

Appendix: Note on the Tripoli Shari'a Court Registers

There is more than the usual confusion about register numbers, years covered, and pagination of the Tripoli Shari'a Court Registers (*sijillat maḥkamat Tarabulus al-shar'iyya*). Ironically, this confusion is partially due to the efforts by local scholars to photocopy and organize the registers during and immediately after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in the summer of 1982. Fearing that these invaluable records might be destroyed during the invasion, these scholars formed an informal group, *Rābiṭat li-Ihyā' al-Turāth al-Fikrī fi al-Shamāl* (Association for the Promotion of the Intellectual Heritage of the North), which received permission from the Tripoli Shari'a court qadi at the time, al-shaykh Nasir al-Saleh to photocopy the registers.¹ From July to September, 1982, members of the *Rabita* – including Dr. Khalid Ziade, Dr. 'Umar al-Tadmuri, Fredrick Ma'tuq, Fadl al-Muqaddam, Harun 'Issa al-Khoury, and Muna Haddad al-Yakan, personally took shifts manually photocopying the first thirty registers, which they classified according to a system that did not always match the court-assigned numbers of the originals. The results are excellent despite the technical deficiencies of the photocopying machines. In 1983, Muna al-Yakan, with additional financial support from the Faculty of Letters and the Faculty of Social Sciences of the Lebanese University, Third Branch, Tripoli, directed a team of employees, which photocopied the rest of the registers. For the most part, they kept the actual court-assigned numbers for the registers,

¹ For more information see the introduction to 'Umar Tadmuri, Fredrick Ma'tuq, Khalid Ziade, *Watha'iq al-mahakama al-shar'iyya bi-Tarabulus: al-sijill al-awwal, 1077-1078 H.-1666-1667 M.* (Tripoli: Lebanese University: Center for Social Sciences, Third Branch, 1982).

but they also used their own numbers.² A large debt is owed to these scholars for facing dangerous and difficult circumstances in order to preserve what is, arguably, Tripoli's greatest textual archival treasure.

Inevitably, photocopying and reorganization by non-archivists in a wartime situation resulted in inconsistencies. Table A.1 below summarizes the differences between the original and the photocopy collections. Of course, the "originals" are themselves copies of separate documents (*hujja*) issued by the court to individuals for a fee. These copies were recorded in rough chronological order on folios that were collated. Since the onset of Ottoman rule five centuries ago (1516/1517) and until the present, these registers have been housed in the offices of the Tripoli Shari'a Court. The same is true for the registers of the Nablus Shari'a Court. Over this long period and on at least two occasions, registers were recombined, re-numbered, and re-paginated. In some instances, a single page of a register can have three different numbers written decades apart. Thus, and aside from loss through fire, flood or other catastrophes, a certain organic fluidity characterized the archiving system of the shari'a court as a locally rooted Ottoman state institution.

The photocopying process of 1982 and 1983, however, is radically different from previous moments of reorganization. A moment of partial duplication and relocation, it constitutes a rupture in terms of how the shari'a court registers were governed, perceived, and used. First, and most important, there was no longer simply one collection that existed solely within the court. Four copies were made. One is kept in the shari'a court. A copy each are kept in libraries of the Faculty of Letters and the Faculty of Social Sciences

² Interview, Khalid Ziade, Wednesday, June 21, 1995.

of the Lebanese University, Third Branch. The fourth is housed in the Tripoli public library in Qasr Nawfal. The university and the library made the collections available to researchers. Moreover, Tripoli Shari'a Court Register Number 1 was transcribed, published, and distributed widely outside of Tripoli. When only one copy of the records existed, the authority of the qadi and the religious establishment had decided who would have access to what is still considered by many to be a living archive that holds the secrets of property rights to the built environment of the old city and its surrounding orchards and olive groves. But with the wartime copies of the records, the older authorities were effectively bypassed.

Second, the moment of duplication came at a time of sharply increasing interest among historians from the Balkans to Egypt in local history during the Ottoman period. Much of that interest focused on the shari'a court registers, widely perceived as an extraordinarily rich source for recovering that history. Consequently, almost all researchers on Ottoman Tripoli since 1982 have worked with the photocopied collections and cited their work accordingly. To add to this complexity, microfilm and digital copies of the photocopied collections were made by various individuals and institutions over the years. They may not be all the same, as it is easy to make mistakes when duplicating such a large archive. This proliferation makes it all but impossible to establish a single unified system for referencing the registers of the Tripoli Shari'a Court in academic studies.

Third, not all extant registers and folios were photocopied, so there is a content difference between the photocopies and the originals. As Table A.1 shows, forty-one registers dating from Ottoman period were not photocopied in the early 1980s. In addition, and as indicated earlier, the binding, numbering, dating, and pagination of the

photocopy registers sometimes differed from the originals. In one instance, some folios were photocopied twice and bound into two differently numbered registers. The range of years covered in each bound photocopy register was indicated on the spine, but these dates did not always match the actual years. This is because the dates were determined by looking at the first and last recorded cases. A closer examination reveals, however, that the registers consist of chronological clumps with internal gaps, and these are not always organized in sequence. I re-dated each register to reflect the actual chronological range of the bulk of recorded cases (Table A.2). Fortunately, the gaps in the time periods covered by the register registers are smaller than previously thought. The missing years after the first register are roughly as follows (*hijri*): 1080-1087, 1090-1095, 1099-1126, 1129-1135, 1141, 1145-1149, 1154-1155, 1191, 1198, 1201-1202, 1210-1214, 1217-1227, 1236-1237, 1244-1246, 1252, 1279-1280, 1285-1286.³ Table A.3 does the same for the Nablus Shari'a Court Registers.

During the summer of 2000, I worked with Dr. Bari' Daher on a preliminary indexing of the original registers housed at the Tripoli Shari'a court, spurred on by a pile of unbound folios recently found in a storage room. In addition, I systematically compared the numbers, dates, and pagination of the original registers with those of the two photocopied collections kept at the local state university and the municipal library. As Table A.1 shows, there are gaps and inconsistencies in the indexing of the original court registers. With the court's permission, I made photocopies of all the registers and

³ I hasten to add that there is no consistency in the number of recorded cases per year. They fluctuated widely over the centuries, even when the registers are completely intact. This is but one of numerous factors – such as the changing personnel and protocols over the centuries – that need to be taken into account by researchers when studying the registers.

folios up to 1870 that were missed in the original round of photocopying in the early 1980s and made them available to the court. I also submitted the information summarized in Table A.1 to the court and to the staff that oversees the photocopied collections.

Despite all of the above, the citations in this book, with the exception of citations from folios and registers that were missed during the photocopying process, reference the numbering and pagination of the collection in the Qasr Nawfal Municipal Library. This is to enable other researchers, most of whom have no access to the originals, to check my citations and to examine the accuracy of my work more easily than would, otherwise, be the case.

Table A.1
Comparison of Original and Photocopied Registers of the Tripoli Shari'a Court

Years in Hijri	CE (approximate)	Court number	Photocopy number	Control Number
1077-1078	1667-1668	1	1	
1078-1079	1668-1669	2	2 (first half)	
1088-1090	1677-1680	No Number	2 (second half)	3A
1096-1098	1684-1686	3	3	3B
1127-1128	1715-1716	5	4 (first half)	
1136-1141	1723-1728	6	4 (second half)	
1143-1144	1730-1731	7	6	
1150-1153	1737-1740	8	7	
1156-1157	1743-1744	No Number	8 (first half)	1156-1157
1158-1159	1745-1746	No Number	8 (second half)	10A
1159-1160	1746-1747	10	9	10B
1161-1162	1748-1749	11 (16)	10	
1163-1164	1749-1750	12	11	
1164-1165	1750-1751	13	12 & 13 (pp. 93-244)	
1167	1753-1754	No Number	13 last section	1167
1168	1754-1755	No Number	14	1168
1169	1755-1756	No Number	14 (pp. 148-346)	1169
1170	1756-1757	No Number	15 (first section)	1170
1170-1171	1756-1758	15	15 (also in 14)	
1172-1173	1758-1759	No Number	15 (second half)	
1174	1760-1761	13	13 (pp. 249-262)	
1174-1175	1761-1762	18	16	
1175-1177	1762-1764	19	17	
1177, 1180-1182	1764, 1766-1769	20	18 (first half)	
1178-1179	1764-1765	21	19 (first third)	
1179-1180	1765-1766	22	19 (last third)	
1179-1181	1765-1767	23	20	
1181-1182	1767-1768	No Number	18 (second half)	1181-1182
1182-1183	1768-1769	25	21 first half	
1183-1186	1769-1773	7	21 (second half)	
1187-1190	1773-1776	26	22	
1192-1194	1778-1780	27	23	
1194-1195	1780-1781	28	24 (first half)	
1196-1197?	1781-1782	29	24 (second half)	
1199-1200	1785-1786	No Number	25	1199-1200
1203-1206	1789-1791	32	26 (second half)	
1204-1205	1789-1790	31	26 (first half)	
1206-1208	1791-1793	33	27	
1208-1209	1793-1794	34	28	
1215-1216	1800-1801	36	40	
1228-1229	1813-1814	39	42	
1229-1230	1814-1815	40	43	
1230-1231	1815-1816	41	44	

1231-1232	1816-1817	42	45	
1232-1234	1817-1819	43	46	
1234	1819-1820	44	47	
1235	1820-1821	45	48	
1238-1239	1823-1824	48	49	
1239-1241	1824-1826	49	50	
1241-1243	1826-1828	50	Not Photocopied	
1247-1250	1831-1835	55	52	55A
1251	1835-1836	53	54	
1253-1255	1837-1839	56	55	56A
1255, 1257-1260	1839, 1841-1844	57	Not Photocopied	
1255-1256	1839-1840	55	31	55B
1256-1257	1840-1841	56	32	56B
1260-1263	1844-1846	58	33	
1264-1265	1847-1848	59	59	
1266-1267	1849-1850	60	60	
1267	1850-1851	61	61	
1268-1269	1851-1852	62	62	
1269-1270	1852-1853	63	63	
1270-1271	1854-1855	64	34	
1271-1272	1855-1856	65	35	
1272-1273	1856-1857	66	66	
1273-1274	1857-1858	67	36	
1274-1276	1858-1860	68	68	
1277-1278	1860-1861	69	69	
1281-1283	1864-1866	72	70	
1283	1866-1867	83	Not Photocopied	83A
1283-1284	1867-1868	No Number	Not Photocopied	1283-1284
1287-1288	1870-1871	76	Not Photocopied	
1288-1289	1871-1872	77	73	
1289	1872-1873	79	74	
1289-1290	1873-1874	78	75	
1290	1873-1874	80	76	
1291	1874-1875	81	77	
1291-1292	1875	82	78	
1292-1295	1876-1878	83	79	83B
1295-1296	1878-1879	84	80	
1296-1299	1879-1882	85	81	
1298-1300	1881-1883	86	82	
1300-1301	1883-1884	No Number	Not Photocopied	1300-1301
1300-1302	1883-1885	87	Not Photocopied	
1302-1303	1885-1886	88	Not Photocopied	
1303-1305	1886-1888	89	Not Photocopied	
1304-1305	1887-1888	90	Not Photocopied	

1305-1306	1888-1889	91	Not Photocopied	
1306-1307	1889-1890	92	83	
1307-1308	1890-1891	93	Not Photocopied	
1308-1309	1891-1892	99	Not Photocopied	99A
1309-1311	1892-1894	95	Not Photocopied	
1311-1312	1894-1895	96	Not Photocopied	
1312-1313	1895-1896	97	Not Photocopied	
1313-1314	1896-1897	98	Not Photocopied	
1314-1316	1897-1899	99	Not Photocopied	99B
1316-1317	1899-1900	100	Not Photocopied	
1317-1318	1900-1901	101	Not Photocopied	
1318	1900-1901	102	Not Photocopied	
1319	1901-1902	No Number	Not Photocopied	1319
1319-1321	1902-1904	104	Not Photocopied	
1321-1323	1904-1906	105	Not Photocopied	
1322-1324	1905-1907	108	Not Photocopied	
1323-1324	1905-1906	No Number	Not Photocopied	1323-1324
1323-1324	1905-1906	106	Not Photocopied	
1324-1327	1906-1909	109	Not Photocopied	
1326	1908-1909	No Number	Not Photocopied	1326
1327-1329	1909-1911	No Number	Not Photocopied	1327-1329
1329	1911	111	Not Photocopied	
1330	1911-1912	113	Not Photocopied	
1330	1912	112	Not Photocopied	
1331-1332	1912-1913	No Number	Not Photocopied	1331-1332
1331-1338	1912-1920	No Number	Not Photocopied	1331-1338
1333-1334	1914-1915	No Number	Not Photocopied	1333-1334
1333-1334	1914-1915	No Number	Not Photocopied	1333-1334
1334-1335	1915-1916	No Number	Not Photocopied	1334-1335
1334-1339	1914-1921	118	Not Photocopied	
1337-1339	1918-1921	119	Not Photocopied	
1338-1340	1919-1922	No Number	Not Photocopied	1338-1340

Table A.2
Tripoli Shari'a Court Registers: Photocopy Collection, Qasr Nawfal

Number	<i>Hijri</i>	CE	Pages and Notes*
1	Early Shawwal, 1077 – Rajab 14, 1078	March 27, 1667 – December 30, 1667	155 Deleted: 7
2	Sha'ban 26, 1078 – Rajab 19, 1079	February 20, 1668 – December 23, 1668	367
3	Shawwal 28, 1096 – Jamadi I 1098	September 27, 1685 – March 1687	197/199
4	End of Rabi' I, 1127 –	April 5, 1715	108

	End of Jamadi I, 1128	May 21, 1716 –	
	Mid-Jamadi I, 1136 – Early Jamadi II 1137	February 10, 1724 – February 15, 1725	150 (109-258)/158 258 (total)
5	Mid-Rabi' II, 1141 – Mid-Sha'ban, 1142	Mid-December 1728 – Early March 1730	177
6	Shawwal 1, 1143 – Muharram 15, 1145	April 9, 1731 – July 8, 1732	189
7	Rabi' I 1150 – Safar 8, 1154	June 29, 1737 – April 26, 1741	358/479
8	Shawwal 1, 1156 – End of Jamadi, I 1159	November 18, 1743 – June 20, 1746	332
9	Dhu al-Qa'da 2, 1159 – Shawwal 5, 1160	November 16, 1746 – October 10, 1747	194
10	Jamadi I 16, 1161 – Ramadan 4, 1162	May 14, 1748 – August 18, 1749	295/292
11	Ramadan 15, 1163 – Jamadi I 13, 1164	August 17, 1750 – April 8, 1751	188/189
12	Jamadi I 9, 1164 – Shawwal 21, 1165	April 4, 1751 – August 31, 1752	310/319
13	Muharram 15, 1166 – End of Muharram, 1167	November 21, 1752 – November 27, 1753	281/291
14	Muharram 1, 1168 – Rabi' I 4, 1170	October 17, 1754 – November 26, 1756	400
15	Rajab 1, 1170 – Rabi' II, 1171	March 21, 1757 – January 10, 1758	325
	Mid Sha'ban 1172 – Rajab 1, 1173	April 13, 1759 February 17, 1760	
16	Jamadi II 15, 1174 – Dhu al-Qa'da 23, 1175	January 21, 1761 – June 14, 1762	205
17	Dhu al-Qa'da 23, 1175 – Rajab 1, 1177	June 14, 1762 – January 4, 1764	377
18	End of Jamadi II, 1177 – Rajab 19, 1182	January 5, 1764 – November 28, 1768	305/167
19	Dhu al-Hijja 1178 – Rajab 15, 1180	May 22, 1765 – December 17, 1766	250/288/253
20	Jamadi I 8, 1179 – Rajab 16, 1181	October 23, 1765 – December 8, 1767	292/290
21	Rajab 1, 1182 – Rajab 1, 1184	November 11, 1768 – October 21, 1770	327/385
22	Shawwal 14, 1187 – Jamadi I 14, 1190	December 29, 1773 – July 1, 1776	281
23	Muharram 15, 1192 –	February 13, 1778 –	270/278

	Muharram 23, 1194	January 30, 1780	
24	Muharram 20, 1194 – Muharram 10, 1197	January 27, 1780 – December 16, 1782	269/173
25	Dhu al-Qa'da 12, 1198 – Jamadi II 1200	September 27, 1784 – April 1, 1786	123/101
26	Rabi' II 24, 1197 – Jamadi II 1197	March 29, 1783 – May 4, 1783	143/139
	End of Dhu al-Hijja, 1203 – Rabi' I 20, 1206	September 20, 1789 – November 17, 1791	190/179
			Total: 335
27	Rabi' I 16, 1206 – End of Safar, 1208	November 13, 1791 – October 6, 1793	292/296
28	Rabi' I 1, 1208 – Jamadi II 12, 1209	October 7, 1793 – January 4, 1795	169/160
29	Sha'ban 17, 1215 – Sha'ban 3, 1225	January 3, 1801 – September 3, 1810	261
29A	Same as 42		
30	Rajab 8, 1241 – Jamadi II 7, 1243	February 16, 1826 – December 26, 1827	234/232
31	Rajab 1255 – Rabi' II 7, 1256	September 10, 1839 – June 8, 1840	132/135
32	Rabi' I 7, 1256 – Dhu al-Hijja 1257	April 19, 1840 – January 14, 1842	196/195
33	Muharram 10, 1260 – Rajab 6, 1263	January 31, 1844 – June 20, 1847	276/275
34	Jamadi II 17, 1270 – Ramadan 20, 1271	March 17, 1854 – May 19, 1855	270/271
35	Sha'ban 25 1271 – Jamadai I 5, 1272	May 13, 1855 – January 13, 1856	214
36	Jamadi II 17, 1273 – Dhu al-Hijja 23, 1274	February 13, 1857 – August 4, 1858	327
40	Dhu al-Qa'da 13, 1215 – Dhu al-Hijja 1217	March 28, 1801 – March 25, 1803	151
42	Rabi' II 24, 1228 – Safar 15, 1229	April 26, 1813 – February 6, 1814	170/171
43	Rabi' I 1, 1229 – Rabi' II 23, 1230	February 21, 1814 – April 4, 1815	304
44	Rabi' II 20, 1230 – Rabi' II 29, 1231	April 1, 1815 – March 29, 1816	225
45	Jamadi I 1231 – Dhu al-Hijja 19, 1232	March 30, 1816 – October 31, 1817	383/382
46	Dhu al-Qa'da 23, 1232 – Rabi' I 11, 1234	October 4, 1817 – January 8, 1819	234/239

47	Safar 2, 1234 – Dhu al-Hijja 23, 1234	December 11, 1818 – October 13, 1819	212/217
48	Muharram 1235 – Sha'ban 15, 1235	October 20, 1819 – May 29, 1820	196/191
49	Sha'ban 23, 1238 – Ramadan 1239	May 5, 1823 – May 1, 1824	156/155
50	Ramadan 8, 1239 – Rajab 6, 1241	May 8, 1824 – February 14, 1826	211
52	Muharram 1247 – Sha'ban 3, 1250	June 12, 1831 – December 5, 1834	168/166
54	Sha'ban 1250 – Safar 23, 1253	December 3, 1834 – May 29, 1837	356/357
55	Rabi' I 1253 – Jamadi II 25, 1255	June 5, 1837 – September 5, 1839	233
59	Muharram 1264 – Sha'ban 3, 1265	December 9, 1847 – June 25, 1849	284/281
60	Muharram 17, 1266 – Jamadi I 3, 1267	December 3, 1849 – March 6, 1851	370/382
61	Rabi' I 15, 1267 – Rabi' II 26, 1268	January 18, 1851 – February 18, 1852	265/257/258
62	Mid-Rabi' I 1269 – Safar 1269	January 8, 1852 – November 29, 1852	348
63	Jamadi II 7, 1269 – Shawwal 25, 1270	March 16, 1853 – July 21, 1854	281
66	Muharram 11, 1272 – Sha'ban 14, 1273	September 23, 1855 – April 9, 1857	309/311
68	Dhu al-Hijja 16, 1274 – Muharram 25, 1276	April 19, 1858 – August 24, 1859	300/331
69	Dhu al-Hijja 27, 1276 – Ramadan 1278	July 17, 1860 – March 16, 1862	356
70	Sha'ban 7, 1281 – Safar 9, 1283	January 6, 1865 – June 23, 1866	467/466/493
73	Jamadi II 17, 1288 – Safar 25, 1289	September 3, 1871 – May 16, 1872	436
74	Rabi' I 11, 1287 – Dhu al-Hijja 6, 1289	June 18, 1872 – February 5, 1873	424/422 Includes three-page index
75	Dhu al-Hijja 1, 1289 – Sha'ban 2, 1290	January 31, 1873 – September 25, 1873	392/393 Includes two-page index
76	Muharram 4, 1290 – Muharram 14, 1291	March 2, 1873 – March 3, 1874	350/339 Includes two-page index
77	Dhu al-Hijja 19, 1290 – Ramadan 8, 1291	February 7, 1874 – October 19, 1874	379

78	Sha'ban 10, 1291 – Rajab 23, 1292	September 22, 1874 – August 25, 1875	339
79	Rajab 24, 1292 – Muharram 4, 1295	August 26, 1875 – January 8, 1878	353
80	Muharram 7, 1295 – Sha'ban 11, 1296	January 11, 1878 – July 31, 1879	364/335
81	Shawwal 1, 1296 – Muharram 27, 1299	September 18, 1879 – December 19, 1881	357/355 Includes a three-page index
82	Ramadan 13, 1298 – Dhu al-Hijja 19, 1300	August 9, 1881 – October 21, 1883	288
83	Safar 6, 1306 – Jamadi II 14, 1307	October 12, 1888 – February 5, 1890	319/371

* The X/Y/Z format is used in cases where there is a discrepancy in the page numbering systems. X refers to actual number of pages as best as can be determined from scans of manually photocopied copy of the photocopies as well as scans of the photocopies. Y and Z refer to hand-inscribed number(s) of unknown provenance written on the last page of the register. I am grateful to Christian Sassmannhausen for cross checking this table, for alerting me to discrepancies with his records, and for providing additional information. As the frequent striking over of page numbers indicates, each count (hand, photocopy, or scan) carried out over the years contains the risk of error. Some discrepancies, therefore, cannot be resolved without further research. In such cases, I relied on my own counting.

Table A. 3
Nablus Shari'a Court Registers

Number	<i>Hijri</i>	CE	Pages
1	Early Jamadi I, 1066 – Mid Dhu al-Qa'da, 1068	February 26, 1656 – August 14, 1658	362
2	Early Rajab, 1096 – Mid-Sha'ban, 1100	June, 1685 – June, 1689	437
3	Rabi' I 22, 1101 - Mid Rabi' I, 1103	January 3, 1690 - November 22, 1691	194
4	Ramadan 15, 1135 – Early Shawwal, 1138	June 19, 1723 – June 2, 1726	351
5	Dhu al-Qa'da 1, 1140 - End of Sha'ban, 1142	June 10, 1728 - March 19, 1730	186
6	Muharram 1213 – Ramadan 1222	June 1798 – November 1807	370
7	Sha'ban 1223 – Rajab 1232	September 1808 – May, 1817	402

8	Jamadi II 1232 – Dhu al-Qa'da 1245	April 1817- April, 1830	432
9	Dhu al-Qa'da 1246 – Rajab 1255	April 1831- September, 1839	417
10	Dhu al-Qa'da 1255 – Safar 1263	January 1840 – January 1847	307
11	Safar 1263 - Rabi' II 1266	February 1847 – January 1850	193
12	Rabi' II 1266 – Rabi' II 1277	February 1850 – October 1860	382
13A	Mid Rabi' II, 1276 - Jamadi II 9, 1280	November 11, 1860 - October 22, 1863	278
13B	Jamadi I 1, 1280 - Rabi' II 25, 1282	October 14, 1863 - September 17, 1865	244
14	Rabi' II 21, 1282 – Dhu al-Hijja 19, 1284	September 13, 1865 - April 13, 1868	336
15	Dhu al-Hijja 15, 1284 - Rajab 4, 1286	April 9, 1868 - October 10, 1869	396
16	Jamadi II 25, 1286 - Sha'ban 29, 1287	October 2, 1869 - November 2, 1870	387
17	Ramadan 1, 1287 - Dhu al-Qa'da 16, 1290	November 25, 1870 - January 5, 1874	792