

Natural and Cultural Factors Influenced the Toponyms of Al-Shuyoukh Town in Hebron District

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After studying the 131 place names² included in my Master thesis I came to the conclusion that two significant factors influenced their origins, concurrently impelling their evolution to their current form: the natural and the cultural factors. The nomenclatures were subjected to multiple, mixed and overlapping cultures

¹ This paper consists of the modified conclusions of my Master thesis entitled 'the Toponyms of Al-Shuyoukh Town in the Governorate of Hebron' submitted to Yarmouk University, Irbid/Jordan in 2001. It concerns only natural and cultural factors that played a role in creating the place names (actually the names of the land blocks).

² All of the place names have been collected from the spoken local dialect through interviews with old people aiming at registration of the accurate pronunciation of the place names and their appearance in the contexts of the spoken colloquial dialect, and through gathering the popular tales and narratives that provide some explanations of the place names since they reflect social and religious thinking. The fieldwork was carried out in a space of 23.000 dunums in the summer of 2000.

and peoples, acting in a particular and specific landscape. The outcome of my research is the three clear results stated here:

First, the role of the landscape is obviously the solid foundation of people's creation of place names. Second, the lexemes contained in the place names have common attestations and meanings in the Semitic languages, mainly those lexemes related to land, topography, architecture, agriculture and pastoral activities, yet vary in their phonetics³. On the other hand, some of the place names contain lexemes not used in the current colloquial, therefore belonging to ancient times and cultures. Third, the current dialect, to which these place names belong, is certainly a mixture of two dialects, the dialect of two families who came from Ashkelon (*ʿasqalān*) some four hundred and fifty years ago and previous inhabitants who were already there in the 13th century A. D., each one probably created place names affected by its own cultural and historical background.

Natural and cultural influences on local toponymys

We understand the reasons that prompted the locals to use such names for the topographic features. Since popular memory still preserves a huge number of those names, it is to be understood that the contexts in which those names were formed and used persist to the present day. Peasants who still have a continuous and permanent relationship with the land, due to agricultural and pastoral activities, and as the principal habitual users of the names, ensure that they are sustained in the local vernacular. Therefore we may assume that the peasants and their agricultural activities were one of the main factors which contributed to the daily use of the names by many people, and, consequently, their preservation.

Since man began to exploit the land properly, he knew pretty well on the basis of his daily observation and daily contact, whether this land is rugged or plain, high or low, fertile or poor. How could he name or describe a site without living there or seeing it. So these names are a result of land exploitation, interchange, action-reaction relations-relations between man and the environment. Therefore, the peasants, the craftsmen and the shepherds in their daily treating with the land are the ones who gave names according to its topographic features. Names were also given to places according to specific criteria or according to a particular factor. This can be seen in the case of singular names, for example, *ʿed-dbēl* "drying of fruits" which refers to an agricultural activity. But more than one criterion or factor could intervene as the name causative. An overlap between two factors can easily be seen in some place names, mainly compound names like the topography and attribution to a plant. This is the case of *ḥallit ʿel-balūta*, which is composed of two elements, the first is *ḥalla* as a topographic

³ As a linguistic result it is clear that the majority of the studied place names were mixture of Semitic and non-Semitic origins, reflecting the extended period of the existence of many cultures across the area. An attempt of the definition of the linguistic layers and backgrounds of these place names are to be dealt with in a separate study.

designation and the second is *ʿel-balūta* as a kind of plant, or the case of an overlap between archaeological remains and man e. g. *dēr ḥannā* “monastery of *ḥannā* (PN John)”.

Any nomenclature, regardless of its use or causative, needs a social agreement by the majority of the locals in order to assure its actual use among the people, at least in regard to its correct meaning and its lingual/linguistic semantic. In that sense, it seems to me that the question of creating or inventing the names is not difficult, but it is much more difficult to achieve agreement on their use by a majority of the locals if not all, and especially the peasants. Moreover, these place names represent a continuous heritage passed from one generation to another. Some of them may be considered old, and originating in ancient linguistic layers which make it difficult to specify their period.

I Natural factors

In order to distinguish between several sites that are similar in their topographic appearance,⁴ mainly flat or high areas expressed by the terms *marāḥ* and *qanān*, or *qurna(/it)* and *rāṣ*, or *ḥalla(/it)* and *šīʿib*, such topographic terms were followed by other terms to distinguish them. As the whole area is mountainous, to say *ḥalla(/it)* or *rāṣ* alone, is not enough to specify the site properly, so the locals attached to those terms other elements such as a name of a person, an animal, a plant, or ownership in order to distinguish it from the other sites which are similar in appearance.

I.1. Topography: Many terms were assigned to describe the topography of the area. This includes names displaying a description of specific topographic features that exist in the sites themselves.

I.1.1. Flat land: toponyms preceded by *qanān*⁵ “flat and wide mountaintop with a thin layer of soil” with *el-ḥardōn*, *abo-ḥaraza*, *e-dālya*, *el-mabārik*, *en-nyāṣ*; *marāḥ* “flat earthy surface” and *ʿeš-šayyā* “level land”.

I.1.2. Rugged land: toponyms preceded by *wāʿar* “rugged land” *wāʿar baqqō*; and *qarza(/it)*⁶ “piece of rugged land” in *qarza(/it) el-ḥalāwā*; *ḥašram* “coarse land full of rocky masses” *ṭōr ḥašram* and *rāṣ ḥašram*; *ʿoqda* “knot” *wād el-ʿoqda*, *mağālis* “rough land”.

I.1.3. Height/top: toponyms preceded by *rāṣ* “mountain peak/top” with *ḥašram* and *warsan*; *qurna(/it)* “pointed mountain peak/top” with *en-nakkāš*, *mšalla ʿeš-šēḥ*; *qaren* “pointed mountain peak”; *šafa* “highland, high plateau”.

⁴ The description is based on my own personal observations through field survey in September 2000.

⁵ The *qof* in the dialect of these place names is always pronounced as *gemel*, while *č* stands for *kaf*.

⁶ The ending “a” indicates the feminine noun in absolute state, while “*i(t)*” or “*(/it)*” indicates the feminine noun in construct state.

- I.1.4. Mount:** *rič/kba(it)* “the blue mount” in *rič/kbi(t) ez-zarraqā*.
- I.1.5. Depression:** depression is expressed in three lexemes: *ħirān* “low-lying land”; *ħōr* as in *bēt ħirān*; *ħōr* “low land” with *’ed-darāt*, *’atīq*, and *ġabāš*; *wād* “valley, dry valley” occurs with *kabo-el-barāš*, *abo šafar*, *ehyāš*, *ħarīq*, *’el-ħaš-ša*, *’es-simsim* and *el-’oqda*.
- I.1.6. Inclination/slope:** *’arqūb* “inclined mountain top/slope”.
- I.1.7. natural holes:** *’el-faħit* “natural flexion, hole/crack” with *la-bētar*; *ħallān* “opening/cave” in *ṭōr ħallān*; *el-maq’ūr* “natural rocky shelter” in *’eriq el-maq’ūr*; *’eġ-ġebi* “ground rocky cavity”.
- I.1.8. Rocks:** *eġ-ġrūn* “flat rocky surface” initial element occurs with *le-zra*, *es-saggāwi*; *ṭōr* “side protrusive rock” occurs with *ħallān*, *ħašram*, *raħamā*, *qorqos* and *el-badawiyā*.
- I.1.9. Shelters:** *’eriq* “natural rocky shelter used as sheepfold” an initial element occurs with *’el-ħabala*, *es-soħnā*, *serħān*, *el-maq’ūr*.
- I.1.10. Cellars:** *eš-šqīf* “natural rocky cellar used as sheepfold” an initial element occurs with *’amm le-ħšēn* and *fayyāħ*.
- I.1.11. Mountainous track:** it describes mountainous tracks and roads, mainly those declining from tops to valleys *’aqba(it)* “rocky and rugged pass”.
- I.1.13. Gaps:** *ħalla(it)* “gap” an initial element occurs with *el-ballūta*, *ed-dālya*, *eš-šōmar*, *eš-šamālġa*, *e-franġi*, *el-fūl*; *šī’ib* “wide gap, mountain pass” with *’el-č/kallīt*, *le-swed*, *el-č/kadas*, *’ibā* and *el-’ačč/kkūb*.
- I.1.12. Stones:** *šarārā* “pebbled area / stony land”; *č/kallīt* “seal stone / land covered with stones” in *šī’ib č/kallīt*.
- I.1.13. Soil state:** fertile soil like *ħēla(it)* “transferred and sedimentary soil, mud, sediments” in *ħēlit-et-tīna*, *ħēlit-et-taleġ*; poor soil as *būra(it)* “barren soil / uncultivated soil” in *būrit eš-šafa*; coarse *barāš* “sandy soil” in *wād ’abo el-barāš*. Or describing the soil, whether it is thick like *ħalla(it)* “gap full of thick soil” with *el-ballūta*, *ed-dālya*, *eš-šōmar*, *eš-šamālġa*, *e-franġi*, *el-fūl*; *ħabala(it)* “agricultural terraces / walled pieces of land with thick soil / land with walls of freestanding stones” in *ħabāyel e-ryāħ*; or thin as *qanān* “thin soil” with *el-ħarḍōn*, *’abo-ħaraza*, *e-dālya*, *el-mabārik* and *en-nyāš*.
- I.1.16. Soil colour:** attribution to the soil colour like *smāk* “dark reddish soil” in *ħerbit smāk*; *ez-zarrāqa* “blue or greyish soil” in *reč/kbit-ez-zarrāqa*; *sawādā* and *le-swed* “black, grey” in *dēr sawādā* and *šī’ib le-swed*; *’el-bayāza* “whitish / yellowish”.

I.2. Flora and fauna: Referring to both domestic and wild plants and animals, and to express the idea that this site is famous for this or that kind of plant or animal, all the names are related with autochthonous species.

Flora as a second element

I.2.1. Domestic plants: *le-zra* “Zea mays L., corn” in *eġġrūn le-zra*; *et-teffāħ* “Pyrus malus L., apples” in *eġmām et-teffāħ*; *et-tīna* “Ficus carica L., figs” in *ħēlit et-tīna*; *el-ħamāt* “Ficus carica L., black figs” in *ṭōr el-ħamāt*; *el-fūl* “Vicia

Faba L., beans” in *ḥallit-el-fūl*; *ed-dālya* “Ficus Carica L., vines” in *ḥallit-ed-dālya*; *č/karem* “Vitis vinifera, vine(yard)” in *č/karm-el-č/kūr*; *le-qmēḥa* “Triticum aestivum, wheat”.

I.2.2. Wild plants: *zaʿfarān* “Crocus hyemalis, saffron” in *badd ez-zaʿfarān*; *es-sindyān* “Quercus ilex” in *bīr es-sindyān*; *el-ballūṭa* “Quercus calliprius, oak” in *ḥallit el-ballūṭa*; *eš-šomar* “Faeniculum capillacum L., fennel” in *ḥallit-eš-šomar*, and *ehrubbit-eš-šomar*; *es-semāqa* “Rush coriaria, ...” in *ezqāq es-semāqa*; *el-ʿačč/kkūb* “Guridelia touruefortii / Gynara gardunculus” in *šīʿib el-ʿačč/kkūb*; *ʿel-qahawīn* “Anthemis Palaestina” in *mawāris el-qahwānā*; *el-butma* “Pistachio Palaestina / Terebinthus” in *emgārit el-butma*; *es-simsim* “Sesamum Orientale L., sesame” in *wād es-simsim*; *eswēd* “Rhammus Palaestinas” in *ehrubbit(t)-eswēd*; *ratamiyyā* “Retama raetam”.

I.2.3. Forests / wild trees: to indicate that an area was covered with small forests or wild trees, many names have been attributed to places like: *ʿīṣ* “jungle, Acacia” in *ḥallit el-ʿīṣ*; *siʿīr* “tendrils, forest” in *ʿaqbi(t) siʿīr*; *ʿibā* “thicket” in *šīʿib ʿibā*; *hīšā* “small forest” in *hīšit el-warāsnā*; *ehyāš* “thicket, large trees” in *wād ehyāš*.

Fauna: occurring as a second element

I.2.4. Domestic mammals: *en-naʿḡa* “ewe” in *ḍanbi(t)en-naʿḡa*.

I.2.5. Wild mammals: *le-ḥṣēn* “Vulpes Renal, fox” in *ʿamm le-ḥṣēn*; *enyās* “Hystrix” in *qanān en-nyās*; *ed-ḍīb* and *serḥān* “Canis Lupos, wolf / PN” in *marāḥ ed-ḍīb* and *ʿeriq serḥān*; *el-ḡazāl* “Antilope Zeaelle larcas, gazelle” in *meqer el-ḡazāl*.

I.2.6. Wild birds: *raḥamā* “Vulture prenopterrus (??? **Prenopterrus?**), Carrion Vulture” in *tōr raḥamā*; *baqqō* “wild bird” in *waʿar baqqō*; *el-ḥūdā* “wild dove” in *šallāli(t) el-ḥūdā*.

I.2.7. Domestic birds: *edīč/k* “Gallus domesticus, rooster/cock” in *ʿaqbi(t) ʿēn edīč/k*.

I.2.8. Reptiles: *el-ḥardōn* “Agama stellio or Laudakia stellio, kind of reptili” in *ehrubbit-el-ḥardōn*.

I.2.9. Insects: *ʿel-hēlamān* “Ademia Concellata, beetle”.

I.3. Climate: Climatic phenomena have also found their way to be part of the place names mainly as a second element

I.3.1. Cold: *ʿet-taleḡ* “snow, cold” in *ḥēlit et-taleḡ*; *eblān* “wet” in *emgārit eblān*.

I.3.2. Warm: *ʿes-soḥna* “warm” in *ʿeriq es-soḥnā*, *ḥarīq* “flame/fire/hot” in *wād ḥarīq*.

I.3.3. Winds: *ʿer-ryāḥ* “winds / western winds” in *ḥabāyel eryāḥ*.

I.3.4. Light(ning): *zibrīq* “light(ning)”.

I.4. Water: Referring to water resources; the geographic nature of the area has very scarce water resources. Apart from one small spring called *le-ʿwēna*, lo-

cated east of the town, there are no natural springs, thus the people were fully aware of the problem and they, consequently, dug plenty of cisterns. They also utilised the natural cracks and hollows of the land to store water and called them *ehrubba(it)*, and this was reflected in nomenclatures. Hence, a lot of place names contain an element that indicates water cistern. They appear mostly as the initial element, e. g. *bīr* “cistern/well” in *bīr ʿes-sindyān*, *ʿel-miṣnaʿa* “water reservoir” in *herbit-el-miṣnaʿa*; *ehrubba(it)* “huge well” in *ehrubbit etaleḡ*; *ʿēn* “spring” in *ʿaqbit ʿēn edīč/k*; *le-ʿwēna* “small spring”; *šallāla(it)* “waterfall” in *šallālit el-hūda*.

I.5. Orientations: Place names that contain description of the land and its location and orientation to sun or winds are: *šamaliyya* “a mountain foot that faces the north direction or north winds” in *šamaliyyi(t) ʿōdā*, *šamaliyyit-abo eḡnēm*; *eryāḥ* “agricultural terraces / walled pieces of land with thick soil that faces winds / west winds” in *habāyel eryāḥ*; *mišmās* “mountain slope or foot facing sun / south winds” in *emḡārit el-mišmās*.

II Cultural factors

The cultural factors such as architectural, agricultural, economic and pastoral activities have played a role in creating some of place names.

II.1. History: It is clear how the historical factor affected and reflected itself on the toponymy, as it is evident in those names that refer to archaeological material, or in those referring to religious events related to both Christianity and Islam. However, as the historical influence happened in a slightly different manner each historical era is shown followed by the name that belongs to it. It is easily recognisable in its influence presented in the nomenclatures like *dēr*, *qorqos*, *burnis*, *šomēl* and *bētar* among others. These influences were of different origins, mainly from Roman and Byzantine or probably Crusader periods, and accepted by the present locals in the same use and function. Thus those names clearly have a historical background. We can say clearly that each historical era left an impression in the town.

All the place names that contain the element *dēr*, like *dēr ḥanna*, *dēr sawādā* can be either referred to the Byzantine or to the Crusader period. The proper name *šomēl* (Samuel) dated to the Crusader period appears also in many place names e. g. *šomēl* of Gaza (Khalidi 1992, 137–138) and *šomēl* of Jappo (Yaffa) (Al-Dabbagh 1972, IV, 343). The name *šomēl* can be referred to the Crusader Hospitalaires, other cases as the name *franḡī* “the Frankish” in *ḥalli(t) ʿef-franḡī*, *bētar* (Petrus/Peter) in *faḥit la-bētar* and probably *ʿelyās* (Aeluis) in *ḥalli(t) ʿel-yās*, these two proper names might be attributed to Frankish/French families or individuals who dwelt in the area charged with agricultural activities during the Crusader period or who have religious background and the ability of blessing people.

Attributions to local events limited to the town in the Ayyubid era, appearing as second element in the place names are: *maqām el-areb'in* “a shrine dedicated to the commemoration of forty martyrs during the conquest of the site (this event is usually referred to the taking of the place from the Crusaders by the Ayyubids)”,⁷ *mšallah ʿeš-šēh* “the praying place of the ʿeš-šēh (the Kurdī Sheikh ʿel-hidmī who arrived in the town during the Ayyubid period)”.⁸ *erğūmed-dōlā* “stone heap of state (control post) on the way to Hebron”; *aşkar* “army / military camp” could have stationed there. Place names associated with local quarrelling are: *quffān hamīs* “where a violent fight between two families, *hamāysa* and *şamālğa* broke out, caused by a dispute over ownership of the area”; *emğāri(t) el-qaṭrān* “tar, killing” and *emğāri(t) eblān* “thief, killing” which might be linked to local mass killing. Such place names can be dated back either to early or late Arab periods.

II.2. Archaeology: The archaeological material was and continues to be associated with toponymy, thus physical appearance of ancient architectural remains and installations scattered over the area have also left its influence and is represented in the apparent and protrusive remains⁹ like ruined places, presses, buildings for agricultural use, wells, houses, monasteries, shrines that can be seen in these terms: *herba(it)*, *dēr*, *qaşer*, *maqām*, *ebniyya*, *badd*, *bīr/beyār*, *ehrubba*.

⁷ The local tales attribute this event to early Islamic period, and sometimes to late Islamic which I find preferable. The village had a well fortified castle probably from the Crusader period and was conquered by the Ayyubid army, noting that forty people were killed while trying to occupy the site.

⁸ He is *ʿibrāhīm bin ʿabdulah ʿal-hidmī*, he arrived in the town in 1278 A. D. and settled in it, the name of the town became *dār ʿeš-šēh* “the house of the pious/Sheikh” attributed to him, after his death his followers founded a religious Sufi school for teaching Koran and mathematics (Arraf 1993, I, 81), and the name of the town was then changed again to *ʿeš-şuyūh*, plural of *şēh*. Arab historians have described the journey of the Sheikh who came from Orient to Belād ʿeš-şām settled in a barren land that he reclaimed between Jerusalem and Hebron. The Sheikh was known as an ascetic and distinguished by his religiousness (Ibn Katheer XIII, 151), but also known to have good knowledge of farming and cultivation. He was known as healer with good reputation spread being acknowledged as blessed with spiritual power, thus he was highly respected among the locals and people from the neighbouring villages. He died in 1329 A. D. and buried in a cave under an oak tree (Al Hanbalī II, 150). After his death the people venerated and sanctified him and built a shrine over his tomb cave in the upper mound of the village (Guerin, 1969, III, 150). His tomb received continuous votive visits (Ibn Taghri Bardī I, 69), where the people made a kind of visitation to his shrine presenting gifts, oil and votive offerings, sacrifices or money to be spent in restoring the building. The cave located now beneath the current mosque.

⁹ The town is surrounded by olive trees; caves, cut wells and spring at its north edge (Conder/Kitchener, 1883, II, 309), many houses with courts, courtyard, and guesthouse were built around Al-hidmi’s tomb and over Byzantine remains (Abu Sara, 1987, 40). In the surrounding of the town there are 7 archaeological sites connected to it.

II.2.1. Ruins: *herba(it)* “ruined place” with *ʿez-zaʿfarān*, *ʿe-smāk*, *ʿelmeṣnaʿa*; *dēr* “monastery” with *ḥanna*, *sawāda*; *bēt* “house/temple?” with *ḥīrān*; *maqām* “shrine/sanctuary” with *ʿel-hidmī*, *el-arebʿīn*,¹⁰ *abo ṣafar*; *mṣallah* “praying place, shrine” with *ʿeš-šēḥ*; *qaṣer* “storage building / rural palace / villa” with *ḥalīfa*; *ʿel-qēsariyyā* “administrative building”; *ebniyya(it)* “large un-roofed agricultural building” with *ʿed-dārāt*, *ʿaṣkar*, *ʿel-mašāhid*; *ʿerḡūm/ʿer-ruḡīm* “heap/s of stones” with *ʿed-dōlā*, *raḥma*; *ḥaraza(it)* “pierced/perforated circular and large stone used as opening of a well”.

II.2.2. Artificial holes and hollows dug and used by humans: *badd* “carved out cave containing a press”; *bīr* “carved out cistern”; *emḡāra(it)* “cave” with *eb-lān*, *ʿel-qaṭrān*, *ʿel-butma*, *ʿel-mišmās*; *emqaṭaʿa(it)* “wide cut cave” with *ʿarabī*.

II.2.3. Natural holes or cracks but plastered and intensively used as water reservoirs like *ehrubba(it)* “reclaimed cavity / used as well” with *ʿer-rḡūm*, *el-qa-ṣer*, *ʿōn*; *meqer* “rocky basin” with *el-ḡazāl*; *emḡāra(it)* “natural cave”.

II.3. Religion: The Christian religion’s influence is reflected in some place names, namely those which contain *dēr* “monastery” as in *dēr* in *dēr ḥanna* “monastery of John”, *dēr sawāda*, or *č/kadas* “sacred, or sanctuary” in *šīʿib el-č/kadas* and clearly in the proper names with theophoric elements *ṣomēl*, *ʿelyās*. These influences can be dated back either to Byzantine period or to the Crusader period. The influence of the Islamic religion is apparent in place names that contain *maqām* “shrine” in *maqām ʿel-hidmī*, *maqām el-arebʿīn*, *maqām abo ṣafar*; *šēḥ* “pious” in *šēḥ ebyār ʿeš-šēḥ*, *qurni(t) mṣalla ʿeš-šēḥ*; *mṣalla* “place for pray” in *qurni(t) mṣalla ʿeš-šēḥ*; *el-arebʿīn* “forty martyrs” in *maqām ʿal-arebʿīn*; *ʿel-mašāhid* “shrine” in *ʿel-mašāhid* in *ebniyyi(t) ʿel-mašāhid*. This influence that was probably introduced after the coming of Kurdi Sheikh *ʿel-hidmī* to the town is limited and it does not affect those names related to agricultural activities. In spite of what may have been suggested by Arab historians, who attributed a remarkable knowledge in farming and land dealings to him, the sanctifying of buildings contain corpuses of pious persons is a phenomenon established in the Ayyubid period. In both cases, many place names contain the elements *dēr* and *maqām* attributed to righteous and pious persons or dedicated to those who were known to have the ability of giving blessings or healing diseases.

II.4. Economy: Economic activities like cultivation, crafts and pastoralism clearly played an important role early on in giving the place names. Agricultural activities widely contributed to place names that could be traced to the daily contact with land, as detailed below. These influences related to cultivating, harvesting, pressing, threshing, crushing the crops or drying grapes, figs, fruits etc., all were received from different origins and assumed by the present locals for the same use and function.

¹⁰ The element forty is very common in the Palestinian toponymy and indented in some 44 places connected with pious persons, tombs, trees and shrines (Arraf, 1993, II, 335).

II.4.1. Agricultural Activities and related materials: *badd* “olive press”, *ebniyya(it)* “unroofed building for storing summer crops”, *būra(it)* “uncultivated land”, *eğ-ğrūn* “threshing floors” with *le-zra*, *es-saqqāwī*; *e-dbēl* “drying grapes or figs”, *er-ruġim* “heap of stones collected while clearing the land to be reclaimed”, *el-qāser* “storage place?”, *č/karem* “vineyard”, *mawāris* “vine-dressers”, *ħarīq* “burnt land for reclamation”.

II.4.2. Modified land: *ħabala(it)* “terrace”, *el-ħawakīr* “domestic / cultivated walled land”, *terbīa(it)* “squared cultivated land”, *mawāris* “rectangular plot of land”, *karem* “vineyard”.

II.4.3. Modified passages: *ez-zqāq* “narrow pass, domestic pathway, and those reaching or branching to houses and between the *ħōš* (houses with walled courtyards)”; *toġra(it)* “breach / gate of a walled piece of land”.

II.4.4. Professions: *e-saqqāwī* “water supplier” in *eğ-ğrūn-es-saqqāwī*; *šamālġa* “dealers in grain” in *ħallit-eš-šamālġa*; *e-daqqāna* “grain treasurer” in *aqbi(t)-ed-daqqāna*; *ed-dannān* “vessels maker / potter?” in *marāħ ed-dannān*; *n-nakkāš* “the one who weeds out the grass or a ploughman using a hoe or a hand axe” in *qurni(t) en-nakkāš*; *el-ħaššā* “land recorder / assessor, or the one who records the properties to be included under tax law (counting small cattle and sheep for taxes during the British mandate, tax collector)”, in *wād el-ħašša*; *el-č/kūr* “weigher/blower” in *karem el-č/kūr*. *quffān* “vine farmer” in *quffān ħamīs*.

II.4.5. Tools and objects: *es-sarġ* “saddle”, *qafel* “lock”, *kūr* “measurement unit / forge”.

II.4.6. Pastoralism: *šīra* “sheepfold”, *el-mabārik* “rest place for camels”; *marāħ* “livestock’s rest place”; *eğ-ğmām* “rest place”; *tor* “rocky shady place used by shepherds”; *eriq* “shelter used by shepherds”; *ešqīf* “cellar used for housing livestock’s”; *emġāra(it)* “cave”; *emqaṭa’a(it)* “cut cave”.

II.5. Socio-anthropology: It was impossible to trace the social factor’s influence on toponymy at the lingual level. Therefore, we were unable to specify which of the nomenclatures could be attributed to the founding families of the present town, nor to define the lingual, the dialectical and the phonological peculiarities introduced by them. The same can be said about the influence and dialect of the new families. Certainly the current dialects of the place names represent a mixture of two dialects, the dialect of the two new families some four centuries ago and the dialect of the ancient inhabitants from the 13th century A. D. The existence of female proper names in place names tells us that the land was given to women as a part of their dowry and appears as the second element, such as *erġūm raħmā* “heap stones belong to *raħmā* (PN grace)”; *šī’ib mamūnā* “mountain gap / pass belongs mamūnā (PN righteous)”, *šīri(t) zēnā* “sheepfold belongs to *zēnā* (PN beautiful, ornamented)”; *šī’ib el-ħaġġa* “land belongs to *el-ħaġġa* (female pilgrim)”; *eškāri(t) e-slēma* “rent land belongs to *slēma* (PN safe, peace)”, *eškāra(it)* is a name of special intention, it indicates the process of land rented by peasants against a yearly percentage of its production.

The anthropological factor could be investigated in two ways: First, by popular belief or superstition e. g. *ʿamm qarmūl* “the place of the she-goblin” who lives in an isolated and dark cave. Second, by the social behaviour displayed towards dark and isolated places as reflected in place names like *mīhrada* “place of isolation/fear”, *emġāri(t) el-qaṭrān* “the cave of tar indicates pessimism”, *le-swed* “black (colour) indicates pessimism/killing”, *ʿel-qanūb* “an place of isolation, the place located at the end of the village”.

II.6. Onomasticon: Attribution to persons: mainly those people who were highly respected among the locals, in religious observance and because of their righteous behaviour, like Sheikh ʿal-Hidmī and abo Ḥafār who settled and was buried in the town. **The changes in land ownership, provided that part of the compound names mainly those still attributed to persons.** Furthermore, attribution to local events related to family leaders or elders: a good example can be found in *quffān ḥamīs* and *ḥallit-eṣ-ṣamālġa*. **[[[incomplete ???]]]**

II.6.1. Proper names: these appear as the second component of the place names to express that this site was referred to or was owned by the person named, as follows:

II.6.1.1. Masculine: *ḥalli(t) elyās* “my God is *yhwh*”, *dēr ḥannā* “mercy of God”, *ṣamaliyyi(t) ʿōdā* “gift of God”, *ṣamaliyyi(t) abo eġnēm* “receiver of abundance or recipient”, *ṣomēl* “whose name is God”, *ṭōr qorqoṣ* “farmer”, *ʿarqūb ʿōn, ehrubbi(t) ʿōn* “assistance/help”, *faḥit-la-bētar* “rock”, *qaṣer ḥalīfa* “successor”, *quffān ḥamīs* “the five”, *emġāri(t) eblān* “wet”.

II.6.1.2. Feminine: proper names mostly for the female owners of the land, they appear in the second position, such as: *erġūm raḥmā* “grace”, *ṣīʿib mamūnā* “righteous”, *eṣkāri(t) eslēma* “safe, peace”, *ṣīri(t) zēnā* “beautiful, ornamented”.

II.6.2. Appellations: adjectives or nicknames given to persons and becoming dominant later on in place names.

II.6.2.1. Masculine appellation: *ʿabo* “lit. father / abundance / owner of” in *barāṣ* “abundance of sand / sandy place” in *wād abo el-barāṣ*; *ʿabo ṣafār* “abundance / place of yellowish” in *wād abo ṣafār*; *eṣ-ṣēḥ* “venerable” in *ebyar-eṣ-ṣēḥ*, *qurni(t)-e-mṣalla eṣ-ṣēḥ*; *ef-franġi* “frank” in *ḥalli(t)-ef-franġi*; *ʿatīq* in *ḥōr ʿatīq* “old”; *ġabāṣ* “unclear/undefined low land” in *ḥōr ġabāṣ*; *warsan* “player, yellow” in *rāṣ warsan* and *hīṣi(t) el-warāsnā*; *fayyāḥ* “bountiful, wide” in *eṣqīf fayyāḥ*; *el-č/kūr* “weigher/blower” in *č/karm el-č/kūr*; *ʿabo ḥaraza* “the place of pierced stone/bead” in *qanān abo ḥaraza*; *el-hidmī* “the one who has worn rough garments” in *maqām el-hidmī*; *ʿarabī* “Bedouin” in *emqaʿaʿi(t) ʿarabī*; *barāṣ* “abundance / place of sand” in *wād abo el-barāṣ*; *ṣafār* “yellowish/dry” in *wād abo ṣafār*; *ʿel-burnis* “bridal dress”.

II.6.2.2. Feminine appellations: *ʿamm* “lit. mother / abundance / place of” in *ʿamm le-ḥṣēn* “place of the fox”; *qarmūl* “long and braided hair” in *ʿamm qarmūl*; *ḍannba(it)* “tail” in *ḍanbit en-naġa*; *dōla* “state” in *erġġūm edōlā*; *ʿel-ḥaġġa* “female pilgrim” in *ṣīʿib ʿel-ḥaġġa*; *el-badawiyā* “female Bedouin” in *ṭōr el-badawiyā*.

III Stimuli for changing the nomenclature of some places

Some place names were subjected to changes and were not constant and not ancient as place names derived from landscape. The factors that have made this change are:

- *Cultural interruption* presumably happened twice along the history of the area. The first was after the Byzantine period; for this interruption we were unable to learn what the name of the town was during the Byzantine period. The second interruption was after the Crusader period. Following the arrival of a new wave of people four hundred and fifty years ago, the new inhabitants were not familiar with the area, so they may have re-named some sites, introducing new nomenclatures befitting their own ideas and beliefs. Some of place names were probably changed or abandoned while others were still in use by the newcomers.
- *Religious stimuli* which caused the former name of the whole town to change from *dēr ḥanna* related to a former Christian community to *dār eš-šēḥ* and then to *šuyūḥ*. Nevertheless, we note the sustained presence of nomenclatures that still belong to a former religious influence and are known to have been used by Christians such as *dēr sawādā*, *ʿelyās*, *šomēl*, *qorqos*, *bētar*, *ʿef-frangī*.
- *Changing of physical appearance of the topography* of the area through modern large stone quarries cut in the mountains tops and slopes have transformed the shape and the name of many places, e.g. *wāʿar abo ḥasaniyya* “rugged land of abo ḥasaniyya (PN)” became *miḥḡari(t) ḥāmed ʿīsa* “the stone quarry of ḥāmd ʿīsa (PN)”. The changing of ownership of land does not play a significant role. In spite of the new ownerships of land, change in titles and deeds of possession or division of inheritance, many place names that have been inherited from former inhabitants stayed in use by the current inhabitants, till present time.
- *Folk etymology*; changing the pronunciation of the name and creating a new vocalisation produces a new attributed meaning as in *ʿel-hidmī* “worn garment” towards *ʿel-hidbī* “one having long lashes, eyelash” and *ḥalli(t) ʿel-ʿīš* “the gap of *ʿīsau bin ʿišḡaq* (Isau son of Isaac in the Biblical traditions)”, but lexically the word *ʿel-ʿīš* means “the gap of the trees” **mostly found in local tales as an attempt to explain the meaning.** Those tales whether from old or recent invention, could be true, yet it is often possible to find this alternative meaning mistaken. **[[[unverständlich im Zusammenhang!!!]]]**

List of the studied place names and their meanings

N ^o	Vernacular form	Meaning
1.1.	<i>ʿamm le-ḥṣēn</i>	The (place) where the fox can be found abundantly
1.2.	<i>ʿamm qarmūl</i>	Place of long haired (woman) / the place of the she-goblin
2.1.	<i>badd ʿe-zaʿfarān</i>	The (olive) press of crocus hyemalis
3.1.	<i>ʿel-burnis</i>	The bridal dress
4.1.	<i>ebniyyit -ed-dārāt</i>	The villa of villas
4.2.	<i>ebniyyit ʿaṣkar</i>	The villa of the army / military camp
4.3.	<i>ebniyyit -el-mašāhid</i>	The villa of the shrine
5.1.	<i>būrit-e-šafa</i>	The uncultivated plateau
6.1.	<i>bēt ḥirān</i>	The place of hollows
7.1.	<i>ebyar-eš-šēḥ</i>	The cisterns of venerable/pious (<i>ʿeš-šēḥ</i>)
7.2.	<i>bīr ʿes-sindyān</i>	The cistern of Quercus ilex
8.1.	<i>ʿel-bayāza</i>	The white (soil)
9.1.	<i>terbīʿit wād-el-ḥaṣṣa</i>	The squared (land) of the (tax) collector / land recorder / assessor
10.1.	<i>toḡrit-el-qafel</i>	The gate of the lock / return gate
11.1.	<i>ʿeḡ-ḡebi</i>	The (rocky) basin
12.1.	<i>eḡ-ḡrūn le-zra</i>	The threshing floor of the corn
12.2.	<i>eḡ-ḡrūn-e-saqqāwi</i>	The threshing floor of to the water supplier/ butler
13.1.	<i>eḡ-ḡmām-et-teffāḥ</i>	The apple rest place / the apple orchard
14.1.	<i>ḥabāyel-e-ryāḥ</i>	The terraces (facing) the winds
15. 1.	<i>ḥēlit-et-tīna</i>	Clay (soil) of the fig tree
15. 2.	<i>ḥēlit-et-taleḡ</i>	The clay (soil) of snow
16.1.	<i>ʿel-ḥawakīr</i>	Retrained (walled) land
17.1.	<i>ḥerbīt -ez-zaʿfarān</i>	Ruins of crocus hyemalis
17.2.	<i>ḥerbīt smāk</i>	Ruins of the red soil
17.3.	<i>ḥerbīt-el-mišnaʿa</i>	Ruins of (water reservoir).
18.1.	<i>ḥallit-el-ballūṭa</i>	Gap of Quercus callipriuos / oak
18.2.	<i>ḥallit-ed-dālya</i>	Gap of grape tree
18.3.	<i>ḥallit-eš-šōmar</i>	Gap of the fennel
18.4.	<i>ḥallit-eš-samālḡa</i>	Gap of the peasants (/ grain dealers / family name).
18.5.	<i>ḥallit-e-ḥranḡī</i>	Gap of the Franks
18.6.	<i>ḥallit-el-fūl</i>	Gap of the beans
18.7.	<i>ḥallit-el-ʿīṣ</i>	Gap of trees
18.8.	<i>ḥallit-el-yās</i>	Gap of <i>el-yās</i> (PN)
19.1.	<i>ḥōr ʿed-darāt</i>	Low land of the villas
19.2.	<i>ḥōr ʿatīq</i>	Low land of ʿatīq
19.3.	<i>ḥōr ḡabāš</i>	The undefined low land.
20.1.	<i>edbēl</i>	(Place) of drying grapes and figs/ fruits

N ^o	Vernacular form	Meaning
21.1.	<i>dēr ḥannā</i>	Monastery of <i>ḥannā</i> (PN)
21.2.	<i>dēr sawādā</i>	Monastery of dark (soil)
22.1.	<i>ḍanbat-en-naʿḡa</i>	The ewe's tail
23.1.	<i>rāṣ ḥašram</i>	The rugged or uneven mountaintop
23.2.	<i>rāṣ warsan</i>	Warsan's (PN / family name) mountaintop
24.1.	<i>ratamiyyā</i>	Retema raetam
25.1.	<i>ʿer-ruḡḡim</i>	Heap of stone
25.2.	<i>erḡḡūm-e-dōlā</i>	The pile of stones belonging to the state
25.3.	<i>erḡḡūm raḥmā</i>	Raḥmā's (PN) stone heap
26.1.	<i>rič/kbit-e-zarrāqa,</i>	The blue mount
27.1.	<i>zibrīq</i>	Light(ning)
28.1.	<i>ezqāq-e-simāqa</i>	The alley of Rhush coriaria
29.1.	<i>ʿes-sarḡ</i>	The saddle
30.1.	<i>šīʿib ʿel-č/kallūt</i>	Mountain pass of (seal) stone
30.2.	<i>šīʿib le-swed</i>	Black mountain pass
30.3.	<i>šīʿib -el-č/kadas</i>	Cemetery mountain pass
30.4.	<i>šīʿib ʿibā</i>	Mountain pass of the thicket
30.5.	<i>šīʿib -el-ʿačč/kkūb</i>	Mountain pass of Guridelia touruefortii
30.6.	<i>šīʿib mamūnā</i>	Mountain pass of <i>mamūnā</i> (PN)
30.7.	<i>šīʿib ʿel-ḥaḡḡa</i>	Mountain pass of the female pilgrim
31.1.	<i>ešqīf-amm le-ḥṣēn</i>	Cellar of the fox
31.2.	<i>ešqīf fayyāḥ</i>	The wide cellar / bountiful
32.1.	<i>eškārit-e-slēma</i>	Granted / rent (land) of <i>es-lēma</i> (PN)
33.1.	<i>šallālit-el-ḥūdā</i>	Waterfall of ʿel-ḥūdā (wild dove)
34.1.	<i>šamaliyyit-abo eḡnēm</i>	Northern (mountain foot) of <i>abo eḡnēm</i> (PN)
34.2.	<i>šamaliyyit ʿōdā</i>	Northern (mountain foot) of ʿōdā (PN)
35.1.	<i>ʿeš-šayyā</i>	Waste / level (highland)
36.1.	<i>šarārā</i>	Pebbled / stony (land)
37.1.	<i>šīrit zēnā</i>	Sheepfold of <i>zēnā</i> (PN)
38.1.	<i>šomēl</i>	Whose name is God
39.1.	<i>ṭōr ḥallān</i>	The opening of the rock
39.2.	<i>ṭōr -el-ḥamāṭ</i>	Rock of the black fig
39.3.	<i>ṭōr ḥašram</i>	The coarse rock
39.4.	<i>ṭōr qorqoṣ</i>	Gregorius's (PN) rock
39.5.	<i>ṭōr raḥamā</i>	The rock of the Vulture
39.5.	<i>ṭōr-el-badawīyyā</i>	The rock of the Bedouin woman
40.1.	<i>ʿeriq ʿel-ḥabala</i>	The shelter of the terrace
40.2.	<i>ʿeriq -es-soḥnā</i>	The warm shelter
40.3.	<i>ʿeriq serḥān</i>	The shelter of the shepherd / of the wolf
40.4.	<i>ʿeriq -el-maqʿūr</i>	The perforated shelter
41.1.	<i>ʿarqūb ʿōn</i>	The slope of ʿōn (PN)
42.1.	<i>ʿaqbit-e-daqqāna</i>	The track of treasurers
42.2.	<i>ʿaqbit-ʿēn-e-dīč/k</i>	The track to the spring of the cock

N ^o	Vernacular form	Meaning
42.3.	<i>ʿaqbit siʿīr</i>	The track (leads to) the forest
43.1.	<i>le-ʿwēna</i>	Small spring
44.1.	<i>ʿel-faḥit</i>	The hole/crack
44.2.	<i>faḥit-la-bētar</i>	The (natural) hole/crack of <i>la-bētar</i> (rock/PN)
45.1.	<i>ʿel-qaḥawīn</i>	Anthemis Palaestina
46.1.	<i>qarḏit-el-ḥalāwā</i>	The piece (land) of sweetness
47.1.	<i>ʿel-qaren</i>	The horn
47.2.	<i>qurnit-e-mṣalla ʿe-šēḥ</i>	Mountain top of the praying place of pious (ʿeš-šēḥ)
47.3.	<i>qurnit-en-nakkāš</i>	The mountaintop of the one who weeds
48.1.	<i>ʿel-qašer</i>	Storage (building)
48.2.	<i>qašer ḥalīfa</i>	Storage (building) of <i>ḥalīfa</i> (PN)
49.1.	<i>quffān ḥamīs</i>	ʿamīs the vine farmer
50.1.	<i>le-qmēḥa</i>	Small (quantity) of wheat
51.1.	<i>qanān-el-ḥarḏōn</i>	Flat area of lizard / Agama stellio
51.2.	<i>qanān-abo-ḥaraza</i>	Flat area of abundance of beads
51.3.	<i>qanān-e-dālya</i>	Flat area of vine trees
51.4.	<i>qanān-el-mabārik</i>	Flat area where the camels take a rest
51.5.	<i>qanān-en-nyāš</i>	Flat area where there are porcupines
52.1.	<i>ʿel-qanūb</i>	The isolated place / place of isolation
53.1.	<i>ʿel-qēsariyyā</i>	Huge (administrative building)
54.1.	<i>č/karm-el-č/kūr</i>	Vineyard of ʿal-kūr (blower)
55.1.	<i>ʿel-maḡālis</i>	The rough (land)
56.1.	<i>ʿel-miḥrada</i>	The place to spend the time of anger/isolation
57.1.	<i>marāḥ-e-dannān</i>	Livestock's rest place of the vessel maker
57.2.	<i>marāḥ-e-ḏib</i>	Rest place of the wolf
58.1.	<i>emḡārit ebllān</i>	The cave of <i>ebllān</i> (PN) / the wet cave
58.2.	<i>emḡārit-el-butma</i>	The cave of the Pistacia Palaestina
58.3.	<i>emḡārit-el-qaṭrān</i>	The cave of tar
58.4.	<i>emḡārit-el-mišmās</i>	The cave that faces the sun
59.1.	<i>maqām-el-arebʿīn</i>	The shrine of the forty (martyrs)
59.2.	<i>maqām-el- hidmī</i>	The shrine of ʿel- <i>hidmī</i> (pious person)
60.1.	<i>meqer-el-ḡazāl</i>	The basin of the gazelle
61.1.	<i>emqaṭaʿat ʿarabī</i>	The cut cave of the Bedouin
62.1.	<i>mawāris ʿel-ḡaḥwānā</i>	The crushers of Anthemis Palaestina
63.1.	<i>ehrubbit-e-taleḡ</i>	The wealth / well of snow
63.2.	<i>ehrubbit-el-ḥarḏūn</i>	The wealth / well of lizard/Agama stellio
63.3.	<i>ehrubbit-er-rḡum</i>	The wealth / well of the stone heap
63.4.	<i>ehrubbit-es-swēd</i>	The wealth / well of the black
63.5.	<i>ehrubbit-eš-šafa</i>	The wealth / well of plateau
63.6.	<i>ehrubbit-eš-šafa</i>	The wealth / well of fennel
63.7.	<i>ehrubbit ʿōn</i>	The wealth / well of ʿōn (PN)
64.1.	<i>hīšit-el-warāsna</i>	The forest of ʿel- <i>warāsna</i> (family name)

N ^o	Vernacular form	Meaning
65.1.	<i>'el-hēlamān</i>	The beetle / <i>Ademia concellata</i>
66.1.	<i>wād -abo-el-barāṣ</i>	The valley of abundance of sand/sandy valley
66.2.	<i>wād -abo ṣafar</i>	The valley of abundance of yellow (soil) / (pious person)
66.3.	<i>wād eḥyāš</i>	The valley of trees/grass
66.4.	<i>wād ḥarīq</i>	The valley of flame
66.5.	<i>wād 'el-ḥaṣṣā</i>	The valley the assessor / the land recorder
66.6.	<i>wād 'es-simsim</i>	The valley of sesame
66.7.	<i>Wād el-'oqda</i>	The valley of the knot
67.1.	<i>wa'ar baqqō</i>	The rugged (land) of <i>baqqō</i> (wild dove)

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