>282</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 67, document no. 49, case dated to 1148.

<sup>283</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 108, document no. 170, case dated to 1156.

<sup>284</sup> This case is discussed by Rafeq in Rafeq, “Public Morality.” 182.

Women owned urban and agricultural properties. She created foundations with them. She managed those foundations, renting out their properties, and handing out their revenues to both public and private beneficiaries that she had designated.<sup>285</sup>

The law-court records, from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries show that no distinctions were made, on grounds of gender, regarding the administration of pious endowments, and endowments were managed by members of both genders, at the provincial and local level. An inventory of sixty law-court records, dating from 1160/1747 to 1180 /1766 shows that establishing, managing, and controlling the endowment assets were not male-dominated. Both sexes had equal responsibilities with regards to the management of endowments and were subject to follow the same rules and regulations. The law-court inventory from these years shows that approximately 40% of the people responsible for the management of pious endowments were female. Interestingly, these women were from varying social classes and religious backgrounds: pilgrim women (*nisā''hājīyāt*), elite women (*nisā''mn fi''at al-ashrāf*), the daughter of Sulaymān Bāshā al-*ʿAz̄m*, women without title (*nisā''bidūn alqāb*), and Christian women (*nisā''masīhiyyāt*). The social classes and religious backgrounds of the male pious endowment managers also varied and included: pilgrim men (*hujjāj*), influential religious members (*'ulamā'*), soldiers (*aghāwāt/askariyyūn*), artisans (*hiraftiyyūn*), men without titles (*rijāl bidūn alqāb*), Christian men, the jurist Muḥammād Khalīl Afandī al-Ṣiddīqī (*qādī al-quḍāt*), the governor As'ad Bāshā al-*ʿAz̄m*, and the *mufī* Alī Afandī al-Murādī.<sup>286</sup> These law-court records illustrate how, during this period of Ottoman rule, gender blindness existed with regards to the management of pious endowments.

It is important to note that the management of pious endowments required a considerable amount of professional acumen and the ability to communicate effectively with a wide variety of Damascene society. We can therefore assume that the women who were responsible for managing these pious endowments, and many women in Damascene

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<sup>285</sup> Randi Deguilhem, "Gender Blindness and Societal Influence in Late Ottoman Damascus: Women as the Creators and Managers of Endowments," *Hawwa—Journal of Women of the Middle East and the Islamic World* 1: 3 (Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, 2003), 347.

<sup>286</sup> This survey was derived from the study completed by Yūsuf Kūriyya, "Waḳf fī Dimashq: Dirāsa Iqtisādiyya Ijtīmā'iyya min Khilāl Wathā'iq al-Maḥākīm al-Shar'iyya Bayn ʿAmay 1160-1180/ 1747-1766" (Damascus, Faculty of Literature, History Department, 1991), 253.

society, had both the professional ability and, most importantly, the social sense of individuality necessary to undertake such responsibilities themselves. Such evidence reveals that many women enjoyed a relatively important role in society, some of whom functioned as decision makers who contributed to shaping the urban environment and general development of Damascene society, alongside their male counterparts. Though, it worth mentioning that such a few examples of women's individuality and freedom in the society were not necessarily the status quo. Restrictions might have existed, and probably did, on the majority of women's freedom of movement when considered in comparison to men.<sup>287</sup>

### **3.3.2 Changes in Damascene Society**

#### ***Breakdown of Social Barriers***

Hamadeh in her study of eighteenth-century Istanbul states that —traditional celebrations, such as for the birth, circumcision, or wedding of the prince, became more public and propelled the monarch to unprecedented public exposure.”<sup>288</sup> For instance, in Istanbul during 1704, four days and nights of festivities took place to celebrate the birth of the daughter of Sultan Mustafa III. This celebration was the first public celebration for the imperial household.<sup>289</sup>

At the same time in Damascus, in 1165/1743, Sulaymān Bāshā Ibn al-ʿAzm, the governor of Damascus, commenced seven days of festivities on the occasion of his son's circumcision. It was an extraordinary festival that took place in the suburban garden of al-ʿAmāra. The markets of the garden were adorned with candles and lanterns. The garden was prepared to host guests from all social groups, from ordinary people to the notables. A variety of social activities and a wide range of games were enjoyed by the partygoers. Jewish and Christian singers performed, and dancing and a frenzied behaviour were allowed to extremes, which would not normally be tolerated or socially acceptable. Not only did the governor allow such a variety of activities and such behaviour, but he also

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<sup>287</sup> The relationship between women's social freedoms and the landscape is marginal in this study and requires further investigation.

<sup>288</sup> Hamadeh, *The City's Pleasures*, 51.

<sup>289</sup> *Ibid*, 51-52.

endowed food and clothes to all in attendance. —We have never seen a display of such generosity towards both the notable and ordinary people,”<sup>290</sup> al-Budayrī declared.

Similar to Istanbul, in eighteenth-century Damascus, equal opportunities to attend similar celebrations, to visit gardens, and to utilise their urban facilities were offered to those of all social strata. Society became more focused on secular activities and concern grew within some sectors of society as to the suitability of the behaviours which members of the common classes were engaging in.

Though, this style of social event, open to all classes of society, was not necessarily the status quo. In the same year, in Rabī\_I, Faṭḥī al-Daftarī, the treasurer, held another celebration for his daughter’s marriage, lasting for seven days. Each day of al-Daftarī’s celebration was for a particular social group of Damascene society. The seven days were designated to, in order, a day for the governor Sulaymān Bāshā Ibn al-‘Az̄m, a day for sheiks and „*ulamā*”, a day for merchants, a day for Christians and Jews, and a final day for prostitutes. While al-Daftarī shows extreme generosity toward every group of society,<sup>291</sup> this eighteenth century example of a large festivity did not include, as it seems, the intermingling of different social classes.

In Isin Ektem’s article —Coffeehouses as Places of Conversation,” he wrote that —coffee played a liberating role in the lives of ordinary Istanbulus by permitting them an unprecedented step out of their traditional world” ordinary men would feel an attraction to the —habit of the coffee drinking” and —came to attend conversations that took place in the coffeehouses.”<sup>292</sup> Ektem added that the city’s inhabitants began to socialise in places, such as coffeehouses, which provided no religious direction.<sup>293</sup>

In Damascus, coffeehouses were public spaces accessible to everyone and frequented by people of various social strata. Commoners, such as al-Sheikh Muḥammad, known as al-Iḏṭirārī al-Maghribī al-Mālikī, often visited these coffeehouses. Al-Iḏṭirārī lived in

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<sup>290</sup> Al-Budayrī, *Ḥawādith Dimashq*, 111.

<sup>291</sup> *Ibid*, 112.

<sup>292</sup> Isin Ektem, —Coffeehouses as Places of Conversation,” in *The Illuminated Table, the Prosperous House: Food and Shelter in Ottoman Material Culture* ed. Suraiya. Faroqhi and Christoph K. Neumann (Würzburg: Ergon in Kommission, 2003), 206.

<sup>293</sup> Isin Ektem, —Coffeehouses as Places of Conversation,” 206.

Damascus for thirty years and would regularly speak on matters of theology (*ʿilm al-tawḥīd wa-l-ḥaqāʾiq*), his areas of interest and specialisation, to eager groups at the Umayyad mosque. He also regularly frequented coffeehouses, where he would talk and spread his knowledge to people from all walks of life.<sup>294</sup>

Sheikh Ibrāhīm Ibn Saʿd al-Dīn al-Shāghūrī was a Sufi sheikh and the administrator (*mutawallī*) of the Umayyad mosque's pious endowment.<sup>295</sup> Al-Budayrī speaks about Sheikh Ibrāhīm's modesty when he said that he had achieved great prestige (*jāh ʿazīm*), but displayed no sense of arrogance, when he would regularly frequent coffeehouses and deliver greetings to people from all social strata (*al-kabīr wa-l-ṣaghīr*).<sup>296</sup> Al-Murādī mentioned Sheikh Ibrāhīm in his biographical dictionary, *Silk al-Durar*, referring to his visits to coffeehouses. Al-Murādī wrote that Sheikh Ibrāhīm dressed in luxurious clothes and ate (*yaʿkl*) *al-bursh al-maʿjūn*.<sup>297</sup>

Carsten Niebuhr, a German cartographer and mathematician, travelled to the Arab peninsula, visiting Damascus in the eighteenth century. He wrote that some „*ulamāʾ*”, who were only paid a limited income, would preach in the coffeehouses in a humorous and entertaining fashion, in an attempt to receive financial contributions from their audiences.<sup>298</sup> Coffeehouses served as place where Damascene people could enjoy freedom of expression, while at the same time experience intermingling between the different classes of society and therefore reducing barriers for communication between classes.

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<sup>294</sup> Al-Muḥibbī, *Khulāṣat al-Athar*, 4: 287.

<sup>295</sup> Ibrāhīm Ibn Saʿd al-Dīn al-Shāghūrī had a good relation with the caliphs of Constantinople, Egypt, Aleppo and Damascus. He visited al-Rūm (Constantinople) many times and met three Sultans. al-Budayrī, *Hawāḍith Dimashq*, 236.

<sup>296</sup> Al-Budayrī, *Hawāḍith Dimashq*, 236.

<sup>297</sup> Al-Murādī, *Silk al-Durar*, 1: 42. According to Pascual, *al-bursh* is a drug. It has been known as: *al-maʿjūn al-khabīth* (an evil paste). *Al-bursh* consists of opium (*afyūn*) combined with pepper (*fulful*), saffron (*zaʿfarān*), euphorbia (*afribiyūn*), and spikenard (sunbul) for flavouring. See Jean-Paul Pascual, „Nushūʿ Sūq wa-Idmiḥlālūh fī al-Qarn al-Sādis ʿAshar,” *Annales archéologiques arabes syriennes* 35(1985), 242. See also: Franz Rosenthal, *The Herb: Hashish Versus Medieval Muslim Society* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971), 31-33.

<sup>298</sup> Randi Deguilhem, —“Qahwa fī Dimashq min Khilāl Risālat al-Shaykh Jamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsimī al-Dimashqī (1293-1332/1866-1914),” trans. Muḥammad khayr al-Biqāʾī, *al-Turāth al-ʿArabī* 109 (March 2008), 38-50. See the original: Randi Deguilhem, —“Le café et les cafés à Damas et le trait de Sayh Jamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsimī.”

Furthermore, coffeehouses also served as a place where ordinary members of society could go to see musical performances. Al-Budayrī wrote that in 1160/1747, “three Jews from Aleppo arrived in Damascus. They were expert singers and musicians who worked in Damascene coffeehouses, and playing for a mixed audience consisting of both elites and commoners. (*al-khāṣ wa-l-‘āmm*)”.<sup>299</sup> According to Yöldöz, the same practice was occurring in coffeehouses in Egypt at this time. As a result, throughout the region coffeehouses became known as “places of entertainment” as well as “schools of wisdom,” and “public universities.”<sup>300</sup>

Public gardens and coffeehouses would not be the only places where intermingling between notables and common people would take place. High-ranking members of Ottoman society would take excursions to villages surrounding Damascus, where they would often stay with the local inhabitants of these villages. The journey of the elites to various shrines in Barza, al-Tall, and Mnīn are recorded in the chronicles of al-Maḥāsīnī. One voyage started in August 1674 (Jumādā I 1084), in which al-Maḥāsīnī travelled from Damascus to Ibrāhīm shrine in Barza. In an example of increased interaction between the social classes, he and his travelling companions were invited and agreed to stay with the residents of the village next to Ibrāhīm shrine. They continued their journey to al-Tall, where they were again invited to stay until Saturday. Subsequently, they went to Mnīn where they were again invited to stay with the local people. On Monday they returned to Damascus.<sup>301</sup>

### ***Public Morality: New Challenges***

Habermas, a German sociologist and philosopher, examined the emergence of public sphere in seventeenth–and eighteenth –century Europe. He discussed the emergence of a culture of public communication supported by social institutions, such as English coffeehouses and French salons, in which communication was often concerned with literature, but in other cases led to criticism of the government and to political unrest.<sup>302</sup>

<sup>299</sup> Al-Budayrī, *Hawādith Dimashq*, 158.

<sup>300</sup> M. Cengiz Yöldöz, “Coffeehouses as an Informal Education, 1362.

<sup>301</sup> Al-Munajjid, “Şafahāt fī Tārīkh Dimashq,” 94.

<sup>302</sup> Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: an Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (UK: Polity Press, 1989).

In his study, Özkoçak relied on Habermas's work on the subject. He mentioned that the role of coffeehouses extended beyond being simply a place for chatting, listening to music, reciting and discussing literature, and exchanging knowledge. Coffeehouses soon became places frequented by groups who used the confines of the coffeehouse to discuss political agendas. The rise of political discussion in the coffeehouses of Istanbul coincided in time with the intense political debate attributed to the coffeehouses in Britain, France, and Germany.<sup>303</sup> Yöldöz also wrote that the coffeehouses of Egypt were also undergoing similar transformations. Egyptian coffeehouses were no longer only places simply for coffee consumption, chatting, and smoking but also acted as a place for political gatherings, discussions, and a potential source of rebellion against authority.<sup>304</sup> Yöldöz added that in Egypt, some coffeehouses were also centres for immoral behaviour. She wrote that these coffee houses often gathered beggars. In some others, people played music, sang songs, applauded and laughed. They were also places where women would practice prostitution. It is known that in some of them, belly dancers performed. Homosexuals, referred to as shepherds could be found in here too.<sup>305</sup>

Furthermore, Istanbul's coffeehouses were also considered a breeding ground for behaviour which troubled the religious and moral leaders of the time.<sup>306</sup>

In Damascus, according to Rafeq, —coffee drinking and tobacco smoking were banned on moral and physical ground.”<sup>307</sup> In the eighteenth century, coffeehouses were not considered as a place for appropriate social activities and dialogue, but instead gained a reputation for their association with illegal activities that were in violation of the strict moral codes of Islamic law. For instance, on the 19th September 1730 (6th of Rabī\_I 1143), a group of sheikhs filed a claim with the court judge regarding the taboo activities that were occurring in two shops near the marketplace of al-Sināniyya. The first shop,

<sup>303</sup> Selma Akyazici Özkoçak, —Coffeehouses: Rethinking the Public and Private in Early Modern Istanbul,” *Journal of Urban History* 33,6 (September, 2007), 975.

<sup>304</sup> M. Cengiz Yöldöz, —Coffeehouses as an Informal Education Institution and Coffeehouses of Egypt,” *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, no. 9 (2010), 1365.

<sup>305</sup> Yöldöz, —Coffeehouses as an Informal Education Institution,” 1366.

<sup>306</sup> Dana Sajdi, —Decline, its Discontent and Ottoman Cultural History,” 34-37. See also: Ali Aksu, —Janissary Coffee Houses in Late Eighteenth-Century Istanbul,” in *Ottoman Tulips, Ottoman Coffee: Leisure and Lifestyle in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Dana Sajdi (London; New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007), 117.

<sup>307</sup> Rafeq, —Public Morality,” 181.

previously a stonecutter's (*hajjār*) workshop, was converted into a coffeehouse. The second shop, which was located inside the market, sold *al-bursh* and *al-ma'ājīn*.<sup>308</sup> The sheikhs stated in their declaration that those two shops were —a place where evil-doers congregated (*majma' li-ahl al-mafāsīd*), causing harm to the inhabitants of the market and the suburb."<sup>309</sup> Furthermore, the sheiks complained these shops were providing shelter for people who would drink alcohol and harass Muslim women passing by on the street. —If those two shops remain, it would be a huge detriment to men, women, neighbours, and passersby through the [al-Sināniyya] market."<sup>310</sup>

On the 28th of August 1725 (18th of Dhū al-Ḥijja 1137), after seeking permission from a jurist, official representatives went to investigate a coffee shop in the Sārūjā market. The officials claimed a mess of chairs, seats, and small tables blocked the flow of people walking through the alley, especially women walking to a nearby public bath. These coffeehouses' seats were filled with men who would cause disturbances to the women, coming to and going from the public bath, with their discourteous actions and words (*yaḥṣūl lahum ghāyat al-aziyya bi-faḥsh al-kalām wa-l-aḥwāl al-dīniyya*).<sup>311</sup>

In seventeenth—and eighteenth—century Damascus, questions regarding public morality were not only limited to the city's gardens and coffeehouses. New complaints emerged against behaviour that was considered disobedient in other locations throughout the city. People had begun to congregate in other areas within the city and such areas are therefore considered a part of the wider public domain. In Damascus, according to Rafeq, many accusations were brought to court against perceived wrongdoers. These accusations illustrate an increasing level of social disobedience, leading to new questions regarding public morality.<sup>312</sup> For instance, on the 1st of July 1730 (15th of Dhī al-Qi'da 1142), the judge sent an official group of notables and sheikhs from the suburb of Sūq al-Aghnām and al-Murādiyya mosque to two nearby locations. The shrine of Sīdī dhulnūn al-Miṣrī and *al-ṭabaqa*, a one floor building, located in a cemetery close to the shrine. These two locations were reported as places where Muḥammād al-Baṣrawī gathered with his friends

<sup>308</sup> See explanation of al-Bursh in footnote 285.

<sup>309</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 21 *mushawwash*, document no. 158, case dated 1143.

<sup>310</sup> Ibid.

<sup>311</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 52, document no. 122 *mukarrar*, case dated to 1137.

<sup>312</sup> For further discussion about this point see Rafeq, —Public Morality."



(*ahl al-fusq w-al-fujūr*) to abuse prohibited substances (*munkarāt*).<sup>313</sup> Also, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, on the 5th of March 1708 (12th of Dhū al-Ḥijja 1119), a jurist ordered a house be demolished after people began using it as a place for gatherings, playing musical instruments, and consuming alcohol on a regular basis (*ta'āṭi shurb al-khamr wa ālāt al-fisq wa-l-fujūr*). In its place, this jurist ordered the construction of a Sufi lodge (*zāwiya*) where people could pray twice a week.<sup>314</sup>

According to Rafeq, numerous complaints brought to the Ottoman court were filed by a select group of society against, what they saw as, immoral behaviours (*al-khabā'ith wa-l-fujūr*) taking place in certain locations within the city. The complaints were all based on the same assumption, being that the immoral behaviours taking place were putting the local residents at moral risk. Rafeq added it is not possible to determine to what extent, if any, society in general agreed with the sentiment of the jurist and whether they agreed with the jurist's decision to take action against these behaviours and to have these people removed.<sup>315</sup>

Al-Budayrī also wrote of immoral behaviour in the Damascene society in his chronicles. In 1162/1748, under the rule of As'ad Bāshā al-ʿAẓm, al-Budayrī wrote that near the al-Zuhrābiyya garden, there was a cemetery where mischievous citizens (*al-arzāl wa-l-ashqiyā'*) would gather, by day and night, to indulge in behaviour that was considered immoral and defiant (*fisq wa fasād*).<sup>316</sup>

In conclusion, the rise of secular behaviour, the increasing popularity of coffeehouses and recreational gardens, the increasing appearance of women in public, and their rising individuality, provide insight into how Damascene society was experiencing a period of marked social change, or as Hamadah wrote *décloisonnement*. Such examples might provide a contrasting view to the commonly held belief that this period of Ottoman society was dominated by social stagnation, laziness, and ineptitude.

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<sup>313</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 61, document no. 446, case dated to 1142.

<sup>314</sup> LCR, Damascus, vol. 29, document no. 307, case dated to 1119.

<sup>315</sup> Rafeq, "Public Morality," 194.

<sup>316</sup> Al-Budayrī, *Ḥawādith Dimashq*, 195.

## **PART II MAPPING LANDSCAPE**

## Chapter 4: Mapping Damascene Gardens

### 4.1 Producing the Map: Method and Critical Review

Part I (chapters 1, 2 and 3) forms the analytical section of this thesis, which examines the garden typologies and the urban development in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Damascus. Part I also provides an analysis of how the urban facilities found in Damascene urban institutions, such as coffeehouses and leisure gardens, contributed to a culture of recreation. Part II of this study (chapter 4) forms the documentary section. It provides comprehensive documentations of Damascene gardens based on a wide range of primary Arabic historical sources. The aim of this documentation is to improve the knowledge of the type and location of gardens, of which there are few remains. Chapter 4 also provides a map of Ottoman Damascus during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This map identifies the names and locations of Damascene gardens as well as the locations of other places of recreation, including sacred places, suburbs, and villages. This map is referred to as “the current map,” (Map 4.2) in contrast to Duhmān’s map (Map 4.1, Map 4.3) and the overlay of gardens on google earth (Map 4.4).

#### 4.1.1 Duhmān’s Map: Foundations and Limitations

Sheikh Muḥammad Aḥmad Duhmān al-Dimashqī, born in Damascus in 1899, was a writer, historian, and editor of Arabic historical texts. He was educated by various „*umā*” and was strongly influenced by Sheikh \_Abd al-Qādir Badrān. He devoted much of his energy to reading and learning. He became knowledgeable about theology, science, and history. As a result of his love of history and admiration for Damascus, he devoted much effort to uncovering the history of the city. He founded the office of Islamic studies (*Maktab al-Dirāsāt al-Islāmiyya*) and the magazine of al-Ṣabāḥ. In 1983, he was awarded the first class Syrian merit medal, a civilian award for his contributions in the field of history.<sup>317</sup>

Sheikh Duhmān was the editor of the account *al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya al-Fasīḥa fī Talkhīṣ Tārīkh al-Ṣāliḥiyya*, written by Ibn Kannān al-Ṣāliḥī (d. 1135/1740). With reference to this and other texts, Duhmān created a map of al-Ṣāliḥiyya, the north-western part of Damascus, as it was between 553/1158 and 1153/1740 (Map 4.1). The map

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<sup>317</sup> Maḥmūd al-Arnā‘ūt, “al-Sheikh Aḥmad Duhmān,” *Jarīdat al-Uṣbū‘, al-‘, Abābī* 678 (2/10/1999), <http://wadod.org/vb/showthread.php?t=341>, accessed at 12-07-2011.

included the location of religious buildings, public baths, suburbs, and gardens. Duhmān's map is the only record of this part of Damascus' urban and natural environment from this period, and is therefore considered highly significant. This map was included in his published edition of *al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya*.

Duhmān noted that *al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya* was an abbreviation of an earlier account written by Yūssuf Ibn ʿAbd al-Hādī (d.909/1503).<sup>318</sup> Duhmān added that the author, Ibn Kannān, also used the account *al-Dāris fī al-Jawāmi*, *wa-l-Madāris* by Sheik Muḥi al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Nuʿaymī al-Shāfiʿī as a further source when completing his abbreviated account.<sup>319</sup>

A previous historical account on al-Ṣāliḥiyya, *al-Qalā'id al-Jawhariyya*, was written by the renowned historian Ibn Ṭūlūn (d.953/1529). According to Duhmān, *al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya* complemented Ibn Ṭūlūn's account by providing a record of the subsequent period of history in the editing of *al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya*, Duhmān used Ibn Ṭūlūn text extensively.

The map Duhmān created covers the area of al-Ṣāliḥiyya; however, the map does not include areas close to the eastern boundary of al-Ṣāliḥiyya. Instead, Duhmān's map finished at the boundary of Ṣaṭrā (see attached map). The complete boundaries of al-Ṣāliḥiyya, as identified by Ibn Kannān, are, from the south, al-Sharaf al-Aḥlā the land of Marj al-Daḥdāḥ, and the land of Ḥammām al-Ward; from the east, the land of Bayt Lahyā, Maṣṭabat al-Sultān, and Barza village; and from the north, the Qāsyūn mountain, from Barza village to al-Rabwa valley.<sup>320</sup> We do not have information on Duhmān's reason for not including the missing areas from his map, nor did he give information on the methods used to create this map.

While editing *al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya*, Duhmān did not reference Ibn ʿAbd al-Hādī, the primary source which Ibn Kannān used to write *al-Murūj*.<sup>321</sup> Furthermore, Duhmān did

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<sup>318</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya*, J.

<sup>319</sup> Muḥi al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Nuʿaymī, (d.927/1521) *al-Dāris fī Tārīkh al-Madāris*, 2 vols (Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1990). See also Ibn Kannān, *al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya*, J, D.

<sup>320</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 280-281.

<sup>321</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya*, B.

not mention other important primary Arabic sources that were written by Ibn Kannān, the author of *al-Murūj*. Ibn Kannān had written two accounts which were relevant to this topic: *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya* and *Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya*. Additionally, Duhmān did not reference al-Nābulusī's text, *Khamrat Babil*, a significant text on Damascene gardens during the Ottoman period. In the completion of this study, and in particular the creation of its map, both of Ibn Kannān's sources and al-Nābulusī's text were used to locate and document gardens not included in Duhmān's map.

#### **4.1.2 Geographical Boundaries and Urban Forms**

The purpose of the map prepared in this study is to identify and locate all the known gardens and recreational places, which once existed outside the walled city of Damascus. As a result, the boundaries of the map are as follows: the northern boundary extending to the foothills of the Qāsyūn mountain and the village of Barza, in the north-east. The eastern boundary starting from Barza village and extending southward to the Eastern Valley (al-Wādī al-Sharkī). The southern border of the map includes the orchards and the gardens of al-Shāghūr and al-Qanawāt. The western border includes the village of al-Mazza and the al-Rabwa gorge.

In creating the current map Duhmān's map was first assessed for accuracy. Then the account of *al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya* and a variety of other Arabic sources were examined to confirm the locations of gardens, which Duhmān located on his map. This examination revealed that Duhmān was in fact highly accurate in his descriptions and mapping of the gardens listed on his map. As a result, Duhmān's map provided a useful starting point for the development of the al-Šālihiyya section of the current map.

Gardens that were not recorded in Duhmān's map or were beyond the geographical boundaries covered by Duhmān were identified and located on the current map (map 4.2). of the primary Arabic sources used for this task included historical accounts and anthologies written by al-Nābulusī, Ibn Kannān and Ibn al-Ra'ī. It was not possible to locate several gardens which were mentioned in the primary Arabic sources. Those gardens are included in the list, but not on the map.

As well as Duhmān's map, the creation of the current map also relied on other maps

created by historians during the twentieth century. There are three sets of maps. Firstly, the map of Baradā river and its branches by Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid, and the map included in the account of *al-Barq al-Mut'alliq fī Maḥāsin Jilliḡ*. Secondly, a map of Damascus at the beginning of the twentieth century drawn by Jean-Louis Paillet. This is an important map because it illustrates the roads of Damascus before the rapid changes to the transportation system, which occurred later on in the twentieth century. Thirdly, the aerial photography of Damascus, sourced from the Institut Français du Proche-Orient in Damascus.

The current map was generated with the aid of Autocad software. The various layers of the map (contours, rivers, roads and gardens) were managed using Photoshop software and labels denoting the location of each garden's location were added using this same software.

In its completion, this map is the first to accurately depict the landscape and gardens of Damascus and its surrounding areas during the Ottoman period.

#### 4.1.3 Identifying and Locating Gardens

Gardens were identified, located, and documented within different axes or corridors. (Fig 4.1)

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**Figure 4.1** Section of Baradā river at the gorge of al-Rabwa illustrates the three corridors.  
(Source: Khayr, *Madīnat Dimashq: Dirāsa fī Juḡhrāfiyyat al-Mudun*, 86), modified.

1. Gardens within the mountain axis are located in the foothills of the Qāsyūn mountain and bound on either side by the Yazīd and Thowrā rivers (Figs. 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4)
2. The gardens along the plain axis are surrounded and bounded by three river branches, the Bānyās, the Qanawāt and the Baradā, all of which are branches of Baradā (Fig 4.5)
3. The gardens in the valley axis are located in the gorge of al-Rabwa, through which the seven branches of Baradā river flow, before spreading throughout Damascus (Fig 4.6).
4. Miscellaneous: gardens located outside the main axes.

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**Figure 4.2** Damascus from the slopes of the Qāsyūn mountain, taken in the nineteenth century.

(Source: Degeorge, *Damascus*, 229).

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**Figure 4.3** Damascus from the slopes of the Qāsyūn mountain, taken in the nineteenth century.  
(Source: <http://community.webshots.com/photo/fullsize/1026817192027618820VrLGWeWQph>).

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**Figure 4.4** Damascus from the slopes of the Qāsyūn mountain. The Qubbat (dome) of al-Sayyār is situated to the right of the picture. This illustration was engraved in the nineteenth century.  
(Source: <http://community.webshots.com/photo/fullsize/1182684443027618820DnzHPc>).



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**Figure 4.5** The Baradā river, as it flows through the ‘plain corridor’, with al-Takiyya al-Sulaymāniyya on the right of the picture. This illustration engraved in the nineteenth century.

(Source: <http://news.webshots.com/photo/2767345210027618820qKJSis>).

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**Figure 4.6** The branches of Baradā river, before entering the city of Damascus.  
(Source: Khayr, *Madīnat Dimashq: Dirāsa fī Jughrāfiyyat al-Mudun*, 91), modified.

The following section provides several examples of the methodology used to identify gardens and record their geographical location on the map.

**Example One: The Recreational Garden of al-Bahnasiyya (*Mutanazzah*)**

According to Ibn Kannān and al-Badrī, the recreational garden of al-Bahnasiyya was located between the bridge of Ibn Shawwāsh, on its south, and the suburb of al-Nayrabayn, on its north. Through the al-Bahnasiyya garden people could access the al-Rabwa valley<sup>322</sup> (Fig 4.8).

From the historical accounts of Ibn Kannān and al-Badrī, it is possible to determine the location of the Ibn Shawwāsh bridge and the valley of al-Rabwa which still exist today. As a result of these extant landmarks it was possible to determine the historical location of the al-Bahnasiyya garden in relationship to a map of modern day Damascus.

The gardens approximate location would be in the modern day Tishrīn garden, near the Thowrā river, with the Beirut road, the ancient Ibn Shawwāsh bridge, the Baradā river and Kīwān land, to its south. The eastern end of the al-Rabwa valley is west of the garden's likely historical location (Fig 4.7).

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<sup>322</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1:230; al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 81,82.

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**Figure 4.7** The approximate location of al-Bahnasiyya.

(Source: Google map 2012), Modified.

NOTE:

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**Figure 4.8** The bridge of Ibn Shawwāsh in Kīwān land, 1924.

(Source: Wulzinger and Watzinger, *Damaskus, die islamische Stadt*).

### **Example Two: The Suburb of Bayt Abyāt**

Ibn Kannān wrote in his account that the village of Bayt Abyāt was located in the same area as the al-Shinān mill.<sup>323</sup> Duhmān confirmed Ibn Kannān's account, citing Ibn Ṭūlūn's account of al-Ṣālihiyya.<sup>324</sup> The al-Shinān mill's existence in modern day Damascus provides a point of reference which can be used to determine the approximate location of the suburb.

Typically Damascene suburbs were located in close proximity to rivers, with the suburb's gardens on the banks of rivers. In the area surrounding the al-Shinān mill we find the Thowrā river, to the north of the al-Shinān mill. As a result, it is possible to determine that this was the likely location of the suburb and today the land is occupied by the Madīnat al-Fayḥā' al-Riyāḍiyya sports centre, the al-Adawī highway, and a section of the al-Park al-Sharqī, in which the al-Shinān mill is located. (Figs 4.9, 4.10).

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**Figure 4.9** The approximate location of the suburb of Bayt Abyāt.

(Source: Google map 2012), Modified.

<sup>323</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya*, 12; al-Badrī, *Nuzhat al-Anām*, 81,82.

<sup>324</sup> Duhmān, *Fī Riḥāb Dimashq*, 31-32.



**Figure 4.10** Al-Shinān mill and the *basātīn* of Abū Jarash.

(Source: Taken by Issam Hajjar 2008).

### **Example Three: the Dome of al-Sayyār (sacred site)**

In one of Ibn Ṭūlūn’s accounts he refers to a sacred site, called the dome of al-Sayyār. The name of the dome comes from al-Amīr Sayyār al-Shujā’ī<sup>325</sup> al-Nābulusī wrote that the dome of al-Sayyār was a recreational place, regularly visited by himself and his friends. This sacred site still exists in modern day Damascus. (Fig 4.13)

The dome is located high on the Qāsyūn mountain, overlooking the palace of Tishrīn, to its south, and the road travelling to the new suburb of Dummar (al-Shām al-Jadīda), to its north. (Figs 4.11, 4.12)

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<sup>325</sup> Ibn Ṭūlūn, *al-Qalā’id al-Jawhariyya*, 1:363.

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**Figure 4.11** The location of the dome of al-Sayyār.

(Source: Google map 2012), Modified.



**Figure 4.12** The dome of al-Sayyār.

(Source: Taken by Issam Hajjar 2005).

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**Figure 4.13** The dome of al-Sayyār in the 1930s.  
(Source: Wulzinger and Watzinger, *Damaskus, die islamische Stadt*).

#### **Example Four: Al-Zuhrābiyya Garden**

According to al-Budayrī,<sup>326</sup> Ibn Kannān,<sup>327</sup> and al-Nābulusī,<sup>328</sup> al-Zuhrābiyya was a recreational suburban-garden located outside the walled city of Damascus. The garden was adjacent to the banks of the Banyās river and the al-Sharaf al-Adnā recreational garden, with the al-Marja garden to its side. The garden contained a palace, also named al-Zuhrābiyya. The al-Zuhrābiyya garden was located close to the cemetery of al-Barāmika, which housed the tombs of „*ulamā*“ elites, including Ibn Ṭaymiyya and Ibn Kuthayyir.

The Banyās river, the al-Marja garden and the famous tombs of the *ulamā* elite still exist in modern day Damascus and therefore provide a point of reference to uncover the modern day location of the al-Zuhrābiyya garden.

By taking into account the location of these points of reference, it was possible to determine that the suburban garden was in fact located to the west of the walled city of Damascus, close to the al-Takiyya al-Salīmāniyya building, the tombs of Ibn Ṭaymiyya and Ibn Kuthayyir, and the Bānyās river. Today this land is also occupied by the main building of the University of Damascus and the Obstetrics hospital building. (Figs 4.14, 4.15)

These four examples illustrate the method used to locate a few recreational places, and by reusing the same method with the remaining gardens \_the current map‘ has been created. Thus both the following list and \_the current map‘ help to further enhance the understanding of Part I of this thesis.

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<sup>326</sup> Al-Budayrī, *Ḥawādith Dimashq*, 195.

<sup>327</sup> Ibn Kannān, *al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya*, 1: 272.

<sup>328</sup> Al-Nābulusī, *Burj Bābil*, 12.



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**Figure 4.14** The approximate location of al-Zuhrābiyya.  
(Source: Google map 2012), Modified.

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**Figure 4.15** The tomb of Ibn Ṭaymiyya (front) and the tomb of Ibn Kuthayyir (behind).  
(Source: the collection of Quṭayba al-Shihābī, IFPO).

## 4.2 A Guide to Damascene Gardens and Recreational Places/Sites

All places listed are included within the *maḥāsin al-Shām* and referred to the beauties of Damascus. The list includes gardens (*basātīn*, *ḥadāʿiq*, *niyāḍ* and *janāʿiḥ*), recreational gardens (*mutanazzahāt*), suburbs (*maḥallāt*), lands (*arāḍī*), valleys (*awḍiyya*), recreational palaces (*quṣūr al-nuzha*), villages (*qurā*). It also includes sacred places, such as visitation places (*mazārāt*), Sufis lodges (*zawāyā*), domes (*qubab*), mosques (*mutanazzahāt al-jwāmi*) and religious schools (*madāris*). Most of these places are located on —the current map” (Map 4.3). There is also map 4.4 that results from —the current map” overlaid over a Google earth map. The latter map shows that most of these gardens and places/sites have been lost due to urban development and the resulting relentless landscape change.

#### 4.2.1 The Mountain Axis

Gardens within the mountain axis are located in the foothills of the Qāsyūn mountain and bound on either side by the Yazīd and Thowrā rivers (Figs. 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4)

Name	Category	Condition	Approximate Location on “the Current Map”	Sources
Al-Āsiyya اسيخ	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Starting from the east of the Rukn al-Dīn neighbourhood and continuing to the highway of Rukn al-Dīn, the street of al-Muthnnā Ibn Ḥāritha. Ending near the southern part of the Abū Jarash gardens.	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 421.
Al-Dawwāsāt اقنسب د	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	On the western side of the Tishrīn garden and close to the garden palace of the same name.	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 222-452.
Al-Mi’dhana انئذخ	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	In the Tishrīn garden.	Duhmān, <i>Fī Riḥāb Dimashq</i> , 30.
Al-Marbuṣ انزثى ظ	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	South of the al-Shāmi hospital, on the southern bank of Yazīd river, in the north-east corner of the modern day Tishrīn garden.	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 270-271.
Al-Bahnasiyya اخشيسخ	<i>Mutanazzah</i>	Extinct	Inside the modern day Tishrīn garden, near the Thowrā river, with Beirut road, the ancient Ibn Shawwāsh bridge, the Baradā river, and Kīwān land, to its south. The beginning of the al-Rabwa valley is to the west of the garden’s likely historical location. (Figs 4.7, 4.8)	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 81-82; Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya</i> , 1: 230.
Dayr Marrān فيزيزا*	<i>Maḥalla</i> (suburb)	Extinct	On the land now occupied by the Tishrīn palace, south of the al-Sayyār dome.	Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 130; Duhmān, <i>Fī Riḥāb Dimashq</i> , 16-17; Kurd _Alī <i>Ghūṭat Dimashq</i> , 241, 245.
Al-Nayrab انيزة	<i>Maḥalla</i>	Extinct	Al-Nayrab is divided into two gardens. Al-Nayrab al-A_lā and al-Nayrab al-Adnā.  Al-Nayrab al-A_lā (al-Fawqānī) was located between the Thowrā (southern side) and Yazīd (northern side) rivers and continues	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 82; Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya</i> , 1:239; Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya</i> , 66; Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 39-41, 103, 129; Duhmān, <i>Fī</i>

			<p>from west to the east, following the path of the Yazīd river.</p> <p>Along the path of the Yazīd, the following landmarks are found: the palace of Tishrīn, the square of Ibrāhīm Hanānū, the street of _Urwa Ibn al-Ward, the street of Zanūbia (west al-Malikī), the street of al-Andalus, the square of _Adnān al-Mālikī, ending at the street of Ḥārūn al-Rashīd.</p> <p>Today the area occupied by the al-Nayrab al-A_lā garden contains the following suburbs, listed in order from west to east: Gharbī al-Mālikī, al-Mālikī, al-Rawḍa, and Nūrī Bāshā.</p> <p>The Al-Nayrab al-Adnā (al-Asfāl) garden was located between the Thowrā and Baradā rivers, adjacent (from west to east) these landmarks: Ṣakhrat al-Minshār in the al-Rabwa valley, Tishrīn garden, Muḥammad al-Buzm street, Ḥātim al-Ṭā_ī street, Miṣr street, and the street of Zuhayr Ibn Abī Salmā.</p> <p>Today the area occupied by the al-Nayrab al-Adnā garden is occupied by the following suburbs: Gharbī al-Malikī, al-Malikī, and Abū Rummāna.</p>	<i>Riḥāb Dimashq</i> , 27.
Başārū شصبرو	<i>Arḍ</i> (land)	Extinct	Between the Yazīd and Thowrā rivers, on the site that is today occupied by the Jisr al-Naḥḥās li-l-Sayyidāt garden, specifically between the streets of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī and Ibn al-Nafīs and the northern part of the al-Maysāt square.	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 275-276; Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya</i> , 35- 65; Kurd _Alī, <i>Ghūṭat Dimashq</i> , 35.
Bayt Abyāt شأينوب د	<i>Qarya</i> (village)	Extinct	Today this area is the site of the Madīnat al-Fayḥā' al-Riyādiyya sports centre, the al-_Adawī highway, and a section of the al-Park al-Sharqī park, in which the al-Shinān mill is located.	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 232; Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya</i> , 12; Duhmān, <i>Fī Riḥāb Dimashq</i> , 31-32.
Maqrā يقرى	<i>Arḍ</i> (land)	Extinct	On the southern bank of the Thowrā river, on the site of the modern day Nadī al-Wiḥda al-Riyāḍī sports center and continuing south westerly towards the street of _Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, the al-Mazra_a garden, the Ma_rakit Ḥiṭṭīn square, and ending at the	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 263; Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya</i> , 13; Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya</i> , 1: 370; Ibn al-Rā_ī, <i>al-Barq al-</i>

			ministry of <i>Awqāf</i> .	<i>Muta</i> , <i>dliq</i> , 144; Duhmān, <i>Fī Rihāb Dimashq</i> , 32.
Al-Mayṭūr الْمَيْطُور	<i>Arḍ</i>	Extinct	In the foothills of Qāsyūn mountain and on the Yazīd river, near the suburb of Rukn al-Dīn. From the west it was bordered by the street of Khawlah Bint al-Azwar. From the south it was bordered by the street of _Abd al-Ghanī Burniyya, and from the east street of al-Thawra.	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 268; Ibn al-Rā_ī, <i>al-Barq al-Muta</i> , <i>alliq</i> , 10; Duhmān, <i>Fī Rihāb Dimashq</i> , 33.
Al-Sahm السهم	<i>Arādī</i> (Land)	Extinct	The land of Al-Sahm was divided into al-Sahm al-A_ā and al-Sahm al-Adnā.  Al-Sahm al-A_ā was located between the Yazīd and Thowrā rivers. From the west it was bordered by al-_Afīf street. From the north, the banks of the Yazīd river and Sūq al-Jum_a markets. From the east, the street of Sheik Muḥī al-Dīn. From the west, the street of Nasīb al-Bakrī and the western part of _Uḩa Ibn Nafī_ street.	Ibn al-Rā_ī, <i>al-Barq al-Muta</i> , <i>alliq</i> , 10; Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya</i> , 35; Duhmān, <i>Fī Rihāb Dimashq</i> , 89; Al-Munajjid, <i>Khiṭaṭ Dimashq</i> , 30.
Al-Nābulusī النَّبْلُوسِي	„ <i>Amara</i> (house)	Extinct	Close to al-Nābulusī mosque and to the east of the al-_Umariyya school.	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyat Shāmiyya</i> , 163-220; Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 319-320.
Al-Bāsiṭiyya بَيْتِ السَّيْطِيَّةِ	<i>Madrasa</i> (religious school)	Extinct	In the suburb of al-Jisr al-Abyaḍ.	Al-Khayārī, <i>Tuḩfat al-Udabā</i> “, 142; Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyat Shāmiyya</i> , 381.
Al-Bakrī Palace قصر ابن بكري	<i>Qaṣr</i> (Palace)	Extinct	In the suburb of al-Jisr al-Abyaḍ in al-Ṣāliḩiyya, close to the Thowrā river.	Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 290; Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya</i> , 36.
Karīm al-Dīn Palace قصر كزى ياندى	<i>Qaṣr</i>	Extinct	The palace was located within the al-Dahsha garden, which was divided into two sections: al-Dahsha al-Kabīra and al-Dahsha al-Ṣaghīra.  The western part of al-Dahsha al-Ṣaghīra was located in the Tishrīn garden. The eastern part was located in the suburb of al-Mālkī, continuing from the mosque of Sa_d Ibn Mu_āz to the street of _Abd al-Mun_īm Riyāḍ.	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyat Shāmiyya</i> , 222; Kurd _Alī, <i>Ghuṭat Dimashq</i> , 228, 232.

			Al-Dahsha al-Kabīra was located in the south-east part of the Tishrīn garden and was bounded by the al-Dahsha al-Ṣaghīra garden and Thowrā river from the north.	
Al-Naṣr قح انصر	<i>Qubba</i> (Dome, visitation place)	Extinct	On Qāsyūn mountain, where the Television and Radio station building now exists.	Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya</i> , 1: 384-385; Al-Budayrī, <i>Ḥawādith Dimashq</i> , 260; Duhmān, <i>Fī Riḥāb Dimashq</i> , 59.
Al-Sayyār قح لسيار	<i>Qubba</i>	Extant	The dome is located high on the Qāsyūn mountain, overlooking the palace of Tishrīn, to its south, and the road travelling to the new suburb of Dummar, to its north. (Figs 4.11, 4.12, 4.13).	Ibn Ṭūlūn, <i>al-Qalā'id al-Jawhariyya</i> , 1: 363; Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 273.
Jibrīl كهف جبري م	<i>Kahf</i> (Cave)	Extant	On Qāsyūn mountain, west of the al-Damm cave. The current name of this cave is Maqām Ahl al-Kahf.	Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya</i> , 12, 79.
Al-Jū يغبر حانج ع	<i>Maghāra</i> (Cave)	Extant	On Qāsyūn mountain. The current name of this cave is Maghārat al-Jū_iyya.	Al-Harawī, <i>Al-Ishārāt Ilā Ma., riḥat al-Ziyārāt</i> , 11; Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya</i> , 76.
Al-Damm يغبر حانو	<i>Maghāra</i>	Extant	In the Qāsyūn mountain range, specifically in the al-Arba_in mountain (a.k.a. Jabal al-Akrād).	Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya</i> , 24; <i>Al-Rab., ī, Faḍā'il al-Shām wa Dimashq</i> , 64; Al-'Adawī, <i>al-Ziyārāt bi-Dimashq</i> , 2.

#### 4.2.2 The Valley Axis

The gardens in the valley axis are located in the gorge of al-Rabwa, through which the seven branches of Baradā river flow, before spreading throughout Damascus (Fig 4.6).

Name	Category	Condition	Approximate Location on “the Current Map”	Sources
Al-Rabwa انزثح	<i>Mutanazzah</i>	Extant	The name —aRabwa” still exists, but the character of the valley has changed dramatically.  Engraved on a stone in the valley is a Kufī text ( <i>al-Kitāba al-</i>	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 84-85; Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya</i> , 1: 293-294; Ibn al-Rā_ī, <i>al-Barq al-Muta., dliq</i> , 156; Duhmān, <i>Fī Riḥāb</i>

		<p><i>Kūfiyya</i>). It is in the al-Rabwa valley that all branches of the Baradā river flow before spreading out through the city.</p> <p>The valley begins in the west, at the al-Khashab bridge, where an old Ottoman palace related to the al-<i>_Azm</i> family exists and the river Thowrā bifurcates. From the west, the valley ends at the location of the al-Khashab bridge.</p> <p>In the west of the valley is the al-Khashab bridge and in the north, the mountain of al-Mazza. In the east, the valley is bordered by Ṣakhrat al-Minshār. Finally, from the north the valley is bordered by the Qāsyūn mountain range.</p>	<i>Dimashq</i> , 21-27.
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#### 4.2.3 The Plain Axis

The gardens along the plain axis are surrounded and bounded by three river branches, the Bānyās, the Qanawāt and the Baradā, all of which are branches of Baradā (Fig 4.5)

Name	Category	Condition	Approximate Location on “the Current Map”	Sources
Al-Sharafān ان زلفب*	<i>Basātīn</i>	Extinct	Al-Sharafān is divided into al-Sharaf al-A_īal-Shamālī (northern) and al-Sharaf al-Adnā al-Janūbī (southern). Located between the gorge of al-Rabwa from the west and the square of al-Marja from the east. Bordered by Qāsyūn mountain from the north and Jabal al-Mazzah from the south.	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 73-74; Ibn al-Rā_ī, <i>Al-Barq al-Muta</i> ., <i>allīq</i> , 147; Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya</i> , 1: 253; Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyat Shāmiyya</i> , 340; Kurd _Alī, <i>Ghutat Dimashq</i> , 227.
Al-Kabīr ان كعبير	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	On the land of Damascus University building in al-Barāmika.	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyat Shāmiyya</i> , 421.
Kīwān كفيان*	<i>Basātīn</i>	Extant	Kiwān still exists, though the only remnants are a few gardens, the house of Khalīl al-Qabbāni, and the Kīwān mill.	Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 302, 311, 317; Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyat Shāmiyya</i> ,

				421; Al-Khayārī, <i>Tuḥfat al-Udabāʾ</i> ”; 151-152; Ibn al-Rāʾī, <i>al-Barq al-Muta,,dliq</i> , 206.
Al-Amjadiyya الأجدية	<i>Bustān and Qaṣr</i>	Extinct	In the neighbourhood of Zuqāq al-Ṣakḥir, where the Four Seasons hotel is now located. Also on the site there is the al-Amjadiyya cemetery and al-Farūkhīyya madrasa. The site overlooks the site of the old Damascus International Fair (the location of the Masar project).	Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 205; Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya</i> , 1:2 51.
Al-Zuhrābiyya ان شهرية	<i>Mutanazzah and Qaṣr</i>	Extinct	On the west of the walled city of Damascus, on the southern bank of Bānyās river and south-west of al-Takiyya al-Salīmāniyya. The land is now occupied by the main building of the University of Damascus, the Obstetrics hospital, and the tombs of Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Kuthayyir. (Figs 4.14, 4.15)	Al-Budayrī, <i>Ḥawādiṭh Dimashq</i> , 195; Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya</i> , 1: 272; Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 12.
Bayn al-Nahrayn	<i>Mutanazzah</i>	Extinct	In al-Wādi al-Sharkī, at the current location of <i>maqṣam</i> Baradā.	Ibn al-Rāʾī, <i>al-Barq al-Muta,,dliq</i> , 230; Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 208; Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 69.
Al-Jabha ان ججخ	<i>Mutanazzah</i>	Extinct	Adjacent to the land of Old Damascus International Exhibition (the location of Masar project) from the south, where the Bānyās river extends away from the al-Qanawāt river and forms a flat land. Currently this land is occupied by Damascus University’s School of law and science.	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 79-80; Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya</i> , 1: 223-228; Ibn al-Rāʾī, <i>al-Barq al-Muta,,dliq</i> , 145-146; Kurd Alī, <i>Ghuṭat Dimashq</i> , 53.
Al-Marja ان زجخ	<i>Mutanazzah</i>	Extant	Al-Marja refers to two places. The first is al-Marj al-Akhḍar/al-Mīdān al-Akhḍar. The second is Marjat al-Ḥashīsh/the square of al-Marja/Sāḥat al-Shuhdā’/Ṣadr al-Bāz.  Al-Marj al-Akhḍar is located on the land west of al-Takiyya al-Salīmāniyya, between the Baradā and Bānyās rivers and bordered to the west by Kīwān land. This land is the location of the Old International Exhibition of Damascus, which today is the location of Masar project. This land is now the site of the al-Nubalā’ restaurant, the Fayrūz theatre, and the Opera House.	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 77-78; Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 15.



			The square of al-Marja, is located in the western part of the old city (walled Damascus). The borders of the square of al-Marja are: From the north, the mosque of Yalbughā and the bridge of Victoria. From the south, Ḥikr al-Simmāq and al-Naṣr street. From the west the plains of al-Marj al-Akhḍar. From the east, the street of al-Thawra.	
Al-Darwīshīyya ان ذري طيح	<i>Mutanazzahat al-Jawāmi,,</i>	Extant	One of the most important mosques dating from the Ottoman period. The mosque is located on the western corner of Sa_d Ibn Zaghlūl street, en route to the suburb of al-Mīdān.	Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 212.
Umayyad mosque بيبي ع الأمي	<i>Mutanazzahat al-Jawāmi,,</i>	Extant	One of the most significant sacred places in Damascus. Located inside the walls of the old city.	Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 104.
Al-Khalkhāl ان خبيل	<i>Riyād</i>	Extinct	In al-Barāmika. Today, this site is occupied by the Schools of Law and Shrī_a, and the department of Immigration and Passports (al-Ḥijra wa-l-Jawāzāt).	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 87; Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya</i> , 1: 252; Ibn al-Rā_ī, <i>al-Barq al-Muta,, allīq</i> , 149.
Iskandar اسكندر	<i>Junayna</i>	Extinct	Located in the al-Qaṣṣā_ suburb, in the square of al-Abbāsiyyīn, close to the Dīwāna petrol station. In this square was the (ayn) al-Zaynabiyya spring.	Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 228,229; Ibn al-Rā_ī, <i>al-Barq al-Muta,, allīq</i> , 236.
Bāb al-Salām garden جُيُ خبب ة ليل الو	<i>Junayna</i>	Extinct	Close to Bāb al-Salām (al-Salām gate), east of Bāb al-Farādīs.	Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 304.
Al-Daḥdāḥ ان ذح داح	<i>Junayna</i>	Extinct	On the location of the al-Daḥdāḥ cemetery. To the north is Baghdad street.	Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya</i> , 65; Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 261; Duhmān, <i>Fī Riḥāb Dimashq</i> , 154-162; Kurd _Alī, <i>Ghuṭat Dimashq</i> , 58.
_Annāba عُ ب شخ	<i>Maḥalla</i>	Extinct	In the suburb of Janā‘in al-Ward, north of al-Taḥrīr square and al-Fardaws mosque.	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 233-244.
Bayt Lahyā ن هي	<i>Mazār</i> (Visitation place)	Extinct	On the land of the Al-Zuhrāwī Obstetrics hospital in the suburb of al-Qaṣṣā_.	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 232; Al-Harawī, <i>Al-Ishārāt Ilā Ma,rifat al-Ziyārāt</i> , 12; Duhmān, <i>Fī Riḥāb Dimashq</i> , 32.

Saṭrā سظرا	<i>Ard</i>	Extinct	Located in the suburb of al-Qaṣṣā_ in Burj al-Rūs, in front of Manjak mosque (al-Sādāt Mosque or al-Aqṣāb mosque).	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 236-237; Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya</i> , 1: 285.
al-Mawlawiyya المولوييخ	<i>Zāwiya</i> (Sufī lodge)	Extinct	This site is most likely close to the al-Mawlawiyya mosque in al-Ḥijāz square.	Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 18.
Al-Nābulusī انْبُلُسِي	<i>Bayt</i> (house)	Extinct	Close to Umayyad mosque, where the al- <i>Anbarāniyyīn</i> market was located.	Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 282, 305, 306; Al-Budayrī, <i>Ḥawādith Dimashq</i> , 202; Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyat Shāmiyya</i> , 163.
Al-Wādī al-Taḥṭānī/al-Sharkī نَادِي انْطَوَاقِي/حَرْبِي	<i>Wādī</i> (Valley)	Extant	The valley started at al-Bāb al-Sharkī and continued eastward alongside the following landmarks: basāṭīn al-Ghūṭa, through the lands of al-Iḥdā_ Ashariyya, Jawbar village, al-Malīḥa village, Kafr Baṭnā village, Jisrīn and Bayt Nāyim. The valley ends in al-Nashābiyya.	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 216; Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 208.

#### 4.2.4 Miscellaneous

Miscellaneous refers to gardens and recreational places located outside the main axes.

Name	Category	Condition	Approximate Location	Sources
Sinān Palace قصر سُبْ	<i>Qaṣr</i> (Palace)	Extinct	The precise location of this palace cannot be determined. It could be Sinān Āgha, the site of al-Manakhliyya mosque.	Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 193; Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya</i> , 35; Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 340-341.
Al-Shaḥṭabī نَلْحَطَجِي	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	The al-Shaḥṭabī was a part of al-Nayrabayn, though its precise location could not be determined.	Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 286-287.
Al- <i>Imādī</i> Palace انْ عَمْدِي	<i>Qaṣr</i>	Extinct	The palace might be located in the garden al- <i>Imādiyya</i> , which doesn't exist today.  Al- <i>Imādiyya</i> garden, in modern day Damascus is bordered by: From the south, Baghdād street. From the north-east, the corner of the al-Daḥḍāḥ cemetery. From the west, the street of	Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya</i> , 36; Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 259, 335-336.

			al-Imām al-Bukhārī. It was located partly on the site of al- _Adawī highway and partly on the site of the gardens of Abū Jarash.	
Bahrān * ثهرا	<i>Arḍ</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 274.
Al-Mazzāz wa-l- Shuwayka ان شولان طى يلكخ	<i>Arḍ</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 888.
Al-Lawwān * لها	<i>Arḍ</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 868, 186.
Al-Saylūn * ان سبيى	<i>Arḍ</i>	Extinct		Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 268.
Al-Ḥawākīr الحي الكيز	<i>Ḥadā'iq</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 98.
Ghiyāḍ al-Ḥūr غيبض ان حير	<i>Ghiyāḍ</i> (gardens)	Extinct	Unknown	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 219.
Gayḍat al-Sulṭān * غيض خيل هطب	<i>Ghayḍa</i> (garden)	Extinct	Around al-Qābūn area.	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 219.
Sittu al-Shām سنان طبو	<i>Mutanazzah</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 220.
Al-Laylakī لبي هكي	<i>Mutanazzah</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 137.
Al-Munaybi_ انبي جع	<i>Maḥalla</i>	Extinct	Around al-Marja square	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 78.
Al-Shaykh Arsalān * لطبخ ار سلا	<i>Marj</i> (garden)	Extinct	Around Bāb Tūma area	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 214.
Qaṭya قطيخ	<i>Mutanazzah</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya</i> , 1: 228.
Al-Shaqrā' ان طقزاء	<i>Maḥalla</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya</i> , 1:140.

Al-Shibliyya ان طح ه ي خ	<i>Maḥalla</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya</i> , 1:186.
Qaṣr al-Lubbān قصر ان ه جب "	<i>Maḥalla</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya</i> , 1:288.
Qaṣr al-Lubbād قصر ان ه جب د	<i>Maḥalla</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya</i> , 1:189.
Al-Nashwa ان طح ج	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya</i> , 1:304.
Ibn Jamā_a ان ج ب ع خ	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya</i> , 1:304.
Ibn al-Qurundus ان ل ق ر ذ ص	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 139.
Al-Waqf ان ع ق ف	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 808.
Al-Dawāsāt ان ق س ب د	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 111.
Karīm al-Dīn ك ز ي م ن ني ء	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Around Tishrīn garden	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 111.
Abd al-Hakīm Afandī ع ج ذ ح ط ك ي ا ف ن ذ ي	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 314.
Al-Burj ان ج ز ج	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Could be in Burj al-Rūs	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 313.
Zayn al-Dīn س ي ا ن ذ ي ء	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 318.
Ibn Shībān ان ه ي ج ب "	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 340.
Al-Maṣāṭibī ان ب ط ح ي	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 383.
Al-Ṭawīl ان ط ه ي م	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 383.

Al-Bāsiṭī نابلس طي	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 390.
Al-Qamāḥiyya لقب مجيخ	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 394.
Al-Arnā‘ūṭ الأرنؤوط	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 396.
Ḥawr Ta_lā حدر علا	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 049.
_Ayn Kirish عئ كزش	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Could be in the same location of _Ayn Kirish On today map	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 087.
Al-_Aysh اعئص	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 021.
Al-Zaybaq ان شحق	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 425.
Al-Qaṣr نقصرز	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 425.
Al-Dīnāra ان فئرح	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 033.
Al-Bāshā بنطعب	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 434-435.
Al-Jawz انج صئص	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 004.
Jarīf خئف	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 001.
Al-Qaṭṭān لقط	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 003.
Sharībīshāt ضزئ طئب	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 462.
Bahrām شزاو	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 069.

Al-Maṣātibī انصطحي	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 079.
Al-Sanbūskī انسنجسكي	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct	Unknown	Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 484.
Suwayd سويذ	<i>Bustān</i>	Extinct		Ibn Kannān, <i>Yawmiyyāt Shāmiyya</i> , 449.

#### 4.2.5 The Recreational Villages

Name	Category	Condition	Approximate Location	Sources
Al-Ashrafiyya الأشويخ	<i>Qarya</i> (Village)	Extant	North-West the old city of Damascus	Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 192.
Barza نوسج	<i>Qarya</i>	Extant	North-East the old city of Damascus	Ibn al-Rā_ī, <i>al-Barq al-Muta, alliq</i> , 212-213; Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya</i> , 21; <i>Al-Rab, ī, Faḍā ʿil al-Shām wa Dimashq</i> , 70; Al-ʿAdawī, <i>al-Ziyārāt bi-Dimashq</i> , 16.
Bassīma مشيخ	<i>Qarya</i>	Extant	North-West the old city of Damascus	Ibn al-Rā_ī, <i>al-Barq al-Muta, alliq</i> , 224-225; Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 328.
Ḥarastā حزنب	<i>Qarya</i>	Extant	North-East the old city of Damascus	Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 234-235.
Ḥalbūn حجي	<i>Qarya</i>	Extant	North-West the old city of Damascus	Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 321-323.
Dārayyā درايب	<i>Qarya</i>	Extant	South-West the old city of Damascus	Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 193; Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 283.
Zabadānī سشداني	<i>Qarya</i>	Extant	North-West the old city of Damascus	Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 289.
Al-Sūq انسوق	<i>Qarya</i>	Extant	North-West the old city of Damascus	Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 289.

َعِيَانُ سَاهِب َعِيَانُ سَاهِب	<i>Qarya</i>	Extant	North-West the old city of Damascus	Ibn al-Rā_ī, <i>al-Barq al-Muta, alliq</i> , 231.
Al-Mazza ان شرح	<i>Qarya</i>	Extant	South-West the old city of Damascus	Al-Harawī, <i>Al-Ishārāt Ilā Ma., rifāt al-Ziyārāt</i> , 11; Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 168; Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 285.
Ma_ābā مِيَاب	<i>Qarya</i>	Extant	Northern the old city of Damascus	Ibn al-Rā_ī, <i>al-Barq al-Muta, alliq</i> , 214-215
Mnīn مِين	<i>Qarya</i>	Extant	Northern the old city of Damascus	Al-Adawī, <i>al-Ziyārāt bi-Dimashq</i> , 67-68; Al-Badrī, <i>Nuzhat al-Anām</i> , 299; Al-Nābulusī, <i>Burj Bābil</i> , 246-247; Ibn al-Rā_ī, <i>al-Barq al-Muta, alliq</i> , 218-219; ; Ibn Kannān, <i>al-Mawākib al-Islāmiyya</i> , 1:395.

## Conclusion

In this study I have explored an important moment in the urban and cultural history of Ottoman Damascus during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This period coincides with the phenomenon of *décloisonnement*, examined by Hamadeh in the context of early modern Istanbul, which refers to the increasing openness to change within Ottoman society. I have argued that there is evidence to suggest resonance of such openness taking place in the provincial Ottoman centre of Damascus. I have attempted to trace the evidence of such resonance in the culture of recreation that evolved in association with the development of gardens and urban landscape.

The study has shown that the physical and social fabric of Damascus underwent considerable transformation during this period. Facilities for leisure, commerce, and religion were located inside Damascene gardens. Religious buildings, such as mosques and schools, as well as palaces of the elite, public baths, coffeehouses, small bazaars, kiosks, benches and waterwheels all became, in one form or another, part of these gardens' amenities. This transformation of the built environment can be seen as a reflection of new social trends and changes in Damascenes' social behaviour. Together, these facilities enabled the emergence of a culture of recreation in the public realm where men and women enjoyed eating, drinking coffee, smoking and entertaining in public. Furthermore, these spaces encouraged interaction between people and the landscape.

Critical analysis of primary Arabic sources, including historical accounts, anthologies of poetry, biographical dictionaries, chronicles, and the archives of the law-court in Damascus shed new light on the different typologies of the Damascene gardens, the variety of its urban facilities and furniture, and the activities that took place in the public recreational places.

In this study I have also mapped these gardens and landscapes and prepared a comprehensive list of place names, with annotations, based on the analysis of the primary Arabic sources. Together, the list and the map provide us with new knowledge of the names and locations of the Damascene gardens as well as the locations of other places of



recreation, including sacred places, suburbs, and villages. This map, then, is also an important contribution to knowledge of Ottoman Damascene gardens and landscapes in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that have, for the most part, been lost due to urban development and relentless change.

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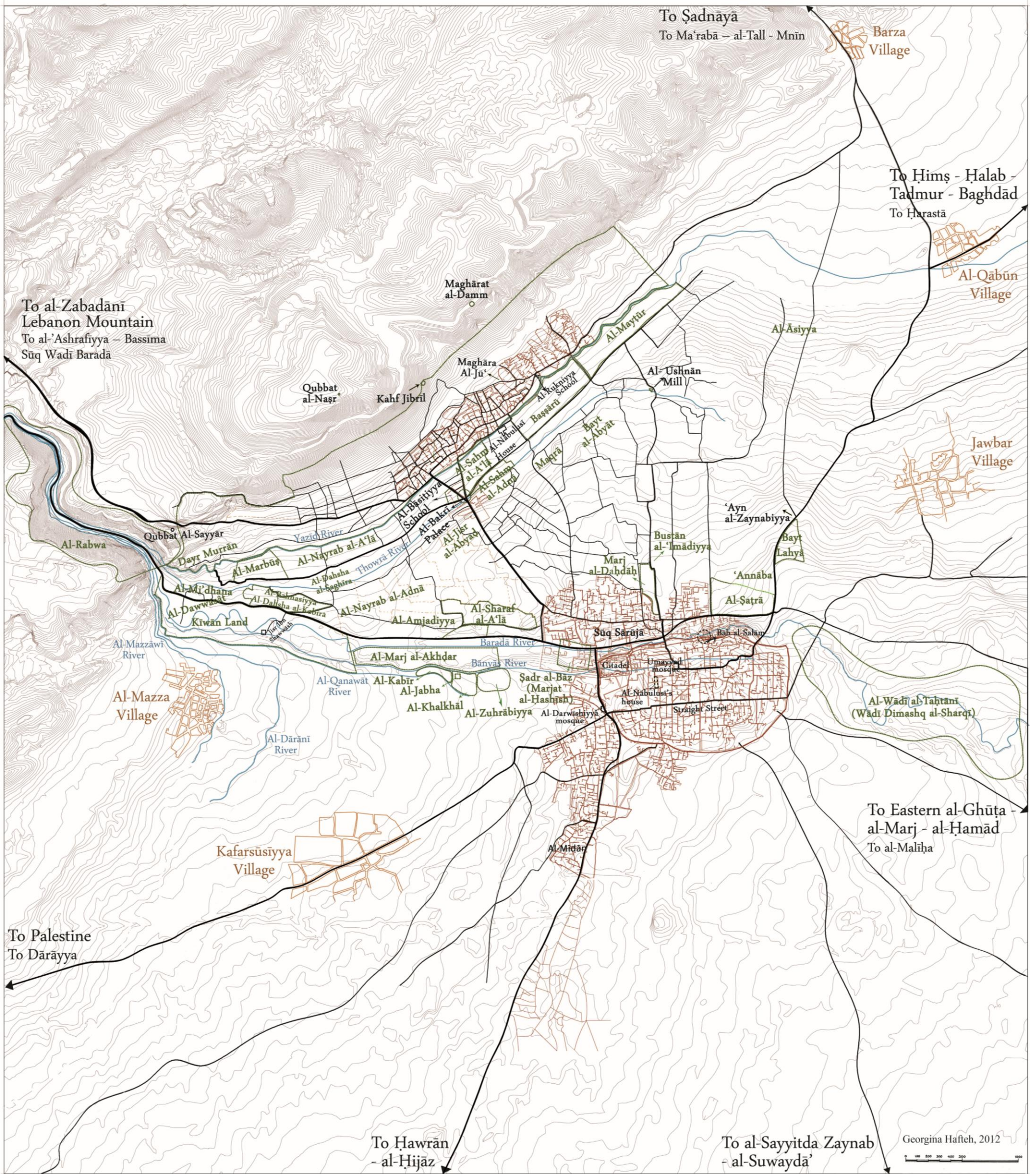
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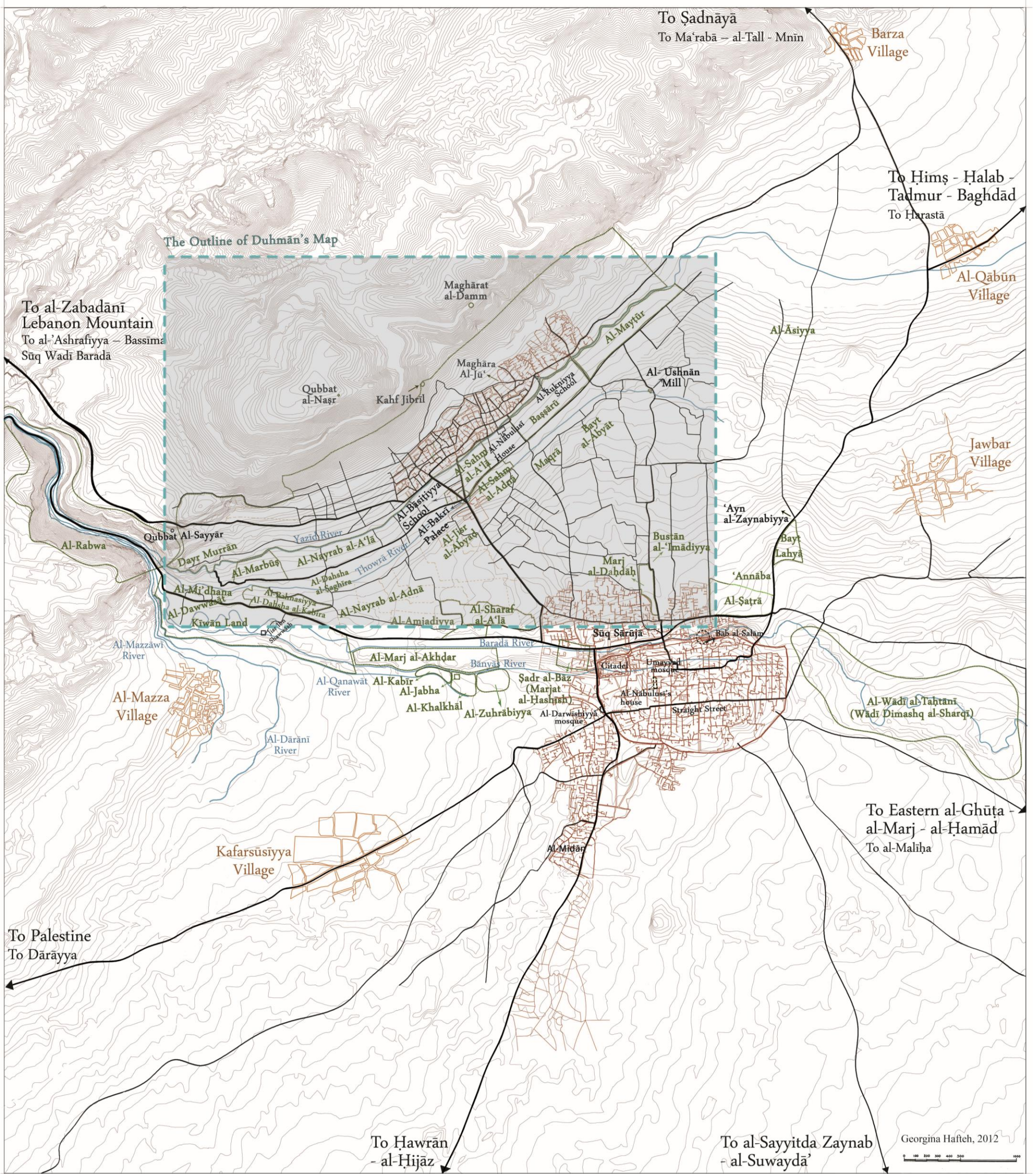
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**Map 4.1** Duhmān map of al-Ṣāliḥiyya  
(Source: Ibn Kannān, *al-Murūj al-Sundusiyya*, annexed)

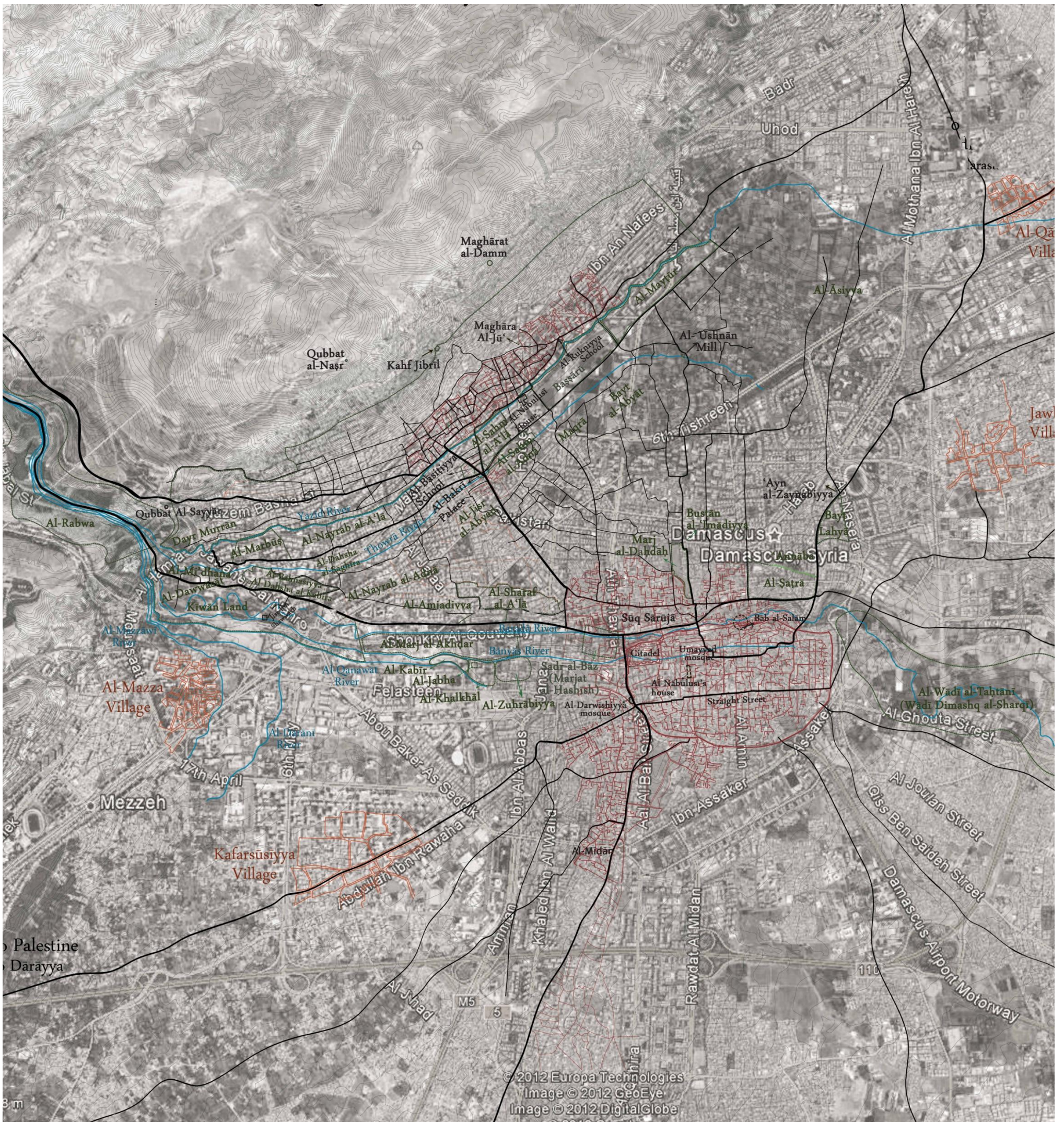


Map 4.2 The current map:

Gardens and recreational places/sites in the seventeenth and eighteenth century Damascus



Map 4.3 Duhmān map over the current map



**Map 4.4** The current map overlaid over a satellite image showing the urban development of Damascus today.