

Corpus Inscriptionum  
Arabiarum Palaestinae

# Handbook of Oriental Studies

Handbuch der Orientalistik

Section One

The Near and Middle East

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Volume 30

Corpus Inscriptionum  
Arabicarum Palaestinae

Corpus Inscriptionum  
Arabicarum Palaestinae  
(CIAP)

Volume Four

– G –

*By*  
Moshe Sharon



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2009

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The publication of this volume was supported by the Fondation Max van Berchem, Geneva. The Max van Berchem Foundation is a scientific foundation established in Geneva, Switzerland, in memory of Max van Berchem (1863-1921), the founder of Arabic epigraphy. Its aim is to promote the study of Islamic and Arabic archaeology, history, geography, art, epigraphy, religion and literature. It subsidizes the Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum Palaestinae since 1997.

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in Publication data

Sharon, Moshe.

Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum Palaestinae (CIAP) addendum : squeezes in the Max van Berchem collection (Palestine, Trans-Jordan, Northern Syria) : squeezes 1-84 / registered, photographed and studied by Moshe Sharon.

p. cm. — (Handbuch der Orientalistik. Erste Abteilung, Nahe und der Mittlere Osten, ISSN 0169-9423 ; 30. Bd.)

ISBN-13: 978-90-04-15780-4

ISBN-10: 90-04-15780-8 (hardback : alk. paper) 1. Inscriptions, Arabic—Palestine. 2. Epitaphs—Palestine. 3. Inscriptions, Arabic—Jordan. 4. Epitaphs—Jordan. 5. Inscriptions, Arabic—Syria. 6. Epitaphs—Syria. 7. Fondation Max van Berchem—Catalogs. I. Fondation Max van Berchem. II. Title. III. Series.

PJ7599.P19S53 1997 Suppl.

492.7—dc22

2007060883

ISSN: 0169-9423

ISBN: 978 90 04 10833 2 (*Vol. 1*)

ISBN: 978 90 04 11083 0 (*Vol. 2*)

ISBN: 978 90 04 13197 2 (*Vol. 3*)

ISBN: 978 90 04 17085 8 (*Vol. 4*)

ISBN: 978 90 04 15780 4 (*Addendum*)

ISBN: 978 90 04 14289 3 (*Set*)

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PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

To *Bernard Lewis*



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The research on the Arabic inscriptions in Palestine is supported by the Israel Science Foundation (ISF) Founded by the Israel Academy for Sciences and Humanities. The Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) gave permission to use its archives and publish from them information as well as original photographs of both locations and inscriptions. Fondation Max van Berchem in Geneva granted permission to use its archives and publish information and photographs from Max van Berchem's files and carnets. The Foundation also extends its financial support for the publication of the volumes of the *CIAP*.



## FOREWORD

The fourth volume of the *CIAP* is the fifth book of the *Corpus* since it follows the *CIAP Addendum* published in 2007, which was the fourth book. It covers the sites whose names begin with the letter G, but in fact is dedicated, except for two entries, to the inscriptions of Gaza. This city contains an unusually large concentration of Islamic shrines—mosques, sanctuaries, religious schools, saints' holy sites, as well as markets, bathhouses, cemeteries, and other edifices of Islamic nature, and consequently I was able to trace some 100 inscriptions in it, and a few fragments, which indicate that the number of inscriptions in the city was higher. The great majority of these inscriptions belong to the Mamlūk period, when the city reached its highest stage of development (as well as the beginning of its decay) under the rule of Islam. Following the method established in the previous volumes, the inscriptions of Gaza are introduced with a study of the history of the city. The inscriptions are arranged chronologically (not according to their monuments) and studied, whenever possible, in their historical and cultural context. In order to enable the reader to follow the inscriptions according to their location, a special list of sites and their inscriptions has been provided. It should be noted that many inscriptions are not *in situ*, and therefore inscriptions, which are listed under the name of a certain site, do not necessarily belong to this site. This issue has been dealt with whenever possible in the discussions of the inscription.

This volume contributes to the history of the Holy Land under Islam as well, in spite of the fact that it deals mainly with two locations, and the historical span is not as extensive as the former volumes, covering only some parts of the Islamic era from the third Islamic century until the late Ottoman period, but with large gaps.

The volume also contains a few entries as addenda to previous volumes. However, most of the material available until now, has been included in the *Addendum*, and only the most recent discoveries have been entered in the addenda of this volume. Suggestions offered by the readers of the previous volumes will not be included in this volume. I plan to collect and deal with them in one of the coming volumes. I wish to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to these readers who added a few pairs of eyes, so much needed for the work of the epigrapher. Professor Werner Diem in particular engaged in a meticulous study of the *CIAP* and his suggestions are valued and appreciated. Sometimes, in cases of an unsatisfactory reading of an inscription on my part, I still publish its reproduction hoping that in the future, other eyes will be more successful than mine.

In referring to the sites, I usually, but not always, use the modern names, as they appear in the present maps, followed by older names. Thus in the entry “Gesher,” the modern Hebrew name of the place is followed by its old name: “Jisr al-Majāmi’”. I also indicate the current colloquial pronunciation of the Arabic names and words, next to the classical version. I preferred to use the word *shaykh* and not sheikh, but sometimes I used *welī* for a saint (sanctuary visited by devotees) alone, or next to *walī*. Throughout the book, I used the word sultan, as accepted in the European languages and not *sulṭān*. Sometimes I used the word vizier instead of *wazīr* for the same reason, but I always followed the spelling of *amīr* not emir. A few sites do not exist any more, but there are references to inscriptions discovered in them by the inspectors of the Department of Antiquities of the British Mandatory Government. Some of their reports contain photographs, and sometimes the reading of inscriptions *in situ*. I have always referred to these photographs by their number and have referred to these readings, now in the files of the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA).

In 1894, Max van Berchem prepared an extensive survey of Islamic monuments in Gaza and read almost all the important inscriptions. His work is particularly important since he saw these monuments before the damage caused to many of them by the bombardment of the city in 1917. His notes about the inscriptions, which he read, copied, and photographed *in situ*, cannot be over-estimated and without them this volume would have been incomplete. Had he not died in the prime of his scholarly activity in 1921, at the age of 58, he would have published these inscriptions. I have used his notes kept in the archives of *Fondation Max van Berchem* in Geneva and referred to them as “MvB Coll.” This is an opportunity to thank the Foundation and Professor Charles Genequand, the President of its Scientific Committee, for their support and encouragement. Special thanks are due to Mrs. Antoinette Harri for the invaluable help she has extended to me during the writing of this and the previous volumes of the *CIAP*.

From the third volume of the *CIAP* onwards I use two grid references to the standard map (scale:1:100 000), one is the usual Is. Gr. (Israel Grid) and the second is N. Is. Gr. (New Israel Grid). The new grid system appears now on all newly issued maps. According to the new system, the value of the longitude was increased by 50 and that of the latitude by 500. When the latitude is above 500 it is decreased by 500. In this manner, mistakes are avoided when longitudes and latitudes, according to the old system, have the same, or nearly the same values.

I take this opportunity to extend my thanks to the IAA for allowing me to use the archives at the Rockefeller Museum in Jerusalem, and to reproduce photographs and other information from these archives, which include all the material from the time of the British Mandate. Credit is rightly due to Ms. Yael Barshak of the IAA, who saw to the prompt supply of the needed photographs from the archives.

The excavations, which are in process in many places in the country, and the continuous archeological surveys, yield additional material to the *Corpus*. In this volume a few inscriptions discovered in Ascalon (Ashqelon, 'Asqalān) and one in Caesarea are included in the Addenda to this volume. I wish to thank Dov Nahliely, the chief archeologist of the Israel Southern District, for drawing my attention to these and other finds in his area of activity, and for supplying me with their photographs and technical details.

Many colleagues, friends and students have extended their help during the preparation of the material for this volume. It gives me pleasure to thank the curators of the Archeological Museum in Kibbutz Sedot Yam for the permission to publish the new inscription from Caesarea, as well as Ariel Berman for his contribution of an important inscription from Gaza from the year 274 A.H, the oldest inscription to date. Thanks are also due to Reuven Amitai, 'Umar Badrieh, Amikam Elad and Leigh Chipman, for their continual willingness to help. Linda Egger and Ami Schrager took an active part in the preparation of this volume, putting the material of my archives in order, and recording it electronically. This is the last volume to which Mrs. Egger contributed her enthusiasm and dedication before her retirement. Mr Schrager went through the proofreading and composed the index for this volume.

In addition to providing me with the proper environment to conduct my research, my wife Judy extended to me her professional advice on matters of language and style for which I am deeply thankful. She read and edited the manuscript in a very short time. Any mistakes if found are due to my shortcoming not to hers. My son (Arch.) Daniel Sharon contributed the plan of the Great Mosque of Gaza to the volume.

Special thanks are always due to my senior colleague Professor Pesah Shinar, who at the age of 93 is always willing to put at my disposal his unusually vast knowledge of world culture and perfect command of Arabic, Persian, Greek and Latin as well as some dozen other languages.

I am indebted to the Israel Science Foundation (ISF) for supporting the project of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum Palaestinae*.

Photo Garo and its proprietor Mardiros Nalbandian, and his artist photographer son Garo Nalbandian, have supplied the photographic services to the *CIAP* for more than a generation. Their professional service has by now developed into deep friendship.

May they all be blessed.

M. Sharon  
Jerusalem, May 2008



## ADDENDA

The *CIAP addendum* (2007) contains many entries which are indicated as “*addenda*” to the previous volumes of the *Corpus*. There are a few inscriptions from Ashqelon and Caesarea that were discovered in the last few years. Only one (Add. Ashqelon 2a) bears relation to the squeezes from the van Berchem collection to which the *Addendum* of 2007 was dedicated. The number and the letter attached to the inscriptions presented below refer to the number of the inscriptions in the original volume of the *CIAP*. Thus Ashqelon Nos. 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d come after Ashqelon No. 2 in the Ashqelon entries in *CIAP I*, and Ashqelon No. 14a comes after Ashqelon No. 14. The same applies to the one inscription added to Caesarea in *CIAP 2*.

### ADDENDA TO CIAP I

TO ASHQELON No. 2a

Epitaph of a Muslim

c.259/872-73

Ustinow collection. MvB Coll. squeeze No. 13, 0.33x0.32m. Top fragment, almost half of which is filled with a decoration of stylized trees, and two branches, one on each side, forming the frame of the decorative element. 4 visible lines, provincial, angular script, letters decorated with barbs and some endings curl-up in the style of the period, no points, no vowels; shallowly incised. Pl. Add. Ashqelon 2a. (In the margin there is a note by van Berchem: “Ustinow Caesarea(?)” I shall show that the origin of this inscription was Ashqelon. Publication: Pedersen, 1928:69, No. 26469; *CIAP, Addendum*, No. 4. The following is a fresh reading, correcting Pedersen’s mistakes.



Pl. Add. Ashqelon 2a

(١) بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ (٢) شَهِدَ اللّٰهُ اَنَّهُ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ (٣) هُوَ وَالْمَلٰئِكَةُ وَاُوَا (٤) الْعِلْمُ (!) الْعِلْمُ (٤)  
[قائماً] بِالْقِسْطِ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ...

Allah hath testified that there is no God but He, likewise the angels and the people of knowledge. Dispensing justice, there is no God but He, (the Sublime the Wise...) (Q, 3:18 Trans. Bell 3:16).

L.3: The word *wa-ʿulū* was defectively incised; the two letters *lam* and *wāw* were left out. In such a word, where similar letters appear one after the other, mistakes of this kind can occur.

This inscription, which contains only the first four lines of the original, would have remained a curiosity with the stylized “trees” at its top and with its peculiar script which made its dating somewhat problematic. However, an unusual coincidence of events, which has rarely happened in the entire history of Arabic epigraphic research, made it possible not only to determine the exact site of the inscription, but also to date it and learn much about the methods of production of such epitaphs. In February 2006, while I was working in the archives of Max van Berchem in Geneva on the fragment squeeze, a full, identical inscription was discovered in the excavations carried out by the IAA near the ruins of the medieval city of Ashqelon, buried in the sand together with a few other inscriptions that had been hoarded by someone in one stockpile.

The inscriptions, as can be seen in the attached photographs, are so similar that at the beginning I was sure that they were two identical copies, one of which reached the Ustinow collection. However, on close examination, the inscription recently discovered is not only a complete one, but is also different in a few, very minute details from the fragment in the Ustinow collection. The latter has two branches on both sides of the “trees” decoration on top, and the new inscription has only “trees.” There are even smaller differences in the distribution of the text according to lines. Other than that, since the inscription is complete, it supplies the name of the deceased and the full date of his death.

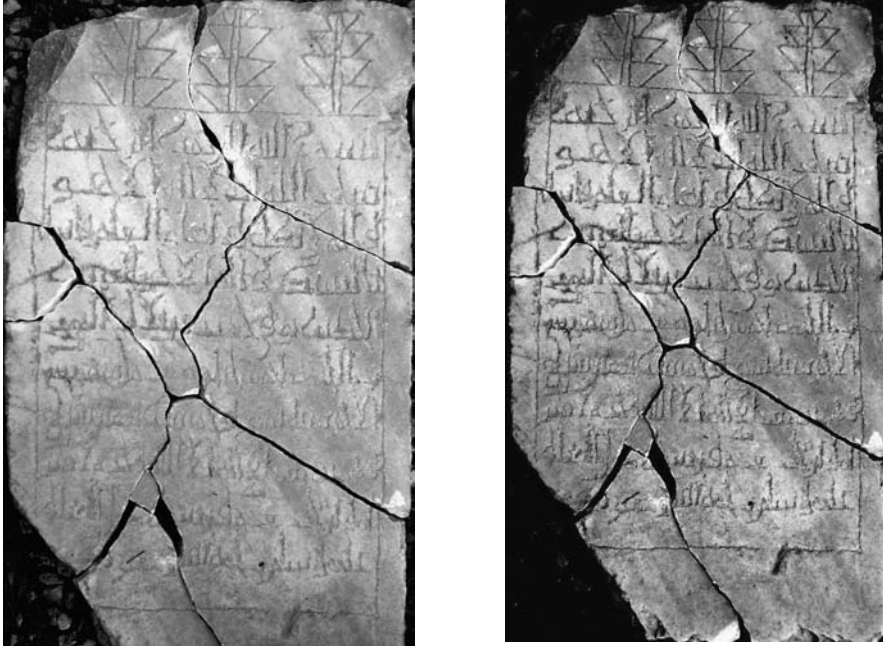
The squeeze which represents only the top four lines out of the original ten lines of the inscription can therefore be accurately dated to the same year or thereabouts. It was produced by the same engraver, who must have had a workshop and repeated the same decorative elements, and the same script, on the epitaphs that he produced. He was not too sophisticated, neither too talented as far as the production of the decoration was concerned. Here we have an example of a provincial workshop turning out its peculiar tombstones with its typical decoration, which I described as “trees.” To another eye, they might appear to be something else.

What follows is the full inscription that puts the fragment in Ustinow collection in its historical and artistic context.

## Epitaph of a Muslim

Friday 26 Rabī I 259/30 Jan. 873

A slab of a gray marble 0.65x0.375m. broken into 8 pieces easily assembled, discovered in 2006 in the excavations carried out by the IAA between the present Barzilai hospital and the ruins of the medieval city. 10 lines, provincial angular script decorated with barbs, no points, no vowels; incised. Pl. Add. Ashqelon 2a(1) Figs. Add. Ashqelon 2a, 2a(1)



Pl. Add. Ashqelon 2a(1)

١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم ٢) شهد الله انه لا اله الا هو ٣) والملائكة واولو العلم قائما  
 ٤) بالقسط لا اله الا هو العزيز ٥) الحكيم توفي حميد بن بلال المصري ٦) يوم الجمعة لخمس  
 ليال بقين من شهر ربيع الأول سنة تسع وخمسين ومايتين و ٨) هو يشهد الا اله الا الله  
 وحده لا شريك ٩) له وان محمد (!) عبده ورسوله صلى الله ١٠) عليه وسلم رحمه الله وغفر  
 له

Basmalah. Q. 3:18 (complete). Ḥumayd b. Bilāl al-Maṣrī died on Friday, 26 Rabī I 259 (=Friday, 30 Jan. 873) while testifying that there is no god but Allah alone, He has no companion and that Muḥammad is His slave and messenger may Allah bless him and give him peace. May Allah forgive him (the deceased) and pardon him.

The inscription was damaged during the excavations but the bottom left corner never existed. The slab of marble, of ancient origin, was in secondary usage. It had this wedge shape before being utilized for incising the inscription.

TO ASHQELON No. 2b

Epitaph of a Muslim

Jumādā I 338/Oct.-Nov. 949

A fragment of a slab of a gray marble 0.535x0.30m. damaged on the left, discovered in 2006 in the excavations carried out by the IAA between the present Barzilai hospital and the ruins of the medieval city. 10 surviving lines, semi-monumental angular script decorated with barbs, some letters curl up, and some bend below the line, the two last lines were pushed leftwards towards the middle and the space was filled up with a decorative element, no points, no vowels; incised. Pl. Add. Ashqelon 2b. Fig. Add. Ashqelon 2b.



Pl. Add. Ashqelon 2b

(١) بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ [٢] شَهِدَ اللّٰهُ [اِنَّهٗ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ] [٣] وَالْمَلٰئِكَةُ [وَاَوَّلُو  
 الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا] [٤] بِالْقِسْطِ لَا [اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ] [٥] لِعَزِيزِ الْحَكْمِ [يَمِیْمٍ تُوْفِیْ] [٦] ... [٦] بِنِ مُحَمَّدٍ فِی  
 السَّنَةِ ... [٧] دَى الْاَوَّلِ (!) مِنْ [شَهْرٍ] [٨] سَنَةِ ثَمَانٍ وَثَلَاثِیْنِ / وَسِتِّیْنِ / وَسَبْعِیْنِ  
 / وَثَمَانِیْنِ / وَتَسْعِیْنِ / وَثَلَاثِیْنِ [٩] مِائَةٍ وَهُوَ [یَشْهَدُ اَنْ لَا] [١٠] اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ

Basmalah. Q. 3:18 (complete). ...b. Muḥammad died on the (date) of Jumādā I of the months belonging to the year 338 (=Oct.-Nov. 949) while testifying that there is no god but Allah.

Except for the last two lines, all the other lines in this inscription consist of about 19 letters. For this reason I think that the missing decimal number in 1.8 is thirty (*thalāthīn*), since a tooth of a letter which can only be *thā'* comes after the *wāw* (no numbers begin with other letters of the same shape, and *sīn* is much higher). However, all the suggestions which I show in the reading above, taking into consideration that *sīn* takes the place of three letters, create a line with more letters than the line allows, except, probably *sittīn* which could be pushed in. Since the engraver chose much larger letters for this line, such a possibility is very unlikely. A later date seems very improbable although provincial script of this kind could have survived until the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century. However, in this case the inscription is professional and represents the script of the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, not its end. I tend even to read the last word in line 8: *wa-thalāth* and settle for the date of Jumādā I 308/Sept.-Oct. 920. Towards the end of the century the same script becomes far more elaborate. (Cf. *CIA, Jérusalem, "Ville"* 1:17, No. 18, pl. IV)

TO ASHQELON No. 2c

### Epitaph of a Muslim

ca. 350/962

A fragment of a slab of a gray marble 0.325x0.13m., discovered in 2006 in the excavations carried out by the IAA between the present Barzilai hospital and the ruins of the medieval city. 8 surviving lines, the first barely visible. Monumental, angular script decorated with barbs, no points, no vowels; incised. Pl. Add. Ashqelon 2c. Fig. Add. Ashqelon 2c.



Pl. Add. Ashqelon 2c

(١ ... (٢ توفي أبو ع... (٣ بن محمد... (٤) رحمة الـ [له عليه... (٥) خمس لـ [يال  
بقين/خلون من ربيع [٦] الأول سـ [نة ... وثلا [٧] ث مائة [وهو يشهد [٨] ان لا اله [الا  
الله ...]

(Almost certainly *basmallah* and Q, 3:18?) Abū ‘...b. Muḥammad, died, may Allah pardon him, when five nights had elapsed/remaining from the month of Rabī’ I, the year ... and three hundred (while testifying) that there is no god (but Allah).

From the reconstruction of l.5, it is possible to deduce that each line in this inscription contained around 18 characters. This makes the inscription about one third of the original excluding the missing part on top.

TO ASHQELON No. 2d

Fragment of an epitaph of a Muslim (?)

ca. 400/1009

A slab of marble 0.38x0.55m. discovered in 2006 in the excavations carried out by the IAA between the present Barzilai hospital and the ruins of the medieval city. Top

part of the inscription broken into 6 pieces—5 of which survived—9 lines (from the 9<sup>th</sup> line there are only remnants of two letters), angular, provincial script, decorated with barbs, thick letters, no points no vowels; in bas relief. Pl. Add. Ashqelon 2d. Fig. Add. Ashqelon 2d.



Pl. Add. Ashqelon 2d

١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم الله لا اله الا [هو] ٢) الحي القيوم لا تاخذه سنة ولا نوم له ما  
 ٣) في السموات [و] ما في الارض من ذا الذي يشفع ٤) عنده الا باذنه يعلم ما بين ايديهم وما  
 ٥) خلفهم ولا يحيطون بشي <ء> من علمه الا بما ٦) شا <ء> وسع [كرس]—يه السموات  
 والارض ٧) ولا يـ [ـئـ <وده>] حفظهما وهو العلي ٨) العظـ [يم] بسم الله الرحمن  
 الرحيم ٩) قـ [ل هو الله احد....]

Basmalah. Q, 2:255 (complete). Basmalah (most probably introducing Q, 112)

The inscription was damaged during the excavations, but was easily put together. The piece at the bottom had already been lost when the slab was excavated.

Above the first line an open space was left which was filled up with a simple decoration which looks like leaves or branches and geometrical elements. On both sides of the decoration the words: *اللهم ارحم* “O Allah forgive!” were incised in a simple angular script. This writing is clearer on the right-hand side than on the left.

The Throne Verse—Q, 2:255, was used frequently in inscriptions, because of the particular importance attributed to it, and the belief in its magical powers. It is valued as one quarter of the Qur’ān, just like the four short verses of Q, 112 that are also regarded as one quarter of the Qur’ān. (For further discussion, see *CIAP* 1:148, No. 2). If I am right that the continuation of this inscription contained *Sūrat al-Ikhlās* (Q, 112) then the inscription could have been valued as one half of the Qur’ān.

## TO ASHQELON No. 14a

Church of St. Mary “the Green”  
Dedication text

CE 1160-1180

The inscription runs along the lower part of the right niche. It seems that it was originally 2 lines, about 1.00 m. long, in red-brown ink, reminiscent of papyri script of the 10<sup>th</sup>–11<sup>th</sup> century. The script clearly represents the transitional period from angular to naskhī script, a process that was completed in the Ayyūbid period. (The letters *dāl* and *kāf*, for instance, were still written in the angular style.) Most of the text has been destroyed with the crumbling plaster. The following is what I could read on the spot on July 15, 2005. Pl. Add. Asqelon 14a. Fig. Add. Asqelon 14a.



Pl. Add. Ashqelon 14a

[أ]ذكر يا رب عبدك الـ[خا]طي المندر[ي]ك [؟]

Remember O Lord Thy sinful slave the (Archi)mandrite (?) ....

I am not sure about the word *mandrīk*, which I believe to represent the word [arch]mandrite—namely the head of the church. At the moment I have no better reading.

Once the Crusaders took Ashqelon in 1153, the local Christian Greek-Orthodox community could resume its communal and religious life around the small church that was restored by the local spiritual leader, the Archimandrite, whose name has been lost. The Crusaders regarded the local Orthodox Christians as inferior to them, and treated them not much better than the Muslims and other local Christian sects. They built four Latin churches in Ashqelon representing a form of Christianity that was both hostile and alien to the “locals” who had already been profoundly Arabicised. (Praver 1984, 1:411-416) Although Greek continued to be the language of their church, Arabic had become their prime language, and when they wished to commemorate the rebuilding of their small church they used this language in conjunction with the Greek in the dedication inscription. Similar examples in which both languages were used to indicate the building or restoration of Christian holy

places can be found in the monasteries of Dayr al-Qalt and Dayr Ḥajlah from about the same period. (*CIAP* 3:51, 109-111 and pl.28) For an example from the nineteenth century, see Gaza No. 99 in this volume.

### ADDENDA TO CIAP II

#### TO CAESAREA NO. 1a

#### Epitaph of a Muslim woman

Jumādā 1 280/19 July–5 Sept.893

Top part of the shaft of an ancient gray marble column 0.91m. long, top diameter 0.25m. (max. including small remnants of the capital base); bottom diameter 0.20m., discovered buried in the sand on the shore of Caesarea, and brought to the Museum of Kibbutz Sedot Yam. 8 lines monumental angular script, top of many letters decorated with barbs and spearheads, tendrils and floriated elements, no points, no vowels; in bas relief, engraved around more than half the face of the column. (Pl. Add. Caesarea 1a. Figs. Add. Caesarea 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e)



Pl. Add. Caesarea 1a

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم (٢) هذا قبر مامونة (٣) بنت جرّار الموصلية (٤) داية ابو (!) العباس  
ابن اسحق (٥) ابن كنداج توفيت بقيسارية (٦) في جمادى الأولى سنة ثمانين (٧) وماتين (!) سنة  
رحمها الله ورحم (٨) من ترحم عليه (!)

Basmalah. This is the tomb of Ma'mūnah daughter of Jarrār of Mawṣil (al-Mawṣiliyyah) the wet nurse of Abū al-'Abbās b. Iṣḥāq b. Kundāj. She died in Caesarea on Jumādā I 280 (19 July-5 Sept. 893) may Allah have mercy on her and on whomever asks (God's) mercy for him (her?).

L. 3: The name of Ma'mūnah's father could also be one of many other variants: Jirār, Jurāz, Jirān, Jazzār, Jazzāz, Ḥarār, Ḥarāz, Ḥarrāz, Ḥazār, Ḥazāz, Ḥazzāz, Ḥarrān, and few more other variants. (Ibn Mākūlā, 2, 1990: 69, 179, 180, 181, 182, 190, 445-447)

Ll. 4-5: Note the word *abū* in the nominative instead of genitive, and *ibn* is full with the *alif* (a common mistake in inscriptions). Ma'mūnah was the *dāyah* of Abū al-'Abbās (most probably Muḥammad) b. Iṣḥāq Ibn Kundāj. (Fig. Add. Caesarea 1d) *Dāyah* is a Persian word, absorbed into Arabic, which means a wet nurse, a foster mother and a midwife. Ma'mūnah, a native of Mawṣil (Mūṣul), could have been all three for the son of Iṣḥāq b. Kundāj (and his heir). At some point, at the end of 279 or the beginning of 280/beginning of 893, she moved to Palestine with Muḥammad b. Iṣḥāq b. Kundāj and his family (see below), and died while in Caesarea (l.5). Her intimate association with the prominent family of Iṣḥāq b. Kundāj explains the monumental inscription on her tomb.

As far as I can remember this is the first inscription from Caesarea where the name of the city is mentioned. The fact that the inscription mentions explicitly that the deceased woman was a native of Mawṣil and that she died in Caesarea is not accidental. It means to say that the woman died in *ghurbah*—away from home. (Cf. *CIAP* 1:98).

### **Iṣḥāq b. Kundāj**

Iṣḥāq b. Kundāj (also: Kundājīq) and his son and heir Muḥammad b. Iṣḥāq (most probably Abū al-'Abbās in this inscription), played a prominent role in the political and military events of the second half of the 3<sup>rd</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> century. Iṣḥāq b. Kundāj, a Turkish general, first appears in the chronological records as a military commander in Irāq, then in the Jazīrah where he carved for himself the governorship of Mawṣil and its environs, took a very active part in the rivalry between the Ṭūlūnids and the central government in Baghdād, and spent his last years as a prominent military commander in the service of the Caliph. The vicissitudes of his career will be surveyed below. The fact that his name appears in this inscription accords it a very special value.

Ishāq b. Kundāj (Kundājīq) is mentioned for first time in 259/873 during the wars against the Zanj. When al-Muʿtamid mounted his offensive against them that year, Ishāq was sent to secure the defense of the city of Baṣrah, where he succeeded in cutting supplies from the Zanj, and holding the defenses of the city against their attacks (Ṭabarī, 3:1877-1880; Ibn al-Athīr 7:259-261). About six years later he, together with a few other generals, forced the government in Baghdād (under Muwaffaq who was the real ruler during the nominal rule of his brother Caliph al-Muʿtamid), to recognize their power and influence. (Ṭabarī, 3:1930; Ibn al-Athīr, 7:327) With the power he had acquired, Ibn Kundāj was able to begin independent activity in the Jazīrah the following year (266/879-80), an area populated by rival Arab tribes (Yāqūt, Dār Ṣādir, 3:134) where various military commanders and tribal leaders were competing for the control of territory and strongholds, while the central government was completely occupied in the south with the Zanj rebellion. He succeeded in taking al-Mawṣil, but, in return for a large tribute, he refrained from actually establishing himself in it. The town had been under the rule of a local military leader called ʿAlī b. Dāwud. Ibn Kundāj opened war against him and his allies, defeated them, and this time he entered the city and forced the hand of caliph al-Muʿtamid, who nominated him to its governorship. (Ṭabarī, 3:1939-1942; Ibn al-Athīr, 7:333-334; Zambaur, 1951:57; Kennedy, 1986:176)

The tribes of Rabīʿah—Bakr and Taghlib, and the tribes of Yaman who had enjoyed much freedom in the Jazīrah were not satisfied with the appearance of such a strong man as Ibn Kundāj on the scene, and in 267/880, they formed a coalition against him with other military commanders in the area. He defeated them all and strengthened his hold outside Mawṣil as well, in Āmid and Niṣṣībīn. (Ṭabarī, 3:1992; Ibn al-Athīr, 7:362) The strong position, which Ibn Kundāj now acquired in the Jazīrah, was such that he allowed himself to intervene in the internal rivalry in the caliphal court between the two brothers al-Muʿtamid and al-Muwaffaq. The former, Caliph only “in name,” finally decided to try and free himself from his brother’s control and contemplated joining Ibn Ṭūlūn, the independent governor of Egypt, who had promised him support against al-Muwaffaq. The Caliph, with a small group of loyal officers, escaped to the Jazīrah from where he planned to cross to the Ṭūlūnid domains in Syria. Ishāq b. Kundāj intervened, arrested the Caliph’s officers and convinced the Caliph not to proceed with his plan, which involved abdicating the caliphate and forsaking his family. (Ṭabarī, 3:2037-2039; Ibn al-Athīr, 7:394-395; Ibn Khallikān, 1:281) Following that, and adhering to his brother’s command, the Caliph ordered the cursing of Ibn Ṭūlūn from the pulpits and bestowed all his territories, from the Jazīrah to North Africa, on Ibn Kundāj. This was a gesture of no real value since these territories were not under the control of the central government, but it reflected the prominent position of Ibn Kundāj,

who was also nominated a commander of the special units of *shurtat al-khāṣṣah*. (Ṭabarī, 3:2048, 2084; Ibn al-Athīr, 7:397)

The death of Ibn Ṭūlūn in 270/884 seemed to Iṣḥāq Ibn Kundāj to be an opportunity to seize some of the Ṭūlūnids' domains in Syria. Allying himself with Ibn Abū as-Sāj, another strong general in the Jazīrah, and securing al-Mawaffaq's consent and a few royal military units, he marched on Syria. The joint armies won a few battles against Khumārawayh, Ibn Ṭūlūn's heir, and the caliphal units which took the lead under the command of Abū al-'Abbās b. al-Muwaffaq (in future Caliph al-Mu'taḍid), followed the retreating Egyptian army to Ramlah. In the ensuing "Battle of the Water Mills" (*waq'at at-tawāhūn*) near Antipatris (271/885), the caliphal army was crushed by the Egyptians and retreated in disarray to the north, and out of Syria that returned to Khumārawayh's rule. (Ibn al-Athīr, 7:408-414, "Nahr Abī Futrus," *ET*<sup>2</sup>; Kennedy, 1986:179)

In 273/886-7, following this disappointment in Syria, the alliance between Ibn Kundāj and Ibn Abū as-Sāj came to a bitter end. They now both competed for the sole control of the Jazīrah. From his stronghold in Qinnaṣrīn, Ibn Abū as-Sāj turned to Khumārawayh, offered him his support, and convinced him to invade the Jazīrah. On the arrival of the Egyptian army, Ibn Abū as-Sāj crossed the upper Euphrates into Ibn Kundāj's domains, defeated him in a few battles, putting a substantial part of the Jazīrah under Ṭūlūnid rule. The *khutbah* in all the Friday mosques started to be delivered in the name of the new Egyptian sovereigns. (Ṭabarī, 3:2112; Ibn al-Athīr, 7:422)

In spite of this setback, Ibn Kundāj remained in the Jazīrah, now a Ṭūlūnid province. However, in 274/887-8, he still made an effort to rebel against them. He was defeated by Khumārawayh's army, after which he accepted Khumārawayh's suzerainty, but had lost the governorship of Mawṣil to Ibn Abū as-Sāj (Ibn al-Athīr, 7:427; Zambaur, 1951:56).

Concentrating now on the war against the latter, Ibn Kundāj succeeded in winning the favour of Khumārawayh, (Ibn Khallikān 5:57) who furnished him with a large army. In the ensuing war against Ibn Abū as-Sāj, in 275/888-9, he was defeated and driven out of the Jazīrah. The victorious Ibn Abū as-Sāj turned to al-Mawaffaq and asked permission to invade Khumārawayh's domains in Syria. Now it was the turn of Ibn Kundāj to defeat his enemy who had to leave the Jazīrah and join al-Muwaffaq in Baghdād (276/889). Iṣḥāq Ibn Kundāj returned to his old position as the governor of Mawṣil, but now as a Ṭūlūnid official. (Ibn al-Athīr, 7:431-432; Zambaur, *loc.cit.*)

In 278/891 he died and his position was taken by his son Muḥammad, who most probably is the Abū al-'Abbās of this inscription. (Ibn al-Athīr 7:451) The following year Muḥammad found himself entangled in combat in the Jazīrah, and lost Mawṣil

to the central government that nominated its own governor to the city after a long interruption. (*Ibid.*, 454) In the same year he lost the rest of his possessions in the Jazīrah (Ṭabarī, 3:2134; Ibn al-Athīr, 7:460; Kennedy, 1986:184), and had to join the Ṭūlūnids in Palestine. When Khumārawayh was assassinated in 282/896, he joined the officers who rebelled against Jaysh, Khumārawayh's son and heir, and left with them to enter the service of Caliph al-Mu'taḍid in Baghdād (283/896). From this date on, Muḥammad b. Ishāq's fortune was connected with the central government, and he was nominated to very high rank offices both in the army and the administration. (Ṭabarī, 3:2151, 2210, 2213; Ibn al-Athīr, 7:478, 518)

By 289/902 the reports mention him well entrenched in the Caliph's service. In 291/904, and again in 293/906, he took part in the war against the Qarmaṭians in Syria as one of the most distinguished generals in the army of Caliph al-Muktafi (Ṭabarī, 3:2241, 2244, 2248, 2259, 2266; Ibn al-Athīr, 7:518, 542, 546). Six years later he was nominated to the governorship of Baṣrah, a position his father had occupied 40 years earlier. Then the enemies were the Zanj and now they were the Qarmaṭians.

It was in late 279 or early 280 that Muḥammad left the Jazīrah for Syria. Only then could Ma'mūnah, his wet nurse, come to Palestine with the rest of his family. Whether she stayed in the place for a few months or whether she died on the way, and was buried there it is difficult to know. The inscription gives the date of her death in the fifth month of the year 280, which means that she could not have spent a long time in the place before her death. The emotional attachment to a wet nurse, practically a foster mother, is not surprising. One is reminded of Deborah, Rebecca's nurse, who "died, and was buried in Bethel under the oak," which was thereafter called the "Oak of Weeping" (אלון בכות Gen. 35:8), while Jacob and his family were still on their way, wandering through Canaan.

L.7: The word *mi'atayn* is slightly damaged; however, I cannot see any other way of writing it but as suggested above, since between the *alif* after the *mīm* and the last *nūn* there is room for only two "teeth" of *tā'* and *yā'*.

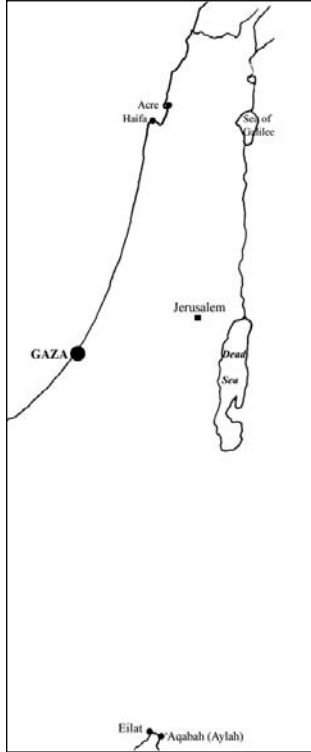
L.8: The ending of the inscription is strange. Naturally it should read: *wa-rahīma man tarahhama 'alayhā* (not *'alayhi* as in the inscription)—and may He have mercy on whomever asks mercy for her. However, attributing mistakes should be avoided as much as possible; the line (in the masculine!) must therefore be interpreted as referring not to Ma'mūnah, but to Abū al-'Abbās whom she had nursed, although in this case a mistake cannot be excluded.

The date of the inscription corresponds to the last decade of the Ṭūlūnid reign in Egypt and Syria.



## GAZA (GHAZZAH)

Is. Gr. 099 101 (N. Is. Gr. 149 601)



One of the most ancient cities in the world. Its name, which sounds like *Ghaza*, is found in Egyptian and other ancient documents. (*Azati*, *Khazati* in the Tell el-Amarna tablets from the 14<sup>th</sup> century B.C. is the location of the Egyptian commissioner in the Land of Canaan). The Greeks pronounced its name Γάζα following the local pronunciation. The Hebrew name ‘Azzah (אֲזָח) is in fact Ghazzah, because, similar to the Arabic, the Hebrew also had a letter *ghāyin* next to ‘*āyin*. For this reason the Greek translators of the Bible, who knew the exact pronunciation of the Hebrew text, differentiated between these two letters that orthographically looked the same. Because of this, we have in Greek the names Ghazzah—Gaza, and Ghomorah—Gomorah (which later became ‘*Amorah* in Hebrew, pronounced: ‘Omorah, but see Idrīsī. 1994:355 where he has *Ghāmūrā*). This is the spelling (Γάζα) that Eusebius used in his *Onomasticon* (quoted by Guérin, *Judée*, 2:191). The translations of the Bible into European languages followed the Greek and Latin translations, and this is how “Gaza” and

“Gomorah” found their way back into English, French, Italian, German and so on. The original Hebrew pronunciation Ghazzah is kept best in Arabic (غَزَّة) which, unlike the Hebrew, preserved the letter *ghayn* separate from the ‘*ayn*, in spite of the same orthographical sign of the two. It was only with the introduction of the diacritical points into Arabic, late in the 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> century, that the two letters were separated by a dot above the letter ‘*ayn*. However, the reading of the name as Aza also has an ancient source. The sixth century geographer, Stephanus Byzantinus, remarks that “Gaza is also called Aza (Άζα), and until now the Syrians call it Aza” (quoted by Guérin, *vol. cit.*, 195). The other names he attached to the city, such as Ionè (Ἰωνη) and Minoa (Μινώα), belong to the period when Gaza became a Hellenistic city, adopted the names of figures from Greek mythology (such as Io and Minos), and placed Marnas, the Cretan Zeus, at the head of their pantheon. (*ibid.*, 196) Herodotus called it Κάδυτις—Cadytis (see Guérin’s explanation about the identity of names *op. cit.*, 209). The Crusaders named it Gadres, and Gazara

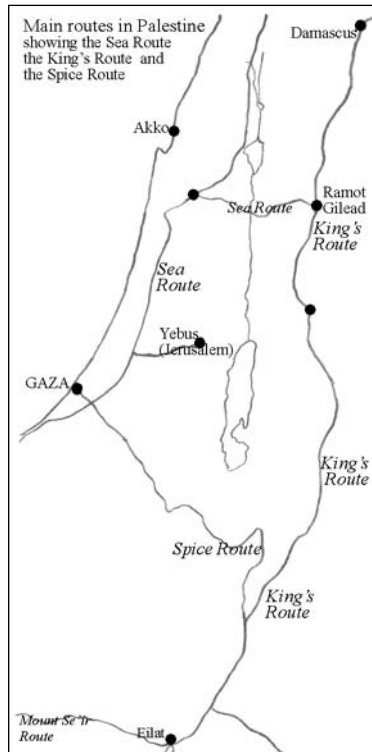
confusing it with Gezer. (Burchardi de Monte Sion, *Itinerarium*, quoted and discussed by Guérin, *vol. cit.*, 207; Meyer, 1907:82)



Pl.1 General view of Gaza 1842 dominated by the Great Mosque (English artist W. Tipping)

Gaza had already been a reputable city prior to the 15<sup>th</sup> century B.C., and an important strategic location on the southern borders of Palestine, and on the main travel and commerce route connecting Egypt with the Fertile Crescent. This route, which the Roman called *Via Maris* (the Sea Route), joined up in Gaza with a branch of the famous “Spice Route” along which were transported spices, frankincense, and other expensive and luxurious commodities from Yemen and South Arabia to the north. Gaza emerged as one of the major sea outlets of this trade in the later part of antiquity, with the emergence of the branch of the Spice Route from Petra through the Negev highland towards its markets and its port. From this city, the imported commodities could also reach Egypt along the south route that crossed northern Sinai, following the southeastern Mediterranean coastline to the Egyptian Delta. From its port, the exotic merchandise reached the centres of the ancient civilizations of Greece and Rome. The Sea Route from Gaza northwards, traversed Palestine from west to east via the ‘Iron Valley (Wādī ‘Ārah), and, crossing the

Jordan, connected in the Gilead (al-Balqā') with the Spice Route (called also "The King's Route.")



The Biblical records attest to the activity along this route in the story of the selling of Joseph by his brothers: "...and behold, a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh going to carry it down to Egypt." (*Genesis*, 37:25) The control that various Arab tribes had over the Spice Route trade had created an intimate connection between them and Gaza from antiquity. This is how, about two millennia after the Biblical story about Joseph, we find Prophet Muḥammad's great-grandfather, Hāshim b. 'Abd Manāf, leading merchants' caravans to Gaza. He died in Gaza on one of his travels and was buried there. (Ibn Hishām, *Sīrah*, 1: 137) For this reason, and in spite of the fact that Hāshim died a pagan, Gaza is sometimes called after him: *Ghazzat Hāshim*—Hāshim's Gaza. (Marmarjī, 1951:156) Over 1200 years after the conquest of Gaza by the Muslims, in 1268/1852 (or 1266/1850), the Ottoman Sultan 'Abd al-Majīd built a grand mosque in the Daraj Quarter of the city, ostensibly over Hāshim's grave, and named it: Jami'

as-Sayyid Hāshim (Gatt's plan of Gaza E2/3). It is clear that the story about the grave of Hāshim only developed after the biography of the Prophet had become known. There is no reason to doubt the tradition about the death of Hāshim in Gaza in the course of a trading expedition, but the identification of his grave, probably more than two centuries later, (first mentioned by Ya'qūbī, who died after 294/905, Le Strange, 1890:442; Marmardji, 1951:154) belongs to the realm of legend, and to the tendency of believers to hunt for saints' tombs. It is not surprising, therefore, that the grave of Hāshim was also shown in Mazār ash-Shaykh Riḍwān (see 'Ārif al-'Ārif, 1943:337, 354) far from the mosque which was built to commemorate his tomb.

Built in a fertile area, with a great abundance of underground water, Gaza developed agriculture as well, particularly in times when its security was guaranteed. It was famous for its vineyards in ancient times as well as in the Middle Ages. Until the coming of Islam, it produced wine (under Islam, Jews and Christians continued producing wine), and its grapes were exported as well, primarily to Egypt. Security

was the key to its prosperity or decline. Built on the verge of the desert it was always exposed to the danger of the marauding nomads. In its times of glory, under Egyptian rule between the 15<sup>th</sup> and the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C., under the Philistines and successive great empires, the Assyrians, the Greeks and the Romans, it was surrounded by walls, which must have been impressive. (The last walls were destroyed in 1193 by Saladin). Its walls and gates play a part in the famous story of Samson who “took the door of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders and carried them up to the top of the hill that is before Hebron.” (*Judges*, 16:3). The memory of this story, as well as that of Samson finishing his tragic life under the ruins of the Temple of Dagon in Gaza, which he pulled down upon himself and on the feasting Philistines (*Ibid.*, 16:23-30), remains in Gaza to this very day. His name is bound to the sanctuary in the city called Mazār ash-Shaykh Abū al-‘Azm, Shamshūm Abū al-‘Azm (“the Powerful”) and Shamshum al-Jabbār which echoes the Hebrew appellation: *Shimshon ha-Gibbor*—“Samson the Hero.” (*AR*, 2:380; ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, 1943:354; Gatt’s plan of Gaza, D6; List, *zDPV*, 1888:153). When the city lacked walls, was deprived of military power or protective government, it was left to the mercy of the desert dwellers.

The strategic position of Gaza shaped its history throughout the ages. Sitting as it was at the junction between the great empires of antiquity, Egypt on one hand and the rulers of the Fertile Crescent and Asia Minor on the other, each side at one time or the other fought for it.

The recorded history of Gaza goes as far back as the 15 century B.C. when, in 1468 B.C., the Egyptian King Thutmose III took it and established a base for his further military operations in Syria there. From then on and until 1225 B.C., it was one of the most important Egyptian administrative centres in Palestine. The Hebrews who captured Canaan did not take Gaza, which remained outside their borders, although according to the Biblical records it was in the territory allocated to the tribe of Judah. When the Philistines arrived in the area, early in the 12<sup>th</sup> century B.C., they captured Gaza and made it the chief city of their five major cities along the coastal plain. They emerged as the bitter enemies of the Israelites until they were finally subdued by King Solomon. (I Kings, 5:4) Gaza remained, however, a Philistine city until it was taken by the Assyrian Tiglat-Pileser III in 734 B.C. For a long time afterwards, it was loyal to the Assyrians, but had its own local governors.

In 525 B.C. it was occupied by the Persian King Cambyses (d. 522 B.C.) on his way to conquer Egypt. In the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C., Herodotus described it as a beautiful and prosperous city that had resisted Alexander the Great who besieged it for two months (and was twice injured during the siege), before it fell into his hands. In his fury, he massacred its men and sold the women and children into slavery. The town was not destroyed; Alexander resettled it with people, whom he brought from

elsewhere. It emerged as a magnificent Hellenistic town under the Ptolemaic rule, yet it was claimed by the Seleucids of Syria as well, and the wars between the Syrian and the Egyptian successors of Alexander took place in its vicinity. In 312 B.C., Ptolemy of Egypt destroyed it when he took it from his Syrian rivals together with other towns he had conquered in Syria. It revived soon after and in the second century B.C. it was once again a flourishing city. The sources of the period describe it as a commercial centre and repeatedly mention the three annual fairs that used to take place in it. Like several other coastal cities that were built some distance away from the shore, it had its own port—Maiumas-Gaza, which in time developed into a city in its own right. Gaza came a few times under the rule of the Hasmoneans who developed a Jewish community there, particularly after Simeon the Hasmonean had taken it in 141 B.C. In 96 B.C. Alexander Jannaeus (103–76 B.C.) destroyed it again after a siege which lasted a year. At that time it was a large city with a senate composed of five hundred senators. (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, XIII, 13, §3 in Guérin, *vol. cit.*, 201)

Under the Romans, after its capture by Pompey in 62 B.C., Gaza developed as a free “maritime city” and flourished again as a Hellenistic centre with no less than 8 pagan temples dedicated to Aphrodite, Helios, Apollo, Persephone, Hecate, Tyche, Marnas, and Here. (Conder, *Syrian Stone-Lore*, 1887:286-287). It was also a centre of intellectual activity from the third century, with schools of rhetoric and neoplatonic thinkers flourishing there as well as in nearby Ascalon. The city remained a stubborn pagan stronghold for centuries, and was one of the last locations to resist Christianity. It also had, as before, a very large annual fair in which one could even buy slaves, land and houses. It was only at the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century that paganism was violently ended in Gaza when St. Porphyry received the permission, and the army, of Emperor Arcadius to destroy the pagan temples, and to build a basilica over the Temple of Marnas. It is very possible that the later Crusader Church of St. John was built over the site of this Byzantine basilica. It was named the Eudoxiana, after the Empress Eudoxia, who had provided the funds for its construction. (Meyer, 1907:65)

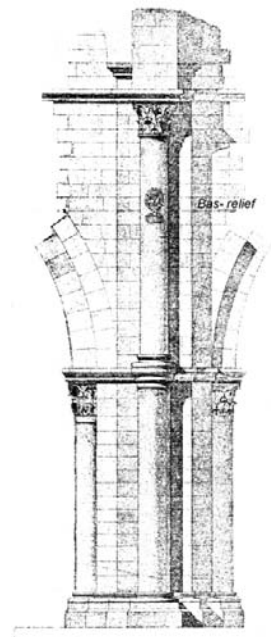
Under Byzantine rule, the city became more cosmopolitan, with Jews and Samaritans settling in it. Because Jews were not allowed to go to Jerusalem, they chose Gaza for the communal gatherings of the three main feasts (which in the period of the Temple were times of pilgrimage). Apart from these annual gatherings, there was a large Jewish community in the city as well as a synagogue. The Jews fared much better under the pagans than under the Christians, particularly when Julian the Apostate (Flavius Claudius Julianus), the Roman Emperor (361–363 AD) favoured the Jews as part of his policy of protecting the old religions against the growth of Christianity, and even gave permission to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. But

the last attempt to revive Paganism failed with the sudden death of Julian, and Christianity was again triumphant. Already in the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, at the beginning of the Christian dominance, Maiumas, the port of Gaza broke away from the pagan city and established itself as an independent town and an important Christian centre. (Avi-Yonah, *In the Days of Rome and Byzantium*. 1970:164-165; Meyer, 1907:61-62)

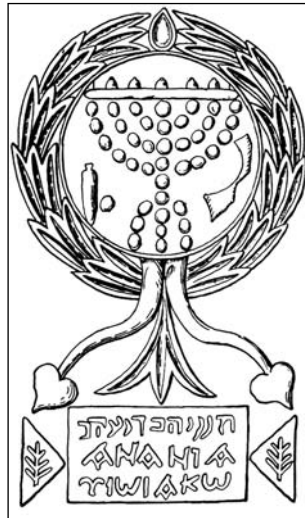
The Samaritans were also organized in Gaza in a separate community, and had their own synagogue. They continued to exist in the city, albeit in far smaller numbers than the Jews, until the final year of the 18<sup>th</sup> century when Napoleon conquered Gaza, and both Jews and Samaritans fled the city before the arrival of his army. The Jews returned, the Samaritans did not.

Remnants of a Jewish synagogue or synagogues were discovered in excavations that took place in Gaza and its vicinity during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Clermont-Ganneau saw in the Great (“Umarī”) Mosque in Gaza (formerly the Crusaders’ Church of St. John) a column on which there was a bilingual inscription in Greek and Hebrew (pl. 2). His description of the efforts to which he went in order to copy this inscription, and his comments are worth repeating here:

I had noticed in 1870...on the shaft of one of the upper columns of the central nave ...a carved *bas relief* representing the seven-branched candlestick inscribed in a crown, and below it a cartouche with an inscription of three lines. I had taken a sketch of it as well as I could, but even with the help of a field-glass I had only been able to make out a few Greek characters, the inscription being placed too high and the letters being moreover partly obscured by a thick coating of dust. This time I resolved to set my mind at rest. I caused several ladders to be tied together and managed to scramble up to the *bas relief*. I must confess that I did not feel very comfortable when I found myself perched at a height of over twenty feet on this unsteady support, the bottom of which rested on the slippery flags of the mosque, and the top only touched at one point the smooth cylindrical shaft of the column. A single false step, and I should very likely have been thrown down and dashed on the ground. I nevertheless attempted under these precarious conditions, to take a squeeze of the *bas relief* and the inscription after having carefully cleaned them. The operation was a long one, as I had to deliberate on every movement, in order not to lose my balance. Finally it succeeded, and I uttered a sigh of relief when I got back to *terra firma* with good squeezes. (*AR*, 2:389-391)



The two columns mentioned here represent a special feature of the Great Mosque. (See picture attached). They form an integral part of the pillars on which the arches supporting the ceiling of the mosque rest. Two columns, one on top of the other, were built against each one of the four sides of every pillar. The columns rest on square bases and most of them are surmounted by Corinthian capitals. (*AR*, 2:387) There is no question that the bluish-gray columns came from an ancient building to be reused in the Church. They could have come from the original Eudoxiana of Porphyry which in its turn used material from another ancient edifice.



Pl. 2 Bilingual Inscription Great Mosque

The bilingual inscription, with the decorations over it, is 48 cm. high. The crown of leaves is “closed at the top with an egg-shaped gem and bound around the bottom with a fillet with two ends terminating in ivy-leaves.” (*AR*, 2:393) In the centre at the bottom, on both sides of the seven-branched candlestick there is a horn (*shofar*) on the right and representations of *ethrog* and probably a *lulav* on the left. Clermont-Ganneau (*ibid.*) thinks that on the left there is a representation of the sacrificial knife. The inscription, in three lines, was engraved in a *tabula ansata* whose “handles” are decorated with palm branches. It reads:

Aramaic in Hebrew characters: (1) חנניה בר יעקב—Ḥanania the son of Jacob

Greek: (2) ANANIA (3) ΥΙΩ ΙΑΚΩ—To Ananias son of Jaco(b)

(*AR*, 2:394)

The column with the inscription must have come from the ruins of a synagogue and it joins other finds from another synagogue which were discovered in the excavations conducted in Gaza in 1967 and 1976. The mosaic floor of a large synagogue was discovered in these excavations in an area of about 300 m. to the south of the present port of the city. In addition to beautiful representations of animals and plants there is a picture of a person playing a lute to listening animals and next to it the word David in Hebrew characters (דָּוִד). On a fragment of a marble grill, found in the same synagogue there is an inscribed decoration of a seven branched candlestick (*menorah*) flanked by a palm branch on the right and a horn (*shofar*) on the left. Since then, however, the mosaic as well as the bilingual inscription which Clermont-Ganneau had endangered himself to copy, and other remnants, which refer to the Jewish presence in Gaza, were deliberately destroyed. (*NEAEHL*, 3:1162f)



*Gaza Synagogue: Menorah  
(Seven branches candlestick)  
flanked by a palm branch and a horn*

The Jewish community in Gaza continued to exist throughout the Islamic rule, and almost every traveller in the Middle Ages, particularly the Jewish ones, left reports about its size, and the sources of the livelihood of its members. The most accurate report about the Jews, as well as the other inhabitants of Gaza, is found in the documents of the Ottoman *tahrir* register for Palestine. The Jews in Gaza appear in the register as a separate community beside many other communities, each registered under its own name. Thus we have in the register for the year 932/1525-26, in addition to the numbers of households and religious functionaries in each of the major quarters of Gaza, a separate registration of the Christians, the Copts, the peasants who had been organized as a separate community, the Samaritans (25 households) and the Jews (95 households). In the following registers for the years 945/1538-39, 955/1548-49; 964/1556-57; 1005/1596 there are even more details about the rich variety of the inhabitants of Gaza in which the Jewish community and the Samaritans were carefully recorded (Cohen-Lewis, 1978: 120ff). The Jews, who owned land and vineyards, were especially engaged in commerce with Egypt, and developed rich intellectual activity in Gaza. (Ben Zvi, 1953:167) The Jewish community came to an end during the First World War.

Given that before Islam the Arabs and particularly the Meccans were very well acquainted with Gaza, which they frequently visited on their trade voyages, it was

only natural that when the invasion of Syria began in 633, the first contingent, led by ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ would head for Gaza. The Byzantines had not yet properly re-established their rule in the country, which had been under Persian domination for 14 years since 614. True, Emperor Heraclius had defeated the Persians in 628, but the reinstatement of Byzantine rule in the Syrian provinces was still at its very beginning. The Emperor only arrived in Jerusalem with the remnants of the Holy Cross in 630. However, his army, or whatever remained of it, was engaged on other fronts, mainly the European ones, trying to block the Avars who had been threatening the capital Constantinople itself. Sergius, the new governor of Palestine, had a very small army which was easily defeated when it encountered an Arab ambush east of Gaza, trying to obstruct the Muslim invaders. Sergius was killed in the battle. Soon, most of the population of Syria understood that no help was going to come from the Emperor. Consequently, the large majority of the Syrian fortified towns opened their gates to the Arabs. For this reason, there are no signs of destruction connected with the Islamic conquest, and the Arabic sources speak about the fall of the various parts of the country in *ṣulḥ* agreements. The two or three major battles that are described in highly conflicting reports in these sources belong more to the realm of war legends than to historical fact. (For details, see Sharon, 2007: 328ff)

Gaza accepted the new masters like the others, and for a very short while resumed its position as a border city of Syria and as the key to Egypt. From it, ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ opened his campaign southwards towards Egypt in 640. There seems to have been an Arab community already in the city and following the establishment of Muslim rule it became an Islamic city, although we have no documentation about Islamic life in it. The inscriptions are mute. Except for one funerary inscription, and a short construction text from an unknown location from the third century there are hardly any other inscriptions until the Mamlūk period.

Gaza became a minor administrative centre during the Umayyad period as we learn from the Nessana papyri, in which the issues of pilgrimage, taxation and other legal matters concerning the Christians of this important desert city are discussed. (*Excavations at Nessana III*, 1958, Nos. 60-67, 75, 76)

There is a short mention of the city from the 9<sup>th</sup> century AD by Bernard the Wise who visited Gaza on his way from Egypt to Jerusalem: "...the city of Gaza which was the city of Samson, and is very rich in all things." (*Early Travels*, 1848:26)

Gaza is mentioned by all the Arab geographers from Ya‘qūbī in the 9<sup>th</sup> century until the end of the Crusader Period. Ya‘qūbī does not have very much to say about it except mentioning its location on the "limit of the third climate" and near the sea. He also notes that Hāshim’s grave is in it. About a generation later, al-Iṣṭakhārī (and Ibn Ḥawqal) again mention the grave of Hāshim in the city and add that it was the birthplace of the famous jurist Abū Idrīs ash-Shāfi‘ī, who is buried in Egypt. Saying

nothing about its present state, al-Iṣṭakhrī adds that it was the outlet for Arab trade in the Jāhiliyyah and that the second Caliph ‘Umar became rich from it. Muqaddasī in the second half of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, himself a native of Jerusalem, speaks again about its position on the edge of the desert and on the way to Egypt, but for the first time he mentions that it has a beautiful mosque, and “a monument (*athar*) of ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb” in addition to the grave of Hāshim. (Muqaddasī, 1987:148) It is the first information about a mosque in the city, but there is no question that it had already been a place of learning, particularly since it was ash-Shāfi‘ī’s birthplace (150/767) and the location of his activity for many years. Idrīsī, writing in 1154, described the city under the Crusaders’ rule. He noted that it was a populous town and that its port was called Tīdā (or Taydā); referring probably to Anthedon. In the thirteenth century, Abū al-Fidā’ adds the fact that it has vineyards and a few palm trees to the usual description of the city. He also mentions that it has a small castle overlooking it. The next description is that of Sir John Maundeville who visited the city in 1322. He defines it as “a gay and rich city; and it is very fair and full of people and is a little distance from the sea.” The rest of his description is dedicated to the deeds of Samson. (*Early Travels*, 1848:143) Ibn Baṭṭūtah saw Gaza in 1355 when it was already deep into the Mamlūk period, at the time of its highest glory following the rule of an-Nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalāwun. It was then a large, populous city, with many mosques; he mentions particularly the one Old Friday Mosque and a new one built by the Amīr Sanjar al-Jāwli. (Le Strange, 1890:441-443)

In 1432, Bertrandon de la Brocquière traveled through Gaza and praised the justice of its governor, whose name he did not know. (He was Sayf ad-Dīn Abū an-Naṣr Īnāl al-‘Alā’ī. Governor: 831/1428-836/1433. Later Sultan: 858/1453-865/1460. Sakhāwī, 2: 328-329) Concerning the city he says: “Gaza, situated in a fine country near the sea and at the entrance of the desert, is a strong town although unenclosed.” (*Early Travels*, 1848:289)

From the late 15<sup>th</sup> century comes the description of the Italian Jewish traveller Meshullam of Volterra which is more detailed than the previous ones. About his visit to Gaza in 1481 he says: “‘Azzah—the Ishmaelites calle it Gāza—is a good country; it is praiseworthy, and its fruits are commendable and very good. Bread and good wine are found there, but the wines are produced only by Jews. The circumference of Gaza is 4 miles; it has no wall and it is near the sea, about six miles(*sic!*). It is situated on the hill and in the valley, and it has multitudes of people like the sand on the seashore, and about fifty or sixty Jewish households. They are artisans; they have a beautiful, but small synagogue, and vineyards, fields and houses. They have started to produce the new wine. The Jews live on the top of the hill. There are four Samaritan families and they live on the slope of the hill.” (*Compendium of Jewish Travels*, 1926:96-97; *JE*, *q.v.*, “Gaza”)

The only times in which Gaza's importance was emphasized were times of war when Syria on the one hand and Egypt on the other were involved. Following the Islamic conquest it occurred four times (skirmishes with local rebels excluded): in the Crusaders period, during the short war between the Ottoman Selim I and the last Mamlūks in 1517, during the Napoleonic invasion and in the First World War.

For the Crusaders, Gaza was highly important, not only as a key position for their own territories in the Holy Land but also as the key to Egypt, the conquest of which had been on their agenda for a long time. The only city in Palestine which had remained unconquered by the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century was Ascalon and it became clear that the siege on Ascalon would be more effective if Gaza was turned into a Crusaders' fortress to eliminate any possibility of the Fāṭimids supplying it from the south.

It is interesting that when the Crusaders came they found Gaza a deserted city. There is no indication in the sources about the time in which Gaza was ruined and deserted, but the description of William of Tyre (XVII, XII) is clear on this point. Speaking about the plans of Baldwin III, King of Jerusalem, to fortify the place in order to prevent the assaults of the Ascalonians southwards he says:

It has been decided to rebuild Gaza. The city, which was deserted and in ruins, is an ancient one and is ten miles to the south of Ascalon... Gaza was a splendid ancient city because of its buildings, and there were many reliable proofs for its importance in past days: the houses and the churches though they are ruined, the marble and the large stones, the many wells and even the running springs. It was sitting on a somewhat high hill and its walls encircled a large area. And when our people saw that they would not be able to reconstruct it all, they took part of the said hill and built a fort which became famous because of its wall and tower. (Quoted by Guérin, *vol. cit.*, 205-206)

In 1153 Ascalon fell into the hands of the Crusaders and the two cities became important centres of Crusader activity in the south. The defense of Gaza was entrusted to the Templars, and it seems that in the coming 20 years, the Church of St. John was built in the then purely Christian city, which Idrīsī says, as we have seen, was a built, populated town. (Idrīsī, 1994:356-357; Marmardji, 1951:156)

In 1170, Saladin mounted an attack from Egypt against the two major Crusader strongholds in the south, the Fortress of Daron (Darom) the southernmost of all the Crusaders' defenses, and the city of Gaza. He failed in his attempt to capture Daron and turned to Gaza. The lower town (*rabaḍ ghazzah*, Ibn al-Athīr, 1982, 11:365), which was encircled by a very weak wall, fell into his hands after a futile resistance put up by its inhabitants, but he did not venture to attack the strong citadel that was defended by Milon de Plancy (Miles of Plancy). The civilian inhabitants of the city, men, women and children, who could not find refuge in the citadel, were massacred. (Runciman, 2, 1957:390-391; Guérin, *vol. cit.*, 206; Prawer, 1984, 1:348) It was only

in 1187, following the battle of Ḥiṭṭīn, that it fell into his hands. It was retaken by Richard the Lion Heart, but after the Jaffa Agreement of 1192, which ended the hostilities between him and Saladin, it fell once again into Muslim hands. The Christians coveted it but they were unable to establish again any permanent rule there. In 1239, the attempt of Henry the Count of Barr, leading the army of Tibald IV of Champagne, to mount an attack on Egypt was finished even before it started in a Muslim ambush near Gaza where this army was almost completely wiped out. (CIAP 1:139-140; 2:98-103) That same area near Gaza was, in 1244, the arena of a terrible defeat inflicted by the Kh<sup>w</sup>ārizmians on the Crusaders' armies, which included both the Templars and the Hospitalers. From that date on, Gaza would be the outpost of the Mamlūks of Egypt in their successive offensives which kept pushing the Crusaders northwards towards Acre and towards their end in 1290.

Gaza entered a period of relative tranquility under the Mamlūks. It was the capital of a province, *mamlakah*, and its governor often held the title of viceroy, *nā'ib as-saltānah*. Sometimes he was also given jurisdiction over the hilly parts of the country. The city had no walls, but it was a centre of intensive Muslim activity, which was demonstrated by the building and renovating of many mosques, sanctuaries, and many holy places. It had good markets, and facilities to accommodate travellers, merchants, and pilgrims. It was the station from which Christian pilgrims began their trip to Saint Catherine's Monastery in Sinai. Its heyday was the long rule of an-Nāṣir Muḥammad, particularly his second and third reigns (708/1308–741/1341) mentioned above, and the governorship of Tankiz in Damascus, and Sanjar al-Jāwli in Gaza. About the latter it is said that he made Gaza a town (*maddanahā*).

Almost all the inscriptions found in Gaza belong to the Mamlūk period. There are a few which commemorate some activity in the Ottoman period. Max van Berchem made this observation in 1906 when he wrote to Martin A. Meyer:

“The most striking characteristic of the Arabic epigraphy of Gaza is that all the inscriptions belong to the later Mameluke(!) and Ottoman sultans. The only older one which I [van Berchem] found is a Cufic inscription in the sanctuary of the mosque al-Maḥkama in the quarter el-Sajja'iyya(!) [No. 1 below]; unfortunately, this well-preserved text is not dated, but as it contains only invocations, it is without any historical information. The absence of early Arabic texts in Gaza can be explained by the fact that both before and after the Crusades, under Moslem rule, Gaza remained a very small and unimportant place up to the time of the early Mamelukes.

In the *Great Mosque* the following inscriptions are preserved: Two of Sultan Lâgin(!) dated Rabi' I and Sha'ban 697 A.H.; four of Mohammad el-Nâṣir, of the years 706, 718, Muḥarram 730, and the fourth one undated; one of Sultan Mohammed son of Ḳait Bay, of Ramadan 903. The sultan Sheikh has an inscription in the Mosque Ibn Othmân, dated Sha'ban 821.

The other inscriptions in the Great Mosque and in the numerous sanctuaries of the city belong to the various emirs and officers under the Mameluke sultans, several of these relating to the emir Sanjar el-Jāwalī(!), the first governor of Gaza under the sultan Mohammed el-Nâṣir.

I found, besides these, building inscriptions, and others mentioning public works, or charitable endowments (*waqf*), and several decrees remitting taxes (*marsūm*). Some unimportant texts of Ottoman officials are also found. A number of funerary and commemorative inscriptions occur, mentioning the names of local sheikhs and saints. The oldest of these, in fact the oldest dated Arabic inscription found in the city, is in the little mosque of Shaikh Ilyās, Şafar 671 (1272 A.D.).” (Meyer, 1907:149-150)

In his hand-written notes as well (MvB Coll. “Gaza:” *Observations generales, monuments et inscriptions arabes*) van Berchem observed that the great number of inscriptions belonged to the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries when Gaza was “the chief place of a great province named after it which included, practically the whole of Palestine.”

On the whole, this evaluation of the Arabic inscriptions of Gaza is correct. However, we shall soon show that there were inscriptions in Gaza which van Berchem did not see, and that the oldest inscriptions found in the city are of significant value both historically and literally.

Gaza learnt to live more or less well with the desert next to it, even in turbulent Mamlūk and Ottoman periods, when it was not well ruled or defended. The only calamity that truly hit the city was the epidemic (*wabāʿ*), or the plague (*tāʿūn*), that sometimes visited the city year after year. A remnant of this calamity is also echoed in our inscriptions.

The inscriptions in this volume, as in the other volumes of the *CIAP*, are arranged chronologically. This means that inscriptions which belong to the same site will be found in various places in the volume. However, a list of the inscriptions listed according to their sites has also been appended. Having said that, it should be remembered that the site reference of an inscription does not necessarily mean that the inscription belongs to that site since many inscriptions were attached to sites haphazardly by later hands when buildings were renovated, reconstructed or even built anew.

## GAZA LAYOUT

The old city of Gaza, where all the remnants of the ancient, medieval and early Ottoman city are found, is divided into four quarters, a few of which are subdivided. Three of these quarters (at-Tuffāḥ, ad-Daraj, and az-Zaytūn) were within the walls of the ancient city. The southeastern quarter, as-Sajāʿiyyah, developed later than the others, mainly outside these walls. The walls ceased to exist long ago, but their remnants were still traceable at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when George Gatt prepared his *Plan von Gaza* (1887. Hereafter: *Plan*) which was published in *ZDPV*, XI, 1888 (attached to this volume). Moreover, the gates of Gaza could also be

traced and identified by name, and Gatt indicated them in his *Plan* in the proper places.<sup>1</sup>

In the north are Bāb ‘Asqalān (*Plan* F4) and west of it Bāb al-Balāshiyah (*Plan* E2) both leading to Ashqelon (‘Asqalān) and Ramlah. Outside Bāb al-Balāshiyah to the west is the Mosque of Shaykh Zakariyyā (Fig. P22). In the west, Bāb Maymās (or Mīmās, *Plan* D2), and Bāb al-Baḥr leading to the site of *Maiūmas Gazae* the ancient port-city of Gaza, and in the general direction of the sea and the medieval port. In the south, is Bāb ad-Dārūn leading to the site of the medieval Crusader castle and frontier settlement of Daron (Darom) and thenceforth to Egypt. A short distance to the south of this gate is located one of the old cemeteries of Gaza called *maqbarat al-‘awāmūd*—the “Columns Cemetery” named thus because of the many epitaphs in it engraved on ancient column shafts. Some 200m. to the east of this gate is Bāb al-Munṭār (*Plan* B6) leading to the only hill overlooking Gaza from the southeast, on the top of which was

<sup>1</sup> George Gatt, was a Catholic priest, who was born in 1843 in the Tyrol region. In 1871 he came to Jerusalem. In September 1879 he established the long awaited station of the Catholic Mission in Gaza (cf. Guérin, *vol. cit.* 184), and between 1882 and 1884 he built the Mission House which contained a church and a school on land that he bought in the southeastern part of the Zaytūn Quarter in the middle of the Jewish Quarter (*Plan* C6). In 1884, he published an article on Gaza and its neighbourhood (*ZDPV*, 7, 1884:1-14), which was followed by his *Plan of Gaza* mentioned above accompanied by the description of the city and its major landmarks. He led the Catholic mission in the city until near WWI, when he moved to Jerusalem and died there in 1924. (Kedar, 2003:592 and n. 10 for references).

While digging the foundations for the Mission House Gatt uncovered a broken column with a Hebrew inscription, which seemed to him too modern to deserve his attention. The column on which three inscriptions were engraved, the most recent from 1917, found its way to the cemetery in Rishon Lezion in Israel. The other two inscriptions are from an earlier date and represent the life of the Jewish Community in Gaza in the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup>(?) century. The older inscription in Hebrew letters was engraved inside an incised circle, immediately under the top rim of the column. It reads as follows:

המלאך (2) הגואל אותי מכל (3) רע יוכני לעלות (4) לירושלם

May the angel who delivers me from all evil grant me the right to ascend to Jerusalem.

The script is similar to an inscription from the 17<sup>th</sup> century written by three members of the Najjārah Gazan family of Jewish scholars and mystics in Jabal Hārūn in south Trans Jordan. They were involved with the false Messiah Shabatai Zvi who “revealed” himself in the synagogue in Gaza in 1665, and whose “prophet” was Nathan of Gaza, whose major activity took place in this city. The column seems to have come from the same synagogue described by the traveler Meshullam of Volterra in 1481 as “a small and beautiful synagogue.” (Eisenstein 1926:97) The column with the inscription was thoroughly studied by Kedar (2003:588-598 Figs 3-4). In Gatt’s description of Gaza (1888:150) he mentions the Jewish and the Christian Quarters (*ḥārat al-yahūd* and *ḥārat an-naṣārah*) as independent quarters in the Zaytūn Quarter or next to it.

the sanctuary of Shaykh ‘Alī al-Munṭār and other saints as well as a large cemetery. On the east is the site of Bāb al-Khalīl leading to Hebron, next to which is the sanctuary of Abū al-‘Azm (or al-‘Azīm), who, according to some local traditions, is the Biblical Samason. On the northeast we come to another gate, called Bāb ‘Asqalān, different than the first gate in this list and 300m. away, but bearing the same name.

The four quarters of the city are as follows: in the northeast (generally, north): Ḥārat (or Ḥayy) at-Tuffāḥ (the “Apple Quarter”). In the local dialect, the name is pronounced “*et-Tufēn* (or *et-Tuffēn*).” The Southern part of this quarter is called aḍ-Ḍabbāghah (not aṣ-Ṣabbāghah)—the tanners’ neighbourhood situated in the area of the slaughter house during the Ottoman period. aḍ-Ḍabbāghah was a rather small neighbourhood that, according to the Ottoman *Tahrīr* register from 932/1525, reflecting the situation at the end of the Mamlūk period, contained 57 households. (Cohen-Lewis 1978:117 and n. 4) The other subdivision of this quarter is the neighbourhood of Banū ‘Āmir (Ḥārat Banī ‘Āmir. Gatt, 1888:151; ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, 1943:255).

In the northwest (generally, west): Ḥārat (or Ḥayy) ad-Daraj (“the Stairs Quarter”). This is the oldest part of the city, or the city of Gaza proper, situated on an oblong hill, some 20m. higher than the surrounding plain and the other parts of the city. It probably received its name from stairs that led to it, or from the feeling of whoever went up to it that he was climbing stairs. (‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, 1943:255) The remnants of the glory of ancient Gaza can still be seen in this quarter in the stone houses where marble columns, marble slabs and large beautifully dressed ashlar, remnants of the old buildings, were reused as building material. In the Ottoman *Tahrīr* registers, the southern part of this quarter is called *Burjulīyyah*. In 932/1525 it was quite a large neighbourhood with 141 households. (Cohen-Lewis, *ibid.*) In this quarter there are a few of the most important Muslim edifices of the city: the Great (“‘Umārī”) Mosque, the Mosque of as-Sayyid Hāshim, az-Zahrah School and the *Sarāyah* (Fig. P1 *Qaṣr an-Niyābah*, the seat of the governor (*nā’ib*)—the Ottoman *Mutasallim*). At the time of Guérin’s visit (1863) three-quarters of it were in ruins. Earlier, in the seventeenth century, however, when Chevalier d’Arvieux visited Gaza, the palace was in good condition, beautifully decorated and surrounded by a garden of flowers cultivated by a French gardener. The *Sarāyah*, or *Qaṣr an-Niyābah*, built in the upper city, contained material taken from ancient buildings. From its flat roof, it was possible to see the whole city and its surroundings. (Guérin, *vol.cit.*, 179-180; Cohen-Lewis, *op. cit.*, 118-119 and n.6).

In the southwest (generally: south): Ḥārat (or Ḥayy) az-Zaytūn (the “Olive Quarter”) called thus because of its olive groves. It is the largest quarter of Gaza. In the Ottoman documents just mentioned, the northwestern part of this quarter is called Dār al-Khuḍar (the “Vegetable House”), a small neighbourhood, in the vicinity of Sūq al-Khuḍar (*Plan D3-4*), which, according to the same Ottoman census, contained 43 households. The

central Christian edifice of the city, the Greek Orthodox Church in which, according to tradition is the grave of Saint Porphyri, is in this quarter. Next to it is the Christian graveyard. The Mosque of Kātib al Wilāyah was built in very close proximity to this church; only two or three meters separate between the bell-tower of the church and the minaret of the mosque. (Figs. **P28a**, **P28b**. *Plan C4*)

The Jewish and the Christian neighbourhoods were located in this quarter (see note).

The Daraj Quarter is separated from the Zaytūn Quarter by a wide road built during WWI by Jamāl Pasha. He ordered the demolition of a great part of the medieval Khān az-Zayt to make room for the road to which he gave his name. The city council however, decided to change its name to ‘Umar al-Mukhtār Street. (Figs. **P2**, **P3**, **P27** Khān az-Zayt showing the road cut through it).

The last Quarter in the southeast (generally east): Ḥārat (or Ḥayy) as-Sajā‘iyyah. The name with this spelling exists in an inscription from the year 786/1384 (No. 48, Pl. 37a). The origin of the name is not clear, and from time to time we find it spelt “ash-Shajā‘iyyah” which seems more understandable. Local tradition connects it with a certain hero, Shujā‘ ad-Dīn ‘Uthmān al-Kurdī, who is said to have been killed in Gaza in one of the battles against the Crusaders in 637 (Cohen-Lewis, *ibid.*, 119 n.8 quoting references). However, to this very day everyone calls the quarter as-Sajā‘iyyah not ash-Shajā‘iyyah—definitely not ash-Shujā‘iyyah—in spite of the fact that the latter name makes more sense in Arabic. As mentioned, this quarter developed in the Middle Ages mainly outside the city walls. It was a commercial as well as a partly residential quarter. Many of its houses were poorly built, its roads narrow and unpaved, and in spite of the fact that some beautiful mosques and sanctuaries were built there, it gives the impression of being an indigent quarter. However, being built outside the wall, it had extensive possibilities to develop and become the largest quarter of the city, surpassing the Zaytūn Quarter. The Sajā‘iyyah is subdivided into two parts: al-Judaydah (coll. Judeideh/Jdeideh) or Sajā‘iyyat al-Akrād (the Sajā‘iyyah of the Kurds) in the northeast, and at-Turkmān in the south. The names were given in keeping with the origin of its inhabitants. According to the Ottoman census of 932/1525-26, there was almost an equal number of Turkmāns and Kurds in the city, 89 and 90 households respectively, slightly more than the Christians (82 households) and less than the Jews (95 households). In the following census conducted 13 years later (945/1538-39) the number of Turkmāns and Kurds rose dramatically. In “Shujā‘at (*sic!*) al-Akrād” there were 278 Kurdish households in comparison to 181 among the Turkmāns. In 955/1548-49 the change continues in favour of the Kurds. In Sajā‘iyyat (*sic!*) al-Akrād there are 406 Kurdish households in comparison to only 195 households among the Turkmāns. We also learn from these documents that the *jundiān-i-ḥalqah*, who were remnants of the Mamlūk military units, lived as a separate, small community in the

Sajā'īyyah. They dwindled in time until, from the 44 households that were in two Quarters in Gaza (Sajā'īyyah and al-Khuḍar) in 964/1556-57 there were only 60 *persons* there in 1005/1596-97. (Cohen-Lewis, *op. cit.* 120ff.). The name al-Judaydah for the Kurdish quarter may be related to the Kurds who settled in the Sajā'īyyah and brought with them the name of the town near Mūṣul, their place of origin, called al-Judaydah. The Turkmāns could well be the descendants of the Turkish tribes who settled in Gaza at the time of the Ayyūbid aṣ-Ṣāliḥ Ayyūb (637/1240-41–647/1249)

## EDIFICES

### Major mosques

Gaza has an unusually large number of mosques. Some of these mosques are large and have minarets and, as the Friday service is conducted in them, each one of them is a *jāmi'*. Others are more modest *maṣjids*, without a minaret, to which worshippers only come for the five daily prayers. There are, however, some edifices bearing the name *jāmi'* in which no Friday prayer is conducted. The large *jawāmi'* are (following 'Ārif al-'Ārif's order in his list, *op. cit.*, 330ff):

In the Daraj Quarter:

1. The Great “‘Umarī” Mosque (*al-Jāmi' al-'Umarī al-Kabīr*).
2. The Mosque of Sayyid Hāshim (*Jāmi' as-Sayyid Hāshim*).
3. The Mosque of Shaykh Zakariyyā (*Jāmi' ash-Shaykh Zakariyyā*).

In the Zaytūn Quarter:

4. The Mosque of Kātib al-Wilāyah (*Jāmi' Kātib al-Wilāyah*).
5. The Mosque of ash-Sham'ah (*Jāmi' ash-Sham'ah*).

In the Tuffāḥ Quarter:

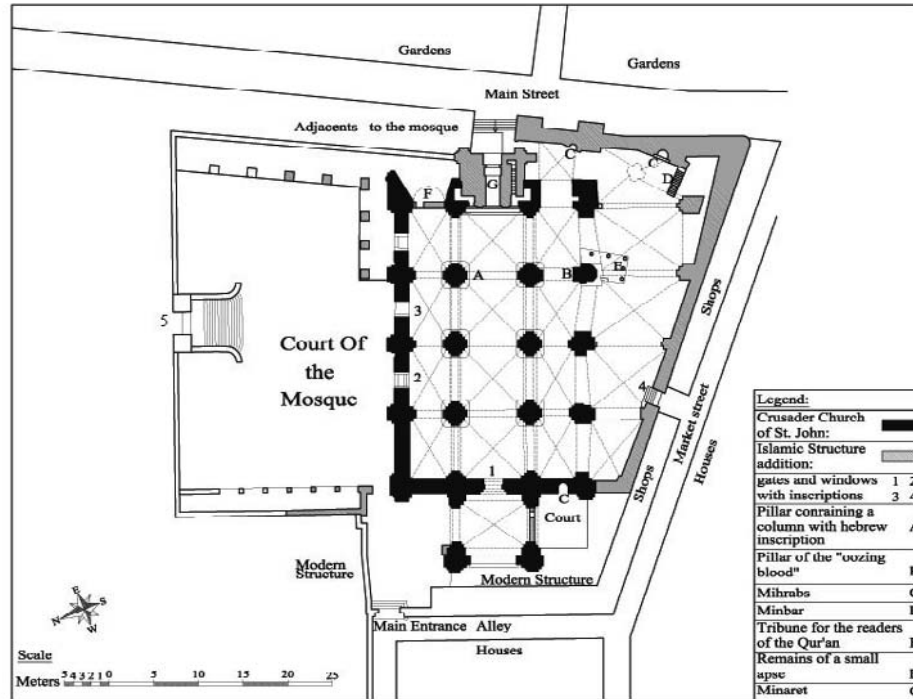
6. The Mosque of 'Abdallah al-Aybakī (*Jāmi' ash-Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Aybakī*).
7. The Mosque of 'Alī b. Marwān (*Jāmi' 'Alī ibn Marwān [Marwānā]*)

In as-Sajā'īyyah Quarter:

8. The Mosque of Ibn 'Uthmān (*Jāmi' Ibn 'Uthmān*).
9. The Mosque of Birdibak—al-Maḥkamah (*Jāmi' Birdibak, al-Maḥkamah*)

### The Great Mosque (Plan D5)

The mosque, situated in the centre of the town, was named after Caliph 'Umar, although he had nothing to do with it. Nevertheless, this practice of attaching the name of the venerated, second Caliph with the clearly messianic title al-Fārūq (“the Saviour”) to mosques is not unusual. Even the Dome of the Rock became “the Mosque of 'Umar” (for which the Christians are responsible) in addition to the Mosque opposite the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem and part of the Aqṣā covered mosque which are also called by the same name (*CIA, Jérusalem, “Ville,”* 1:69; 89 n.1; “*Haram,*” 2:225, 373f.).



Pl. 3 Plan of the Great Mosque (drawing: architect Daniel Sharon)

Clermont Ganneau proved beyond doubt that the Great Mosque of Gaza, was originally the Crusaders' Church of St. John, probably built by the Templars between 1149 and 1170, nearer to the earlier date (*AR*, 2: 387 and note). Whether this church stood over the original Basilica of Eudoxia or not, it is immaterial for our discussion.

The one beautiful feature left intact from the original church is the western gate, which was originally the main entrance of the church. (Figs. **P5**, **P5a**). Clermont Ganneau's description of the gate is worth quoting verbatim:

The principal door of the church, which opens out under the porch, is a pointed arch of three orders, each of which is formed of a *torus* and a bead, and resting on an abacus which is prolonged as a string-course to the right and left along the wall of the façade. The abacus beneath the inmost covering rests directly on the uprights of the door; the springs of the two front coverings are supported, by the aid of the abacus, on two dwarf columns surmounted with crocketed capitals. The columns rest on square bases, ornamented with three vertical flutings. The archivolt, formed of a moulding of a plain description, display at its two spring points a small acanthus leaf bent back, handsomely carved in relief. It should be noted that the archivolt has a vertical joint in the middle, whereas the inner arches have keystones.

All the component parts of this doorway are of marble, as well as the lintel which rests, in the tympanum, on the abacus. (*AR*, 2:387, 389 and drawings, p.388)

Examining the lintel from the interior, Clermont-Ganneau could ascertain that ancient material was used in the building, since the lintel had been an ancient column. This is not surprising, taking into consideration the glorious past of the Hellenistic city with its many temples, the buried ruins of which were a source of building material for centuries after they had been demolished.

The many inscriptions found in the mosque enable the tracing of the various stages in its development, and the numerous reconstructions and repairs it had undergone. Some of the inscriptions were brought to the mosque during its restoration in 1926 (Fig. P9 restored Great Mosque) after it had been badly damaged during WW1. (Figs P6, P7, P8) Some of these inscriptions and fragments of inscriptions were stored in the mosque, but most of the important inscriptions are to be found in their proper places in the mosque itself. The main inscriptions in the Great Mosque discussed below in chronological order are:

1. Inscription on lintel of a gate [from the mosque of Balabān(?)] 687/1288 (No. 13)
2. Inscription on a window of the southern *īwān* 697/1298 (No. 19).
3. Inscription above lintel of the door on the eastern front, under the minaret 697a/1298 (No. 20).
3. Two identical inscriptions over a window 706/1306 (No. 24).
4. Inscription on the east side of the *minbar* (718/1318 (No. 27).
5. Inscription embedded in the western rear wall, forming in part the lintel of the now blocked entrance door to the mosque from the bazaar street 730/1329 (No. 32).
6. Undated inscription of Muḥammad b. Qalāwun (before 741/1340) (No. 39).
7. Inscription on eastern gate: decree of the Caliph al-Mustaʿīn 815/1412 (No. 58).
8. Inscription of Muḥammad b. Qāʾitbāy, Ramaḍan 903/May 1498 (No. 74).
9. Decree of Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī 922/1516 (No. 78).
10. Inscription on column in the southern part of the courtyard, 1203/1788-89 (No. 91).

More details about the Great Mosque, and its plan (pl. 3) were included in the discussion of No. 32 dealing with the inscription from the year 730. (Photographic details of the mosque see Figs. P5, P5a, P10—P17)

### **The Mosque of Sayyid Hāshim** (*Plan E2-3*)

Mentioned above, this mosque is one of the largest and best built mosques in Gaza. It was constructed far from the centre of the old city, near its northern border. The story connecting it with the burial place of Hāshim is no more than a legend.

No historical inscriptions were recorded in it. Max van Berchem left a short description of this mosque, indicating that it had been repaired about 1860 and in 1892. He points out that it is a “modern elegant structure” and calls attention to its beautiful entrance gate saying that, as far as he knew, Gaza was the only city in the Orient where they still make beautiful gates. (MvB Coll. c. VII,98)

#### **The Mosque of Shaykh Zakariyyā** (Plan E2)

Built outside the wall not far from the Balāshiyah Gate on the northwestern side of the old city (Fig. P22). For details about this mosque see inscription No. 03 dated 449. It is doubtful whether the mosque was established at such an early date. However it is named after Zakariyyā at-Tadmurī who died in 449, and was buried on the site of the present mosque.

#### **The Mosque of Kātib al-Wilāyah** (Plan C4)

Founded, according to the inscription in it, in 965/1557-8 or 995/1587. The builder identified himself as *kātib al-wilāyah*. Locally however, the name *Kātib al-Awliyā* seemed to make more sense, (‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, *op. cit.* 339) and this is the name van Berchem heard when he registered the edifices of Gaza, but he refers also to Gatt who has *kātib al-wilāyāt* (“Regierungs-schreibers.” *ZDPV*, 1888:152) as well as “*kātib al-wilāyat*.” He prefers the date 965 (MvB Coll. c.VII, 71). For more details see inscription No. 83 for the years 965(995). ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif (*ibid.*) prefers the later date and rejects the popular *kātib al-awliyā*.

The mosque is built in great proximity to the Greek Orthodox Church, and, as indicated above, its minaret which had been small and was elevated after WW1, is only a few metres away from the bell tower of the church. The local legend, recounted by ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, could not miss this forced proximity of the mosque and the church, and attributed the former construction to no less than ‘Amr b. al-Āṣ, who acted on the orders of Caliph ‘Umar himself to build, whenever possible, a mosque next to every church.

#### **The Mosque of ash-Sham‘ah** (Plan B5)

A very famous mosque, without a minaret, (Gatt, *ibid.*) whose real name is **Jāmi‘ Bāb ad-Dārūn**. The origin of the name ash-Sham‘ah is uncertain. According to the inscription it was built by the famous governor of Gaza Sanjar al-Jāwlī in 714. However, it is very possible that ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif (*ibid.*, 340) is correct in saying that the inscription was found in the debris of the original Jāwlī mosque after it had been destroyed, and fixed onto this mosque during one its many repairs since its foundation around the 14<sup>th</sup> century. (See inscription No. 26 for the year 714).

**Mosque of Shaykh ‘Abdallah al-Aybakī** (*Plan G4*)

Famous mosque in the Tuffāḥ Quarter, not mentioned by Gatt, but registered by van Berchem who also indicated its position on Gatt’s Plan. No inscriptions were recorded in this mosque which is named after a certain ‘Abdallah al-Aybakī, who, according to his *nisbah*, was a Mamlūk of al-Mu‘izz Aybak (648/1250–655/1257). He had two sons: one, Shaykh ‘Iyād, was buried next to the mosque of Sayyid Hāshim; the other, Aḥmad, became a saint with a sanctuary called Mazār ash-Shaykh Aybak.

**The mosque of ‘Alī b. Marwān** (*Plan EF6*)

The mosque is situated on the eastern border of a large graveyard (*Plan E6*), called Maqbarat ‘Alī b. Marwān (Fig. P19 MvB photo; P19a, P19b IAA photos Nos. 19355, 19356), and named after a certain saint with this name, said to belong to the Ḥasanī family, who came from the Maghrib and settled in Gaza, where he died early in 715/1315, and attained the station of a saint. (See inscriptions No. 29 and No. 30 for the year 725 and No. 94 for the year 1217, and more details in these entries).

**The Mosque of Ibn ‘Uthmān** (*Plan E8*)

This mosque is regarded in Gaza to be second only to the Great Mosque both from the point of view of the strength and the beauty of the building, and the number of inscriptions. (Fig. P20) The real identity of Ibn ‘Uthmān is not known. For more details, see Nos. 51, 52, 53, 55, 61. Inscription No. 55, that dates the building of the mosque to the year 802, cannot be correct.

**The Mosque of Birdibak—al-Maḥkamah** (*Plan E7*)

Also called *Jāmi‘ al-Maḥkamah al-Birdibakiyyah* combining all possibilities. (MvB Coll. c.VII, 63). For details, see No. 68 for the year 859.

**Sercondary mosques**

In addition to these major Friday Mosques there are another 14 mosques (*masājīd*) which worshippers use only for the five daily prayers.

In the Daraj Quarter:

Masjid al-Maghribī (al-Mughrabī), Masjid ash-Shaykh Faraj (*Plan E3*), Masjid ash-Shaykh Khālīd (*Plan E2*), Masjid az-Zāwiyah al-Aḥmadiyyah, Masjid Zāwiyat al-Hunūd (*Plan D4*), Masjid al-Hajjānī (*Plan F2*, added by van Berchem).

In the Zaytūn Quarter:

Masjid al-‘Ajāmī (*Plan D6*), Masjid ash-Shaykh al-Qashqār.

In the Tuffāḥ Quarter:

Masjid as-Sidrah.

In as-Sajā‘iyyah Quarter:

Masjid al-Gazzālī; van Berchem heard also Jāmi‘ al-Ghazzālah (MvB Coll. c.VII, 124). **Masjid as-Sayyidah Ruqayyah**; in van Berchem: **Sitti Rekayyah**. “No inscription except for an epitaph fitted across above the door.” (MvB Coll. c.VII, 111, 124).

**Masjid az-Zufur Dumrī (Güzümmereh Plan D7)** van Berchem: “*sic! prononcation vulgaire.*” (MvB Collection, c.VII, 114). This is a very distorted name. It should be **Toquz Demürī** the Turkish name which means “nine irons”. For details see No. 43 for the year 762. **Masjid at-Tawāshī (Masjid al-Mughrabī)**, **Masjid al-Hawwāshī** (van Berchem: **al-Hawwāshah**. MvB Coll. c.VII, 124, no epigraphic).

**Masjid al-Maghribī** (al-Mughrabī)

In ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif’s lists the mosque appears in the Daraj Quarter, but in fact the inscription quoted is from a mosque with the same name near *Masjid at-Tawāshī* in the Sajā‘iyyah Quarter. (MvB Coll. c.VII, 124f). For details, see No. 48 for the year 786.

**Masjid ash-Shaykh Faraj** (Plan E3)

For details, see No. 12 for the year 686.

**Masjid ash-Shaykh Khālid** (Plan E2)

For details, see No. 57 for the year 814 and No. 81 for the year 955.

**az-Zāwiyah al-Aḥmadiyyah—Zāwiyat as-Sayyid Aḥmad al-Badawī** (Plan EF3)

For details, see No. 35 for the year 731-32.

**Masjid Zāwiyat al-Hunūd** (Plan D4)

For details, see No. 95 for the year 1236.

**Masjid al-Hajjāni** (Plan F20).

Added by van Berchem.

For details see No. 93 for the year 1216.

**Masjid al-‘Ajāmī, Masjid al-Qashqār, Masjid as-Sidrah, Masjid al-Ghazālī** and **Masjid as-Sayyidah Ruqayyah** (Plan E9)

Sitti Rekayyah in van Berchem notes. See above. These are all local mosques in the Tuffāh, Zaytūn and Sajā‘iyyah Quarters about which there are no historical details.

### Partly deserted mosques and sanctuaries

There is a large number of mosques which were used in the past, but are not always used in modern times either for lack of worshipers or for lack of attention to their physical conditions.

In the Daraj Quarter are the following mosques (some are called *jāmi'* and some are called *masjid* though none of them have been used for Friday prayer):

al-Ghuṣayn or al-Madrasah al Ghuṣayniyyah. A small fragment of an illegible inscription engraved on three limestone ashlar was used as building material over the arch of the gate. The ashlar belonged to a long monumental inscription originally engraved in relief on many ashlar. The three ashlar with the inscription, were brought from one of the ruins in Gaza, and were built into the wall haphazardly, one upright flanked by two upside down. (Fig. P23 Ghuṣayn. IAA photo No. 8266) *Jāmi'* Ash-Shaykh Zārīf; *Jāmi'* ash-Shaykh Maṣṣūr; Masjid al-Halīs, and Masjid ash-Shaykh Sha'bān Abū al-Qurūn. (For details about Shaykh Sha'bān Mosque see No. 73 for the year 901. Figs. P24, P25).

In the Zaytūn Quarter:

Masjid ash-Shaykh Ilyās (see details about this mosque in No. 11 for the year 671); Masjid ash-Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Maghfarī, Masjid Abū ar-Rikāb; *Jāmi'* al-Wazīrī, (for details and inscription see No. 69 for the year 880); Masjid ash-Shaykh 'Aṭīyyah, (for details see No. 28 for the year 721).

In the Tuffāḥ quarter:

Masjid, Mazār, (or Walī) as-Shaykh Bashīr (for details see No. 09 for the year 653). The inscription (an epitaph) has no direct connection with the sanctuary.

In the Sajā'iyyah quarter:

Masjid al-'Ābid. There is no historical material about most of the above mentioned edifices. (See 'Ārif al-'Ārif 1943:350-351)

### Lost mosques and sanctuaries

In addition to these sanctuaries there are many which have disappeared, or ceased to fulfil their original function. Some of them however are mentioned in the sources or in the local tradition, some have inscriptions.

In the Daraj Quarter:

Masjid al-Awzā'ī named after the famous Syrian Jurist Abū 'Amr al-Awzā'ī (d. 157/774.), who had nothing to do with Gaza since most of his life he lived in Damascus, and was buried in Beirut (*EL, q.v.*). However, migration of names, particularly of scholars and saints is not unusual. This mosque used to be next to mosque of Sayyid Hāshim (Plan E2-3) and is now a cemetery (see below).

**Masjid ash-Shaykh Riḍwān.** It is now a *mazār*. There are a few traditions concerning the person who gave his name to this shrine. There is one which says

that he is a certain Riḍwān b. Raslān, the son of the Shaykh Muḥammad al-Baṭāḥī, who was buried in Tell al-Munṭār sanctuary, where his tomb is also visited by worshippers. (See No. 45 for the year 765)

**Masjid al-Andalusī.** This mosque was destroyed when a new road was built in Gaza in the late 1930s. The road was named Fahmī Bek Street after Fahmī Bek al-Ḥusseni, the third mayor of Gaza (1928-1939). According to information supplied by ‘Arif al-‘Arif (*ibid.*, 352, n.2) there was a tomb in the sanctuary with an epitaph which read as follows:

هذا قبر الفقير الى رحمة ربه علي بن احمد الأندلسي الأنصاري توفي في شهر رجب سنة تسع  
وخمسين وسبع مائة

This is the tomb of the needy for the compassion of his Lord, ‘Alī b. Aḥmad al-Andalusī al-Anṣārī. He died in the month of Rajab the year 759 (=began 11 June 1358).

The name of the sanctuary kept the memory of the deceased, who might even have built it.

**Jāmi‘ al-Bīmāristān.** This mosque was part of a complex which was built by Sanjar al-Jāwlī, the governor of Gaza between 711/1311 and 720/1320 (Maqrīzī, *Khīṭat*, 2:398; Mujīr, 1283:607). It included, in addition to the mosque, a *madrasah*, a *khān*, the *bīmāristān* (hospital), and a *ribāṭ* (hostel) which was established in 730/1330 by the Sultan himself. Both the *ribāṭ* and the mosque were destroyed; their stones and inscriptions found their way to later buildings in Gaza. The Bīmāristān, which had a wing for the demented, continued to function until the 1799, and was destroyed in the Napoleonic war.

Jāmi‘ Abū Madyan al-Ghawth, about which nothing is known.

In the Zaytūn Quarter:

Jāmi‘ al-‘Ajjān; Masjid ash-Shaykh Rashīd (or *al-Manjarah*)—about which there are no details.

**Jāmi‘ ash-Shuhadā’**, was next to al-‘Awāmid Cemetery (*Plan A5*) in the southern part of the city just outside the gate called Bāb ad-Dārūn. Since the cemetery was supposed to include the tombs of the martyrs in wars against the Crusaders, the name of the mosque, the Mosque of the Martyrs, fits the place. The major mosque in the area is, however, **Jāmi‘ Bāb ad-Dārūn** (“Ash-Sham‘ah.” See Above p. 34. *Plan B5*).

**Jāmi‘ al-Jāwlī**, built in 714. (See No. 26 for the year 714). It is probably one of a few mosques, which Sanjar built in Gaza. (See Jāmi‘ al-Bīmāristān above.) This mosque was destroyed during the Napoleonic invasion and its stones were used for the building of other edifices in Gaza. The inscription was most probably attached to ash-Sham‘ah mosque to which I have just referred, and in No. 26.

**Al-Madrasah al-Kāmiliyyah.** Built by the Ayyūbid al-Malik al-Kāmil in 635 in the southern part of the city (*Plan C5*).

Masjid al-‘Ajamī; Masjid al-Baṭal; and Masjid al-Qaydah are only names without any other information.

In the Tuffāḥ Quarter:

**Jāmi‘ al-Jum‘ah** north of Jāmi‘ ‘Alī ibn Marwān. The reason for the name is not clear. The local story that it was the only mosque where the Friday prayers used to take place is no more than a popular invention. (‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, *ibid.*, 352 n.6)

**Masjid Ibn Sulṭān** to the west of the cemetery of Ibn Marwān (*Plan E6*), is called after the Muslim scholar and Qādirī ṣūfī, Shams ad-Dīn or Naṣr ad-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān b. ‘Īsā b. Sulṭān (known as Ibn Ṣulṭān). He was born in Gaza before 760/1358 and was educated there and in Cairo. He became venerated because of his scholarship and ascetic life to such an extent that sultans and viziers used to visit him at his residence. He died in the plague (*maṭ‘ūnan*) on 26 Ṣafar 853/20 April 1449, more than 90 years old and in full command of his mental faculties. He was buried in Cairo next to other ṣūfīs in al-Azhar cemetery. (Sakhāwī, 7:298-299) ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif’s (*ibid.*, n.7) Assertion that he was buried in this mosque in Gaza is incorrect.

**Masjid Abū al-‘Azm** is also called Mazār Abū al-‘Azm, mentioned above, on the west border of the cemetery of Ibn Marwān (*Plan D6*). Max van Berchem noted that in his time there was a sanctuary near a place called al-Anbār, about 150 m. to the west of this sanctuary which he indicated on Gatt’s Plan as Shamsūn al-Jabbār (*Plan E5*). It seems that there were two places which were shown as Shamsūn (also: Shmashūm) al-Jabbār. See more details in No. 14 for the year 690.

In the Sajā‘iyyah Quarter:

Jāmi‘ al-Bisāṭiyyah. There is nothing more than the name of this edifice. Masjid Rukn ad-Dīn at-Turkmānī, apparently built by a person called ‘Umar b. Khalīl at-Turkmānī al-Ghazzī in 782/1380. (‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, *ibid.*, 353 n.4)

**Jāmi‘ Qāyitbāy.** This mosque was part of a complex which also contained a college (*madrasah*). See details in No. 70 for the year 882.

**Masjid ash-Shaykh Musāfir** (for details see No. 07 for the year 647). ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif’s note (*ibid.*, 353, n.3) that the place was founded in 706 is apparently wrong, since the inscription is dated 60 years earlier.

**Mazarāt and Walīs (welīs)**

Among these mosques (which do not function as such) and sanctuaries there are many *mazarāt* (plural of *mazār*, saint’s shrine visited by worshippers to acquire blessing). Thus *mazār* al-Awzā‘ī, mentioned above, is a site in a cemetery. The *mazār* of Muḥammad b. Ṭarīf in the Daraj Quarter is not much more than a tomb with an inscription dated 784 (No. 47).

Mazār ash-Shaykh ‘Aṭīyyah was mentioned above as a mosque and discussed in No. 28 for the year 721. Mazār ash-Shaykh Bashīr, mentioned above as a mosque. **Mazār ad-Dārquṭūn** is also a tomb over which there is an inscription that reads:

هذا قبر العبد الفقير الى الله الشيخ علاء الدين الدارقطون الكمالي البدرى

This is the tomb of the slave who is in need for Allah the Shaykh ‘Alā’ ad-Dīn ad-Dārquṭūn al-Kamālī al-Badrī.

**Mazār Tell al-Munṭār** or **Maqām ‘Alī al-Munṭār** occupies an important position among all the popular sanctuaries in Gaza. It has been discussed in No. 45 for the year 765.

**Mazār ash-Shaykh ‘Ajlīn** to the north of al-Munṭār has been discussed in No. 11 for the year 671 dealing with the inscription commemorating the building of the mosque by Ilyās b. Sābiq. It is very possible that the inscription was brought from somewhere else and fixed in Shaykh ‘Ajlīn’s sanctuary who has nothing to do with the Ilyās of the inscription.

This list does not cover all the sanctuaries in Gaza. There are a few more listed by van Berchem (MvB Coll. c.VII, 71, 81, 98, 111) and by ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif in the last two pages in his book. All of them are without inscriptions and about some van Berchem wrote: “*sans valeur*.”

Finally, I cannot conclude this list without mentioning that L. A. Mayer, mentioned another sanctuary with an inscription in a report which he had prepared for the the Chief Inspector of Antiquities dated 6 February 1923:

“I discovered and copied 6 new inscriptions during my last stay in Gaza...”

(Here he lists the six sites and gives a short description of the inscriptions. The fifth inscription on the list:

“5) al-Kharrubah (Wely) by Behadur as-Saqy 688 A.H.”

I could not find this “wely” nor the inscription from 688. There is no question concerning the accuracy of Mayer’s reports. Unfortunately, there is no trace of the inscription he mentions. There is a large cemetery called Maqbarat al-Kharrūbī in the northern part of the old city of Gaza near Bāb ‘Asqalān in the Daraj Quarter (Plan F3). Gatt remarked that Kharrūbī was a holy man (“*ein Heiliger*” ZDPV, 11:151). ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif (*Ta’rīkh Ghazza*, 277) lists this cemetery among the 13 cemeteries of Gaza, saying that it was physically connected with the Awzā’ī cemetery. The only two sanctuaries in these two cemeteries are the *mazār* of Awzā’ī and the Mosque of Sayyid Ḥāshim mentioned above.

### Mosque of Birdibak (Jāmi‘ al-Maḥkamah)

According to the information that appears in the files of Max van Berchem, the following inscription was found at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century above the pulpit of the Mosque of Birdibak, or al-Maḥkamah, in as-Sajā‘iyyah Quarter. However, according to the files of Gaza from the time of the British Mandate in the IAA archives, the inscription came from Jāmi‘ Kātib al-Wilāyah in az-Zaytūn Quarter. In the present situation in the area (2008 CE) I am unable to verify these details. It seems strange that a tombstone was fixed over the pulpit in the mosque. The squeeze, which is kept in the custody of the IAA, is said to have been taken from the stone in the courtyard of Kātib al-Wilāyah Mosque, which seems to me more logical. In any case, the inscription is not *in situ*.

01

GAZA 270

Epitaph of a Muslim

ca. 270/883-4

A slab of marble, 1.00x0.80m. 16 lines, elegant angular script, small letters, decorated with barbs; incised. Figs. 1, 1a, 1b (IAA squeeze photos Nos. 3383, 3384). Publication: MvB Coll. “Gaza,” env. 24, c.VI, 65-66; *RCEA*, 3:81-82, No. 940 and corrections *ibid.*, 3:220.

(١) بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ (٢) وَصَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ خَاتَمِ النَّبِیِّیْنَ (٣) وَعَلَى آلِهِ الطَّیِّبِیْنَ  
اللّٰهُمَّ اِذَا (٤) حَشَرْتَ الْاَوَّلِیْنَ وَالْاٰخِرِیْنَ (٥) لِمَقَاتِ یَوْمٍ مَّعْلُومٍ فَاحْشُرْ (٦) عَبْدَكَ مُحَمَّدَ بْنَ  
الْعَبَّاسِ الْهَاشِمِیَّ رَحِمَهُ اللّٰهُ وَرَضِیْ عَنْهُ (٨) وَنَصِّرْ وَجْهَهُ وَنَوِّرْ قَبْرَهُ مَعَ (٩) النَّبِیِّیْنَ وَالصَّادِقِیْنَ  
وَالشُّهَدَا [ع] (١٠) وَالصَّالِحِیْنَ وَحَسِّنْ اَوْلَیَّكَ (١١) رَفِیْقًا ذَلِكِ الْفَضْلُ مِنَ اللّٰهِ وَكَفَى بِاللّٰهِ عَلِیْمًا  
امین رب (١٣) العلمین

وَعَافِلٍ اُوْدِیَ لِلْمَوْتِ (١٤) لَمْ یَاخِذِ الْاُهْبَةَ لِلْفَوْتِ

مَنْ لَمْ (١٥) تَزَلْ نِعْمَتُهُ قَبْلَهُ زَالَ عَنِ (١٦) النِّعْمَةِ بِالْمَوْتِ

Basmalah. And may Allah bless Muḥammad the seal of the prophets and his illustrious family. O Allah when thou resurrect the ancient and the more recent (generations) at a specified time of a particular day resurrect then thy servant Muḥammad b. al-‘Abbās al-Hāshimī, may Allah have mercy on him and be pleased with him, and cause his face to shine, and illuminate his grave together with the prophets and the righteous and the martyrs and the upright; good

company are these! That is the bounty from Allah; it is enough that Allah knoweth. (Q. 4:71-72. Trans. Bell) Amen! The Lord of the Universe. “How many are the careless (people) abandoned to death who did not take provisions for (the time of) passing away. And he, whose kindness does not precede him, would be removed from kindness by death.”

The last reading of this inscription, before I saw it, had been offered by L.A. Mayer, whose corrections to the former reading of *RCEA*, 3, No. 940 were published in the *RCEA* 3:220. He suggested the following reading to ll. 13-16:

١٣...وعاقل أوذر للموت ١٤) لم يأخذ إلا هنة للقوت من لم ١٥) تزل نعمته قبله زال  
عن... (١٦) النعمة بالموت...

This was definitely an improvement on the previous reading but, as can be seen from the comparison with my reading above, it was still deficient. Neither van Berchem nor Mayer detected that ll. 13-16 contain a short poem of only two verses by Abū al-‘Atāhiyah which I shall soon analyze. Mayer’s reading of the word **أوذر** seems justified by the inscription. However the word in this form does not exist in Arabic, although with great effort it could mean “abandoned” because the verb *wadhara* (used only in the imperfect and the imperative) is used like, and with, *taraka*—to leave. But there is no need for these linguistic acrobatics since we have the poem of Abū al-‘Atāhiyah to direct us. The reading of the word **أودي** is also sure because the inscriber tended to produce the *yā*’ like *rā*’ as can be seen in the word *al-hāshimī* in line 7. The writer of the text quoted the poem of the Abū al-‘Atāhiyah, but, as we shall see, he had a version that is slightly different from the one that we possess today.

A few more notes on the reading:

L.5: Read *limī’ād* (similar to the Qur’ānic expression.) instead of (the *RCEA*) *bimī’ād*.

L.13: The reading of the last two words: **اودي للموت** is sure. Unfortunately it is impossible to read **اودي بالموت** which would have rendered the verse more elegant and nearer to the usual expression *awdā bihi ’lmawtu*. I can not see the *bā*’ and *alif* before the *lām*.

L.16: No letters are missing in this line. The word *an-ni’mah* does not begin at the beginning of the line. The space left before it gave the previous readers of the inscription the impression that two letters were missing. In order to finish this line properly the artist engraved a very long *tā*’ the size of four normal letters at its end.

At first sight, I estimated the date of the inscription to be around the year 400/1009 partly because of what could be the Shī’ite nature of the opening formula which contains a prayer for the family of the Prophet (l. 3), but mainly because of the elegant stylized script that characterizes the early Fāṭimid inscriptions. (Compare, *CIA* 2, “*Ville*” no. 18 epitaph from 395). However the date in the environs of the

year 300/912 as suggested by van Berchem is plausible. I think, however, that the inscription belongs to an even earlier date, as I shall show.

The text includes a few quotations and allusions to Qur'ānic verses. Line 5, which speaks about the appointed day of resurrection using the phrase *limiqāti yawm<sup>in</sup> mā'lūm<sup>in</sup>*, refers to two verses in the Qur'ān, both of which speak about an "appointed date" using this exact phrase, although only one alludes to the day of resurrection. The first: *فجمع السحرة لميقات يوم معلوم* (Q. 26:38) refers to Pharaoh who gathered his magicians to compete with Moses at an "appointed time on a certain day." The second: *قل ان الأولين والآخرين لجموعون الى ميقات يوم معلوم* "Say: The earlier and the later (generations) shall be collected at an appointed time of a known day" (Q. 56:49-50), relates directly to the message of this epitaph. It speaks about the gathering of everybody on the Day of Judgment.

Ll. 9-11: contain an insert of a large part of two verses (Q. 4:69-70) speaking about the reward awaiting the righteous who obey Allah, starting with the word *an-nabiyyīn* in verse 69, and quoting the whole of verse 70. However, unlike what can be gathered from the previous publication of this inscription, only half of verse 69 actually appears in the inscription, as can be seen in my reading above. Note that the spelling slightly deviates from the Qur'ānic spelling.

Ll. 6-7: The deceased, Muḥammad b. 'Abbās al-Hāshimī seems to have been an important figure, judging by the excellence of the tombstone. According to his *nisbah*, he belonged to the Hāshimite family and this explains the benediction for the Prophet's family at the opening of the inscription which contains the usual formula of the blessing for the Prophet. The *nisbah* "al-Hāshimī" makes his burial place in Gaza very appropriate since, according to all the traditions, Hāshim, his forefather and the forefather of the Prophet, died and was buried there. (e.g. *Munammaq*, 1964:33-34)

Two people by the name of Muḥammad b. 'Abbās al-Hāshimī figure in the Arabic literature. One was a governor of Mūṣul (Mawṣil) for Caliph Hārūn ar-Rashīd (170/786-193/809). He is mentioned in connection with a rebellion against the government, which took place in 177/793 during his time of office (Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil* 6:140 copied by later historians: Ibn Khaldūn, *Ibar* 3:220 with mistake in the date; Nuwayrī, *Nihāyah* 6:140). The other, bearing the same name, is mentioned in *Ṭabaqāt ash-Shu'arā'* of 'Abdallah b. al-Mu'tazz in an anecdote about the poet Abū Nu'āmah ad-Danqā'ī. ("I was told by Ishāq b. Muḥammad al-Madīnī who said: Muḥammad b. al-'Abbās al-Hāshimī said: I entered into a bathhouse and I saw Abū Nu'āmah etc." Ibn al-Mu'tazz 1939:185; 1968:390-391) Judging by the dates, this cannot be the same person as the governor of Mūṣul since Abū Nu'āmah was killed by Muflīḥ, the 'Abbāsīd general, in Rabī' II 258/Feb.-March 872, a month prior to the death in battle of Muflīḥ himself in Jumādā I of that year. (Ibn

al-Mu‘tazz *loc. cit.* Ṭabarī, *Ta’rīkh*, 3:1863) This means that Muḥammad b. al-‘Abbās al-Hāshimī saw him before this date. (The anecdote was told to Ibn al-Mu‘tazz, who died in 295/908, by Iṣḥāq b. Muḥammad who heard it from al-Hāshimī). It seems possible, therefore, that Muḥammad b. ‘Abbās al-Hāshimī, who was buried in Gaza, could very well be the same person mentioned by Ibn al-Mu‘tazz as the source of the anecdote, thus pushing back the date of inscription even to the years 250-70/864-83 or thereabouts.

But there are even better grounds for establishing the identity of the deceased and the date of the inscription: the amazing information contained in lines 13-16, the most interesting and rewarding lines in the whole document. I indicated above that they contain a complete short poem—only two verses—by Abū al-‘Atāhiyah (died 213/828), the melancholic poet of *zuhd*—ascetic life, whose poems revolved around the vanity of the world and the need to remember the immanence of death. (See Cheikho’s introduction to his 1886 (1909) edition of Abū al-‘Atāhiyah’s *Diwān*). He was favoured by the Caliphs al-Mahdī, Hārūn ar-Rashīd and al-Ma’mūn. The poem, included in his *Dīwān*, and quoted in *Kitāb al-Aghānī* (3:152), was composed for al-Ma’mūn and it is said that the caliph appreciated these two verses so much that he rewarded the poet with no less than 20,000 dirhams. They run as follows (*sarī*):

كَمْ غَافِلٍ أَوْدَى بِهِ الْمَوْتُ      لَمْ يَأْخُذِ الْأُهْبَةَ لِلْفَوْتِ  
مَنْ لَمْ تَزَلْ نِعْمَتُهُ قَبْلَهُ      زَالَ عَنِ النُّعْمَةِ بِالْمَوْتِ

(Note: In Cheikho’s editions: زَالَ عَنِ النُّعْمَةِ!)

How many are the heedless that death carried off

who did not take with them provisions for when they pass away!

He whose kindness did not precede him

is removed from kindness by death

(Abū al-‘Atāhiyah 1886, 1909: 54; 1994:48-49)

I have already pointed out that in l.13 the word أودى looks more like أودر or أوذر. both these forms are very strange and even after great efforts I could not fit them into the verse to produce any tangible meaning. The verb أودى is the verb that appears in the poem which this part of the inscription quotes in full. As I suggested, the reading of line 13 in the inscription should be based on Abū al-‘Atāhiyah’s verse beginning in the inscription with the word وغافل (with *wāw rubba*) instead of كم غافل with the same meaning: “how many are the negligent (or careless) people who are left for death (to carry off)!” I suggest reading in the inscription the verb *awdā* (in the poem) in the passive—*udiya* so that it fits with the word *lilmawti*. This small change does not affect the metre.

The second verse of Abū al-‘Atāhiyah is quoted verbatim in the inscription. It is very possible, therefore, that in the inscription we have a very old variant of the first verse that appears to be the original. The usage of *wāw rubba* instead of *kam* is far neater.

The poet died in 213/828 five years before the death of Ma’ mūn, for whom the poem was composed. However, our inscription must be dated long after this date since Muḥammad b. ‘Abbās al-Hāshimī was still alive around 257 prior to Abū Nu‘āmāh’s death (see above). The fact that here we have one of Abū al-‘Atāhiyah’s poems means that his poetry was already known far away from the territory of his activity in Iraq. This should not be surprising since good poetry traveled very quickly, frequently accompanied by a good anecdote (as in this case). The epitaph contains verses produced by a well-known poet and this strengthens the possibility that the grave was in fact that of Muḥammad b. al-‘Abbās al-Hāshimī mentioned by Ibn al-Mu‘tazz in connection with ad-Danqā‘ī who was also a poet, though far less known. He must have died sometime after 258 and much before 295 the date of Ibn al-Mu‘tazz’s murder.

There is, however, evidence about a person with the same name, Muḥammad b. al-‘Abbās al-Hāshimī, in an inscription from a cemetery near the village of Dar‘ah in the Ḥawrān, today in southern Syria not far from its border with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The cemetery is known by the name of “al-Abbāsiyyah Cemetery—*maqbarat al-‘abbāsiyyah*,” which means that it was a family cemetery of the ‘Abbāsīd family. The inscription was preserved in a paper squeeze in the archives of Max van Berchem in Geneva. As it stands, the inscription does not seem to be an epitaph. It is a declaration of faith. However, having learnt that it was fashionable to attach a declaration of faith to the name of the deceased as a sign of piety to ensure Allah’s favour in the afterlife, it is possible that the Dar‘ah inscription is at least part of an epitaph, or a commemorative text referring to the Hashimite who had been buried in Gaza. Since the inscription is an independent one, I decided to register it separately (1a), copying it from my study of van Berchem’s squeezes (*CIAP, Addendum* 2007, No. 32. Pl. 32, figs. MvB 26 and Mvb26a)

01a

DAR‘AH (ADHRI‘ĀT) ·

Declaration of faith of an ‘Abāssīd

Early 3<sup>rd</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> c.

MvB squeeze No. 26, 0.58x0.44, taken in 1894. 8 lines, simple angular script; letters slender and long, decorated with barbs, no points, no vowels; incised. At the end

of some words, letters engraved well below the line, and some high above it. Fig. 2 (Pl. 4=MvB26, MvB26a;). Publication: *CIAP, Addendum*, No. 32.



Pl. 4 Dar‘ah 3<sup>rd</sup>/ 9<sup>th</sup> c.

١) بسم الله يشهد ٢) محمد بن العباس بن محمد ٣) بن علي بن عبد الصمد ٤) بن علي بن عبد  
الله بن ٥) العباس بن عبد المطلب ٦) الهاشمي الا اله الا ٧) الله

In the name of Allah. Has testified Muḥammad b. al-‘Abbās b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad b. ‘Alī b. ‘Abd Allah b. ‘Abbās b. ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib the Hāshimite that there is no god but Allah.

The mirror image, once flipped over (pl. 4 right, fig.2) enables a sure reading of the inscription. The epitaph of “Muḥammad b. al-‘Abbās al-Hāshimī (ll.6-7 of No. 1), tempts us to attribute this inscription to the same person, who is here fully identified within the ‘Abāssid family. (Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, 3, 1978:71-72) The major books on genealogy do not refer to ‘Abd aṣ-Ṣamad’s descendants in detail, probably because they did not play a significant part in political life. The *nisbah* al-Hāshimī however appears with the name of Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. ‘Abd as-Ṣamad, (“al-Hāshimī”) who is mentioned, incidentally, in lists of ḥadīth transmitters. (e.g. Sam‘ānī, 2:137)

Muḥammad b. ‘Abbās epitaph from Gaza and the Dar‘ah inscription constitute, therefore, a valuable pair. Where exactly was this inscription situated, and is there a special reason for its formulae? Balādhurī in an interesting passage in a short

biography of Kathīr b. al-ʿAbbās writes that the latter wrote the following words on the shroud that he ordered for himself: **كثير بن العباس يشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك له وان محمدا عبده ورسوله** “Kathīr b. al-ʿAbbās testifies that there is no god but Allah alone and that Muḥammad is his slave and messenger.” (Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, 3, 1978:67) This formula was fashionable and very common on inscriptions, not necessarily epitaphs, particularly from the early Muslim centuries. It was evidence of piety, and Balādhurī quotes the anecdote in order to present Kathīr as a pious man. But it is also evident that this extended Declaration of Faith was popular. What Balādhurī adds is that it was used in connection with death and burial. The fact that two members of the ʿAbbāsīd family used it is curious but no more than that. The difference in the style of letters means that two different hands produced these two inscriptions. As far as the date of the inscription is concerned, it can be calculated, more or less. Muḥammad b. al-ʿAbbās in this inscription was fourth generation after ʿAbd aṣ-Ṣamad who died in 185/801 (Balādhurī, *op. cit.*, 102) namely, he died about a hundred years after the death of his great, great grandfather sometime around 285-290/898-902.

Is it possible that the two inscriptions from Gaza and Darʿah belonged to the same person? If so then the inscription from Darʿah supplies the full genealogy of Muḥammad b. al-ʿAbbās al-Hāshimī from Gaza. The calculations of the possible dates of both inscriptions place them at about the same time, namely the later years of the 3<sup>rd</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> century. However, the script of the Darʿah inscription is far more primitive than the script of the one from Gaza (No. 1), which brought me to date the former to the earlier years of the 3<sup>rd</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> century, before 250/864. However, taking into consideration that the script from Darʿah is simple and provincial, the inscription could also belong to the second half of the century. As I hinted above, it could well be only a commemorative inscription and not a full epitaph.

The existence of a cemetery at Darʿah called after the ʿAbbāsīds is not surprising since the first centre of the ʿAbbāsīds, before they came to power, was in the village of Ḥumaymah to the southeast of the Dead Sea (Sharon, 1983:120). The cemetery proves that the contacts and interests of the ʿAbbāsīds in the regions of southern Syria—the Hawrān, the Balqāʾ down to Ḥumaymah—also continued after their coming to power and that members of the ʿAbbāsīd family lived there, and had the family cemetery next to the city of Darʿah, situated at an important crossroads in the fertile Hawrān. Concurrently, they kept their contact with the burial place of their ancestor in Gaza, and must have had a family cemetery there too, as we learn from the elaborate epitaph of Muḥammad al-Hāshimī. These facts could easily invoke speculations, which I wish to avoid.

A slab of limestone, 0.70x0.95m. (approx.) from an unknown location in the vicinity of Gaza, discovered in 1969 by Ariel Berman who brought it to the Rockefeller Museum. 10 lines, worn out provincial angular script, small letters, incised; no points, no vowels. Figs. 3, 3a (IAA Photo No. 5617).

(١) بسم الله بركة من الله (٢) امر بصنعة [one word...] عبد (٣) الله أحمد الإمام المعتمد  
 (٤) على الله امير المؤمنين (٥) أطال الله بقاءه بنظر (٦) (؟) خمارويه مولى امير (٧) المؤمنين اعزه الله  
 (٨) [one word? ...] على يدي الحسن ابن (٩) (؟) [one word...] السلعي/السبعي/الشيوعي في  
 سنة (١٠) اربع (؟) وسبعين ومايتـ[ين]

In the name of Allah. Blessing from Allah. Has ordered the making (of...) The servant of Allah Aḥmad the Imām (the Caliph) al-Mu‘tamid ‘alā Allah the Commander of the Faithful, may Allah perpetuate his life, under the supervision of Khumārawayh the slave of the Commander of the Faithful, may Allah strengthen him. (It has been done) by the hands of al-Ḥasan b. ... as-Salī/as-Sabī/ash-Shī in the year 274 (=887-888)

L.2: The missing word describes the building project commemorated by this inscription. In some of the photographs I think that I can see traces of the word *bi’r*—well, which is not impossible. The word *ṣan‘ah* already appears in the earliest Arabic inscriptions to denote the accomplishment of a certain work: roads, milestones, and buildings of different kinds (e.g. *CIAP* 3:95-96). It is possible of course to read the word *biṣan‘ihi*—“its making” after which it is still possible to insert the word describing the object of the work.

Ll.3-4: The term of office of Caliph al-Mu‘tamid ‘alā Allah (256/870-279/892) coincided with that of the Ṭūlūnid Khumārawayh in Egypt and Syria (270/884-282/896). However, the mention of the caliph’s name in this and other inscriptions does not mean that he gave the order for the project or even knew about it. The reference to the supreme suzerain was no more than a conventional formula used even by an independent provincial governor to indicate his acknowledgement of the caliph’s nominal sovereignty. (cf. Sharon 1966; 1997:106-107)

L.8: The missing word could well be *wawaffaqahu* (and gave him success). I can see traces of some of the letters forming this word.

L.9: The most probable *nisbah* of the actual builder of the project is as-Salī (Suyūṭī, *Lubb al-Lubāb* 1840:138) or as-Silī and a few other variants (Ibn Mākūlā

4, 1990:463ff). Sam‘ānī (3, 1988:272) however, insists that the *nisbah* is as-Salī; it is derived from the word *sal‘ah* which is a wound of cracked skin, and mentions a few scholars with this *nisbah*. *Tāj al-‘Arūs* (s.v. s-l-) points out that reading this *nisbah* as *Sil‘ī* or *Sila‘ī* (reference to *Sil‘ah* pl. *Silā‘*—commodity) is a common mistake. The variants of as-Salafī, as-Sulfī, as-Silafī, and as-Silfī are not impossible. Of all these *nisbahs*, as-Sulfī is the most probable variant. It refers to the clan of Ḥimyar and to an Egyptian family from this clan. (Sam‘ānī, *vol. cit.*, 273-274). The reading of ash-Shīī should also be considered.

L.10. The date is almost sure; the number four which does not appear clearly may be traced on the stone itself. The date is supported by the names of both the Caliph and Khumārawayh. (See also: *CIAP* 3:202-205)

### Jāmi‘ ash-Shaykh Zakariyā

This small mosque which possesses an octagonal minaret, is situated in ad-Daraj Quarter (Ḥārat (Ḥayy) ad-Daraj) once in the extreme northwest of the town (Gatt Plan of Gaza E2). The sanctuary itself is built along the west side of an open court, and is entered through a small door at the east side of the north eastern bay. The building consists of three aisles, each with a bay. The middle and the west aisles are surmounted by domes. The western aisle has a flat roof supported by cross vaults. (sketch plan see pl. 9 below) Along the north side of the court are two domed structures and a domed tomb chamber in the northwestern corner. The tomb in that chamber, near the northern wall, was originally built with slabs of marble. When Husseini inspected the place in July 1945, the tomb had already been dismantled but the slabs, some with inscriptions, could be recovered. He offered the reading of three inscriptions on the loose slabs and one above the lintel of the window in the southern wall of the tomb chamber. (See below Gaza Nos. 41, 77 for more details and plan) His preliminary reading, in the IAA files, is partial.

03

GAZA 449

Epitaph of a Muslim

Ṣafar 449/9 April–7 May 1057

Inscription on the tomb inside the sanctuary. Publication: ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, *Ta’rīkh Ghazzah*, 339. No photograph, no other details.

هذا قبر العبد الفقير الى الله تعالى زكريا التدمري توفي في شهر صفر سنة ٤٤٩ هـ

This is the tomb of the slave, the needy for Allah, Zakariyyā at-Tadmurī. He died in the month of Ṣafar in the year 449 (began 9 April 1057).

It is possible that the inscription is a crude, modern copy of the lost, old one since in such an early period, the date was never written in digits. However, I am sure that the date was written in words, but ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, as he almost always did in his book, copied it in digits, and added the letter هـ after the date, which is absolutely impossible in inscriptions from that time. I assume that the date in words is *tis’ wa-arba’in wa-arba’ mi’ah*.

The *nisbah* at-Tadmurī is rather interesting. The man’s origin was the city of Tadmur (Tadmor) in northeastern Syria, and judging by the short and meager inscription, it seems that he must have died while visiting Gaza and was buried as a stranger. There is no record of this inscription in the IAA files from the time of the British Mandate.

04

GAZA 607

Epitaph of a Muslim youth

Rajab 607/19 Dec. 1210–17 Jan. 1211

A slab of marble, 0.56x0.3x0.1m. found in Gaza (location unknown); kept in the private collection of H. Tzuri; cracked, and slightly chipped on the left. 6 lines, monumental Ayyūbid *naskhī*, points, many vowels, and dividing lines; incised, with last line worn out but readable. Fig. 4.

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم (٢) كلُّ مَنْ عليها فان هذا قبر الشاب (٣) التائب الى ربه  
الرجي (!) عفوّه ومغفرته (٤) نجم الدين أيوب ابن (!) شرف الدين ابن (!) (٥) شريك توفي الى رحمة  
الله تعالى (٦) في شهر رجب سنة سبع وستماية رحمه الله

Basmalah. Everyone upon it passes away. (Q, 55:26. Trans. Bell) This is the tomb of the youth who turns to his Lord in repentance, who seeks His pardon and forgiveness Najm ad-Dīn Ayyūb b. Sharaf ad-Dīn b. Shīrik(?). He passed away to the mercy of Allah the Exalted, in the month of Rajab of the year 607 (began 19 Dec. 1210) May Allah have mercy on him.

L.3: The word *at-tāyib* has this spelling in the inscription, which is understandable taking into consideration that the writing of *hamzah* on *kursī yā* was a late development. This justifies the spelling of the word مائة with *yā* as it is spelt here, in many other inscriptions in this volume.

L.5: The name of the deceased's grandfather is most likely Persian, and therefore it should be read Shīrik, namely cub or young lion. Names including the word Shīr are quite common, the most famous being Shīr kūh (the lion of the mountain) or Shīr māh ("Moon lion?" Ibn Khallikān 3:237). In the literature there are quite a few people called Shīrik. From the period of this inscription: Jamāl ad-Dīn al-Irbilī whose full name was Ṭaha b. Ibrāhīm b. Abū Bakr ... b. Shīrik b. Aḥmad b. Bakhtiyār, born c. 595/1198 died 677/1278 (*Manhal*, 7, 1993:8-9), and Humām ad-Dīn Abū Sa'īd Barghash as-Sūbāshī whose full name was 'Amr b. Kaḥt (Kuḥt?) b. Shīrik al-'Azīzī (Maqrīzī, *Khīṭat*, 2:81 ll.29-31).

05

GAZA 626

Epitaph of a Muslim

626/1229

A slab of limestone, 0.90x0.25x0.06m., kept in storage at the Public Works Department, Municipality of Gaza. 7 lines primitive village *naskhī*, a few points, no vowels; in bas relief. After the first two lines the inscription becomes very unclear and the reading is questionable. Fig. 5.

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم (٢) كل نفس ذائقة الموت (٣) ... (٤) بن عبد الله مات (٥)  
(٥) في شهر رجب سنة ست ٦ وعشرين وست مائة

Basmalah. Every soul shall taste death. (Q. 3:185; 21:35; 29:57. Trans. Arberry)...b. 'Abdallah(?) died(?)in the month of Rajab(?) 626 (began on 25 May 1229).

The inscription was brought to the storerooms of the Municipal Public Works Department in Gaza from the cemetery on Tell 'Alī al-Munṭār. Due to the uncertain reading offered here I am not completely sure about the date of the inscription which places it towards the end of the Ayyūbid period. The writing and production of the inscription are too primitive to help with a better dating.

A large fragment of a long slab of marble or one of two slabs, 0.595x0.21x0.052m. (max.), most probably a lintel. Found at Sāqiyat ar-Ramād located, when first registered in 1932, in the plantations of the local notable Na‘mān al-‘Alawī to the east of Bāb al-Khalil in the Sajā‘iyyah Quarter (Gatt Plan of Gaza E7). 4 visible lines, the first of which containing only two words, semi-monumental Ayyūbid *naskhī*, incised; points and some vowels. The upper part broken and lost, leaving less than half of the original text (the right lower part of the inscription). Initial reading by the antiquities inspector Jacob Ory on 15 March 1932. Figs. 6, 6a. (IAA photo No. 3118. IAA archives “Gaza” No. S1689).

[بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم وتمت كلمت ربك صدقا وعدلا لا مبدل لكلماته ]  
 (١) وهو السميع العليم ... [الفقير] (٢) الى رحمة الله صلاح الدين يوسف (one or two words)  
 حامي (?) ثغـ <و>ر (?) المسلمين ... (٣) الاسلام والمسلمين سيد الملوك والسلاطين خلد الله  
 ملكه ... (٤) وكمل في العشر الآخرة سنة اربعة (!) واربعين وستماية ...

(Basmalah. Perfect are the words of thy Lord in veracity and justice; no one can change His words) He is the Hearer, the Knower (Q. 6:115. Trans. after Bell)... He who is in need, of Allah’s mercy Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn Yūsuf b. (?)...(the support?) of Islam and the Muslims, the master of the kings and sultans; may Allah perpetuate his dominion and... .. (work has begun on...) and completed in the last ten days (of) the year 644/end of April 1247...

There is no doubt about the nature of this inscription. It commemorates a construction or a restoration work. I put much guesswork into the reading. The inscription began with the *basmalah* after which, came a verse from the Qur’ān finishing with the words *wa-huwa as-samī‘ al-‘alīm*.

There are four verses in the Qur’ān that finish with exactly these words: 2:137; 6:13; 6:115; and 29:60. Each one of these verses could have been inscribed here. I chose 6:115 because it seemed to me the most appropriate here, but this may be a very wild guess. Line 1 almost certainly finished with the word *al-faqīr* since line 2 begins with the words *ilā raḥmati allāh*. (Cf. CIA, *Jérusalem*, “*Haram*,” 2:99, No. 164) The words after the name of Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn Yūsuf must represent some honorific title or exaltation which contains the word *muslimīn*, but I could not reach a meaningful reading. Line 2 ended almost certainly with the word *rukn*, support, that opens the very well-known honorific title *rukn al-islām wa-al-muslimīn* in line 3. There are,

however, other possibilities such as *‘adud al-islām wa-al-muslimīn* (cf. van Berchem, *OM* 2, 1978:662ff.) For the moment I leave one or two unread words in line 2, and complete the line to read *ṣalāḥ ad-dīn yūsuf... ḥāmī thughūr al-muslimīn* (e.g. *ibid*, 667): “The defender of the border fortresses of the Muslims.” Because of the date of the inscription—644, the Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn Yūsuf mentioned in it can not be Saladin, who died in 589/1193. A few members of the Ayyūbid bore his name and title: Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn Yūsuf. One of them, Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn Yūsuf b. al-Malik al-Kāmil was the ruler of Yemen and Mecca (until his death in 626/1229) and could not have had anything to do with this inscription. (On him see, Ibn Khallikān 5:82-83; Ibn al-Furāt 5(1) 1970:173-175; Zambaur 1951:152)

The Ayyūbid ruler who is, most probably, mentioned in this inscription is al-Malik an-Nāṣir Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn II Abū al-Muẓaffar Yūsuf b. al-Malik al-‘Azīz Muḥammad b. al-Malik az-Zāhir Abū Maṣṣūr Ghāzī b. Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn. He was born in 627/1230 and was executed by Hülegü in 658/1260 (See below No. 9 for the year 653). He became the ruler of Ḥalab at the age of 7 (634/1237), and took Damascus and the Syrian territories on 648/1250. The building in Gaza commemorated by this inscription had been carried out before he became the ruler of Damascus. However, since he was famous for his building activity it is not impossible that his name was connected with other buildings outside his immediate realm, such as this one. (Ibn Khallikān 4:10; Ibn al-‘Imād, *Shadharāt adh-Dhahab*, 5:299-300).

It seems that the date of the inscription begins on line 3, for in line 4 the text mentions the completion of the work in the last ten days but without the word *min* (of) which could indicate that the reference is to the last ten days of the year 644. If I am correct then the missing part contained details of the work mentioning days of months, and the final stage of the work that was completed on the last days of a month which must have been mentioned at the end of line 3. Having said that, I do not discount the possibility that the words *fī al-‘ashr al-ākhirah* (even without the *min*) refer to the end of the year.

### **Mosque of Shaykh Musāfir**

The mosque is situated in the Sajā’iyyah Quarter. This modest sanctuary, the mosque of Shaykh Musāfir, is near another landmark, Sāqiyat aṭ-Ṭawāshī (Gatt Plan of Gaza F8). When van Berchem visited the place in 1894, he noted that the sanctuary was elevated inside an enclosure. He also indicated its exact place near Sāqiyat aṭ-Ṭawāshī, among all the places that he added to the *Plan* whenever he found them missing.

Sha'bān 647/9 Nov.- 8 Dec.1249

A slab of marble, 0.80x0.40m. above the entrance gate. 3 lines; Mamlūk *naskhī*. Small characters, “somewhat thick but elegant” (van Berchem). Publication: MvB Coll. “Gaza,” env. 24 and c.VII, 128; mentioned by ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, *Ta’rīkh Ghazzah*, 353, n. 3. (No photograph).

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم انما يعمر مساجد الله من آمن بالله واليوم الآخر (٢) انشا هذا المسجد المبارك العبد الفقير الى الله تعالى الحاج سيف الدين مسافر بن قنغيلي (?) احد (٣) المماليك السلطانية الناصرية وذلك بتاريخ شهر شعبان المكرم سنة سبعة (!) واربعين وستمائة (!)

Basmalah. They only shall visit Allah’s places of worship who have believed in Allah and the Last Day (Q. 9:18. Trans. Bell). Has founded this blessed mosque the slave in need of Allah the Exalted, the Hājj Sayf ad-Dīn Musāfir b. Qanghīlī(?) one of the Mamlūks of the Sultan an-Nāṣir and this was in the esteemed month of Sha’bān the year 647 (began 9 November 1249)

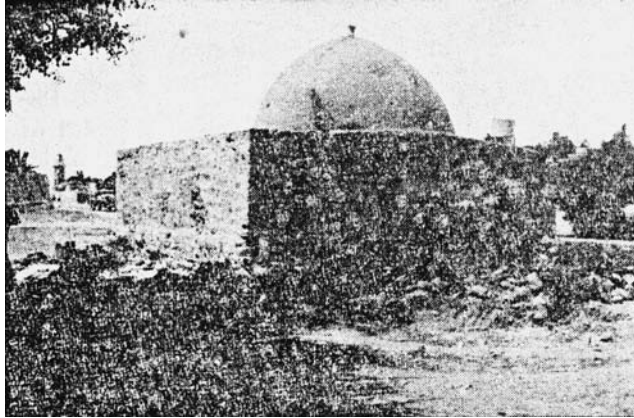
The Mamlūk who built this mosque identified himself as “one of the Naṣiri Mamlūks.” The only an-Nāṣir that could have been his master was the Ayyūbid an-Nāṣir Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn Dāwud (died 656/1258. Ibn Khallikān, 3:496) who was the Sultan in Damascus, for a while, after his father al-Mu‘azzam ‘Īsā.

The name of Musāfir’s father, a Turk no doubt, cannot be found in any of the possible readings: Qanghīlī or Qabghīlī. Van Berchem suggested the possibility of reading the lām as alif and the name as Qunubāy. This name, however, appears in the Mamlūk records in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, and in spite of being a pure Turkish name it belonged to an amīr of Circassian origin. (See van Berchem’s long discussion *CIA Jérusalem*, “Ville,” 1:329, and notes 2-3). Since I do not possess a photograph of the inscription, van Berchem’s suggestion seems very reasonable. ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif who mentions this mosque briefly, suggests another reading for the name of the founder: Sa’d ad-Dīn Musāfir b. Qatbughlī and gives the year 706 AH as the date of the building. This information is based on a wrong reading of the inscription (‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, *ibid.*)

### Mazār ash-Shaykh Bashīr

‘Ārif al-‘Ārif (1943:351) mentions this sanctuary as a *masjid*, and lists it among the inactive and neglected mosques, the only such one in the Tuffāḥ Quarter (see above

p. 37). It is a square one room building with a simple dome in the middle, familiar to very many Walīs (*welīs*) in the country Fig. P26 (pl. 5). A few pages later in his book (p. 354), ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif wrote about the sanctuary (this time he called it: “*mazār* ash-Shaykh Bashīr”): “It is located near the mosque of Ibn Marwān, and in this place there are the tombs of the warriors (*mujāhidīn*) from the 7<sup>th</sup> century.” The inscription is on Shaykh Bashīr’s tomb. In the reports of the Antiquities Department from the British Mandate period it is called “Walī sh. Bashīr.” (Gatt Plan F6. IAA archives “Gaza” to photos Nos. 1728, 1822).



Pl. 5 Mazār ash-Shaykh Bashīr

08  
GAZA 649  
Epitaph

20 Ramaḍān 649/7 Dec.1251

There are no details about this tombstone. Publication: ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, *Ta’rīkh Ghazza*, 354 (No photograph).

هذا قبر الفقير الى رحمة الله تعالى الطواشي الاجل الكبير سعد الدين بشير بن عبد الله  
الاشرفي رحمه الله تعالى توفي في العشر الاخير من رمضان المعظم سنة ٦٤٩ هـ

This is the tomb of one needy of the mercy of Allah the Exalted, the esteemed, the greatest, *tawāshī* Sa’d ad-Dīn Bashīr b. ‘Abd allah al-Ashrafī, may Allah, the exalted, have mercy on him. He died in the last ten days (or: 20) of the glorified Ramaḍān, the year 649 (7)December 1251)

The *mazār*, a sanctuary that is a place of pious visitation, was called after Sa'd ad-Dīn Bashīr who, according to his title, was a Mamlūk eunuch of al-Malik al-Ashraf I, Muẓaffar ad-Dīn, the Ayyūbid sultan of Damascus from 626/1229-634/1237, hence his *nisbah* al-Ashrafī. The term *ṭawāshī* (pl. *ṭawāshīyyah*) designated a eunuch in the later middle ages, and was the synonym of *khaṣī* and *khādīm*. The word comes from the Turkish *ṭapughchi* (*tapuğci*), which originally means a “servant,” the exact meaning of the word *khādīm*, that has been used exclusively for eunuchs in Islam. (Ayalon 1999: 265,185) From the name of his father, ‘Abdallah, we learn that he was born a heathen, and as usual, when he was manumitted as a Muslim Mamlūk he was also given the father’s name ‘Abdallah.

The date 649, in digits, appears in the publication. The original was, no doubt, in words (*tis' wa-arba'īn wa sitt mi'ah*). As in the case of the inscription No. 3 for the year 449 above, ‘Ārīf al-‘Ārīf wrote the date in digits and added the letter *hā* for *hijrah* after it. “The last ten days of Ramaḍān” could well mean 20 of Ramaḍān, this possibility was taken into account too.

09

GAZA 653

Epitaph of a Muslim

17 Ramaḍān 653/26 Oct. 1255

A fragment of the stem of an ancient marble column, about 1m. high, in secondary usage as a funerary stele, dug out in the compound of the sanctuary (*mazār*) ash-Shaykh Bashīr. The inscription 0.58x0.45m. (approx.) covers the top part of the stele. 12 lines, fine, highly professional Ayyūbid *naskhū*, medium size characters, points and probably a few vowels; incised. Figs. 7, 7a. (IAA photo No. 1728; squeeze photo No. 1822)

١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم ٢) كل من عليها فان ويبقى ٣) وجه ربك ذو الجلال وا ٤) لا كرام  
 هذا قبر الشاب ٥) التائب الى ربه المستغفر من ذنبا [و٦] به الغريب الشهيد فخر الدين  
 ٧) إياز بن عبد الله الصلا [ح] ي [؟] ٨) الأشرفي توفي الى رحمة الله في ٩) [ال] سابع  
 عشر من رمضان [المبارك] ١٠) سنة ثلثة (!) وخمسين وستمائة (!) ١١) رحم الله من ترحم  
 عليه و [ج] ميع ١٢) المسلمين

Basmalah. Everyone upon it (the earth) passes away. But the face of thy Lord full of glory and honour doth endure. (Q. 55:26-27. Trans. Bell) This is the tomb of the youth who turns to his

Lord in repentance, asking the forgiveness of his sins, the stranger the martyr Fakhr ad-Dīn Iyāz b. ‘Abdallah aṣ-Ṣalāhī al-Ashrafī who passed away to Allah’s mercy on 17 of the blessed Ramaḍān the year 653 (26 Oct. 1255) may Allah forgive whomever begs mercy for him and all the Muslims.

This inscription is very similar in the style of writing and the language to No. 4 above, and to the epitaph from Dayr al-Balaḥ dated some 47 years later. (*CIAP* 3:17). The latter and the present epitaphs belonged to Mamlūk soldiers. However, the present one is more interesting than the one from Dayr al-Balaḥ. The deceased here was a young man when he fell in war; these two facts are clearly indicated by the words *shāb* and *shahīd*, which describe him. In addition he is also described as *gharīb*—stranger, he came to this part of Syria from somewhere else and gained his martyrdom in Gaza or next to the city. This could have happened in one of the skirmishes with the Crusaders sometime after Louis the IX left the Holy Land to return to France (on 24 April 1254). In 1255, the various Crusader groups signed an armistice agreement with both Egypt and Syria, but in spite of their weakness, they left themselves the option of attacking the Muslim territory between Jaffa and Gaza, mainly for the purpose of plundering. One documented attack of this kind is known from the end of 653/January 1256 (Prawer 1984, 2:342) but on the whole the year 653AH is particularly quiet in the Arabic sources, which only means that in that year there were no unusual events. This does not rule out some insignificant encounter in which our Fakhr ad-Dīn Iyāz gained his martyrdom.

The epitaph tells more about him. He was a first generation Muslim, a Mamlūk who according to his two *nisbahs* could have been the Mamlūk of two Ayyūbids. The *nisbah* aṣ-Ṣalāhī makes him the mamlūk of al-Malik an-Nāṣir Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn II Abū al-Muẓaffar Yūsuf, the son of al-Malik al-‘Azīz the ruler of Aleppo. He succeeded his father who died in 4 Rabi‘ I 634/11 Nov. 1236 and managed by Rabi‘ II 648/July 1250 to enlarge his kingdom to include Damascus and the whole of the Syrian domains. He was executed by Hülegü near Marāghah in Adharbayjān on 23 Shawwāl 658/7 Oct. 1260. (Ibn Khallikān, 4:10. See above No. 5 dated 644.)

This explains the fact that Fakhr ad-Dīn Iyāz in this inscription from Gaza is called “stranger.” He came from the north of Syria. First he was the Mamlūk of Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn II of Ḥalab and then he seems to have entered the service of al-Malik al-Ashraf (hence his second *nisbah* al-Ashrafī) Abū al-Faḥ Mūsā, the ruler of Ḥimṣ (Ḥumṣ) and the last Ayyūbid ruler in Syria (644/1246-662/1263). (Ibn Khallikān 2:481; Ziriklī, 7:319). On strangers and strangers’ literature see *Book of Strangers*, 2000 and below No. 15).

## 10

Gaza 670  
Baybars lions

c. 670/1271-72

Two images of “lions” fixed on both sides of the entrance onto the building, which used to be the police headquarters in Gaza. (Pl. 6, IAA photos 8271, 8273). Unlike the lions decorating the Bridge of Jindās near Lydda (pl. 6a) and St. Stephen’s Gate in Jerusalem (pl. 6b) (Clermont Ganneau, *JA*, 1888, 2:305-310; Idem, *AR* 2:110-118; Mayer, *Heraldry*, 1933:109; *RCEA*, 12:174, No. 4660) these lions were created with interlocking lines which look like letters woven into each other and give the impression of leopard spots (for which reason “lions” is not the exact description of these cats). However, there is no difference in the forms of the animals. They belong to the same style and represent the same Sultan, Baybars. If I am correct then these lions are the only remnant from the time of this Sultan and I register them around the date of the inscription from Jindās Bridge near Lydda dated Ramḍān 671/ February-March 1273. Figs. 8, 8a, 8b.



Pl. 6 Police Headquarters, Gaza: lion images



Pl. 6a Jindās Bridge Lydda: lion images 671



Pl. 6b St. Stephen’s Gate, Jerusalem: lion images

**Shaykh (Nabī) Ilyās**

The small sanctuary northeast of al-Munṭār hill, outside Bāb al-Munṭār, once in the extreme southern part of the city, is now incorporated into the larger town of Gaza, and situated on one of its main roads. Gatt left the building nameless (Plan of the Gaza C6). This sanctuary has been known locally for a long time as Mazār ash-Shaykh ‘Ajlīn after the name of a local saint ‘Ajlīn b. Abū ‘Arqūb Ibrāhīm b. ‘Alī b. ‘Alī (or ‘Ulayl). No details exist about this person and, as we shall soon see, his name does not correspond with the name of the person who appears on the inscription. The famous Damascene scholar and traveller ‘Abd al-Ghanī an-Nābulṣī, (1050/1640–1143/1730), who visited Gaza during his long voyage in 1105/1693 described the tomb of Shaykh ‘Ajlīn, but gave no details about the saint. “It (the tomb) is in a spacious area enclosed by four walls and there is neither relative nor foreigner buried next to it. His tomb is exposed to the open sky near the gate, and there is no building over it. On the side of the place there is a corridor built of stone. The site commands much reverence and esteem.” (Nābulṣī quoted by ‘Aṭallah 1986:225 n.29)

11

GAZA 671

Foundation text

Ṣafar 671/9 Aug.–7 Sept 1272

A block of marble, forming the lintel of the entrance gate, cracked on the right. Mayer dimensions: 1.11x0.255m. MvB dimensions: 1.60x0.40m. 4 lines, very elegant, professional Ayyūbid *naskhī*, small letters, almost complete with points and vowels; incised. The last two words in the fourth line were incised vertically at the end of the inscription across the lines 1-3. Fig. 9. The inscription is encircled by a neatly incised rectangular frame with decorations of *fleur de lis* on each one of its corners. Lines, also carefully incised, divide the lines. The inscription occupies the central part of the lintel leaving a space of identical width on both sides. In this space a strange decorative element in the form of the stylized Hebrew letter *shīn* was incised, the left line of which looks like a polo stick. (Pl. 7 right) Publication: MvB Coll. “Gaza,” c.VII, 108; Mayer, *JPOS*, 3, 1923:70-74, pl. 2; *Saracenic Heraldry*, 124, fig. 1; *RCEA* 12:173-74, No. 4659; ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, *Ta’rīkh Ghazzah*, 355. ‘Aṭallah, 1986:225.

(١) بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ اِنَّمَا یَعْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللّٰهِ مِنْ اٰمَنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَالیَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ وَاَقَامَ (٢)  
 الصَّلَاةَ وَاَتٰی الزَّكٰوٰةَ وَلَمْ یَجْشِ الْاِلٰهَ اَمْرًا بِاِنْشَاءِ <ع> هٰذَا الْمَسْجِدِ الْمُبَارَکِ لِلّٰهِ وَفِي طَاعَةِ اللّٰهِ (٣)  
 وَاِبْتِغَاءِ <ع> مَرْضَاتِهِ وَرَغْبَةً فِی مَغْفِرَتِهِ وَثَوَابِهِ الْعَبْدُ الْفَقِیْرُ اِلَى اللّٰهِ تَعَالٰی الشَّیْخُ الْیَاسِ (٤) بَنَ سَابِق  
 بِنِ حَضْرٍ غَفَرَ اللّٰهُ لَهُ وَاِثَابِهِ فِیْ شَهْرِ صَفَرٍ سَنَةِ اِحْدَ (!) وَسَبْعِیْنِ وَسْتَمِیَةِ (!) رَحِمَ اللّٰهُ مِنْ دَعَا  
 لَهُ وَجَمِیْعِ الْمُسْلِمِیْنَ (Last two words written vertically across lines 1-3.)

Basmalah. They only manage Allah's places of worship who have believed in Allah and the Last Day, have established the prayer and paid the Zakāt, and have feared nothing but Allah. (Q 9:18. Trans. Bell) Has ordered the foundation of this blessed mosque for Allah, and in the obedience of Allah, seeking His pleasure and wishing for His pardon and reward, the slave who is in need of Allah the Exalted, the Shaykh Ilyās b. Sābiq b. Khiḍr may Allah have mercy on him and reward him, in the month of Ṣafar of the year 671 (began 9 Aug. 1272). May Allah have mercy on whomsoever invokes (Allah) in his favour and (in favour of) all the Muslims.

L. A. Mayer remarked that the inscription on the lintel over the gate leading to the shrine's enclosure could well not be in its original site. "As there are no traces of a mosque in this enclosure, but only a ruined *qubbe* with a built-up tomb, it is highly probable that the inscription—like so many in Gaza—had been detached from the building it was originally designated for, and brought hither, to be used as a lintel." (Mayer, 1923:71)

Mayer translated the inscription only in part avoiding all supplications and invocations. Here the translation is given in full.

Ll. 2-3: The Qur'ānic spelling was followed on the whole, except for the word *aṣ-ṣalāt* which is written with *lāmaliḥ* as in many inscriptions, instead of the *wāw* of the Qur'ān. Although the inscription is supplied with points and vowels, as usual the *hamza* is omitted in *inshā*, and *ibtigā* (l. 3)

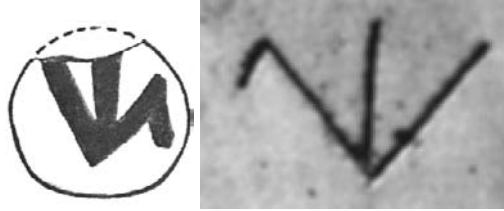
L. 4: The word *ستمیة* in the date is written as one word without an *alif* after the *mim* of *mi'ah* (مائة) which is the more regular spelling (see *Grammar* (1) 1955:258), and with *yā'*, as one finds practically in all the inscriptions until the modern times. The *hamza* which appears in *RCEA* (but not in Mayer's publication in *JPOS*), is the editors addition (as in other inscriptions); the inscription is very clear. This spelling, however rare, is not unusual in Arabic epigraphy (Mayer, *loc. cit.*).

L. 3. The builder of the Mosque Shaykh Ilyās b. Sābiq is not mentioned in all the literature that van Berchem, Mayer and I were able to examine. He must have been a local dignitary but with no official position. However, in the local tradition Shaykh Ilās became Nabī Ilyās, a transformation that is very normal, taking into consideration that Ilyās (and Ilyāsīn) is an important Qur'ānic prophet. He is usually identified with the Biblical Elijah, and his name entered into Arabic in its Greek form Elias, and this is the name which found its way into the Qur'ān, where he is

mentioned in the list of the “righteous” (*ṣāliḥīn*) alongside Zakariyyā, Yaḥyā and ʿĪsā. The text is in Q, 37:123-132, where there is a reference to the story of Elijah and the Baʿal priests. (1 Kings 18:19-41) Apart from this reference, the Qurʾān does not have any more substantial information about Ilyās. But whatever the Qurʾān does not have, tradition and popular legend developed extensively. Ilyās, was sometimes identified with al-Khiḍr or al-Khaḍr, another human who like Elijah had never tasted death. There was a large amount of sources from which these traditions and legends could borrow. In addition to the Biblical story there was a large body of both Jewish Rabbinical and Christian material which, at least in part, formed the repertoire of the storytellers, who ignited the imagination of the Qurʾānic interpreters and ḥadīth scholars. (“Ilyās” *EI*<sup>1</sup>, *EI*<sup>2</sup>; “Elijah,” *JE*)

L.A. Mayer, who dedicated a long discussion to this inscription, was particularly interested in the strange sign on both sides of the inscription. He finally identified it as a blazon of Ilyās b. Sābiq and included it in his *Islamic Heraldry* 1933:124. He remarked that although the sign is not posted on a shield in our inscription it should still be regarded as a blazon. In fact it is probably the earliest known Muslim heraldic emblem, the meaning of which he could not explain. (*ibid*, p. 18; emblem 24 p. 8) The fact that the sign appears so prominently on a space left for it on both sides of the inscription means that it was very important. Mayer proves that it was later attached to a shield, from a fragment on a vase, in the possession of the Arabic Museum in Cairo, “bottom of which shows the very same design of our inscription enclosed in a round shield (Pl. 7)... Thus the absence of a shield is the only difficult point in explaining our emblem straightaway as a blazon.” (Mayer, *JPOS*, 1923:72-73)

After a long discussion Mayer says: “It would seem, therefore possible to risk the hypothesis that we have before us the most ancient form preserved of a Mohammedan blazon; whilst the oldest form known from literature is the blazon of an amīr belonging to Saladin’s army...” (*ibid*, 73-74) Years later, however, Mayer had no reservations at all identifying the sign in the inscription as a blazon in his *Islamic Heraldry*. This is, however, the place to point out that there is a small difference in the design between the sign which appears on the vase and in Mayer’s drawings and the one in our inscription. The bent line, like a stylized polo-stick, appears on the vase and the drawings on the *right*, whereas here it is on the *left*. This might look like an unimportant detail, yet if we are talking about a sign of office or honour, it can not be accidental. I can not surmise, however, the reason for this change, not knowing the meaning of the blazon. The other point is that Ilyās b. Sābiq b. Khiḍr is not an ordinary Mamlūk, since even his grandfather was an Arab, at least as one can gather from the names appearing in the inscription, and from the lack of any expression that ties him to a master of some kind.



Pl. 7 The “blazons” (left, on the vase)

The absence of the shield, which Mayer discussed at length in his 1923 article, is also strange, particularly since the engraver of the inscription, and its delicate frame, would have had no problem of incising the shield, had there been one. The builder is defined as a *shaykh* which mainly designates a religious functionary, a leader of a tribe or simply a man of standing in the community, which further raises the question regarding a blazon, bestowed upon, or acquired by, a civilian dignitary.

The building of the mosque commemorated by this inscription took place during the rule of Baybars (658/1260-676/1277); but there is no mention of the sultan or the governor of the province. The emblem on this inscription remains therefore enigmatic in spite of the fact that Mayer identified it as a heraldic blazon. Is it possible that it is some kind of a magical or protective sign? Mayer also considered and rejected the possibility of a *wasm* pointing out that the *wasm* was burnt on animals (camels, sheep, and donkeys), not incised on inscriptions (*ibid.*). This is not entirely correct since we find many *wasms* incised on rocks in the Negev and Sinai (as well as elsewhere in the Middle East).

It should be pointed out that the sign under discussion resembles some of the *tamghas* used by the Mongols who had already appeared in our area. There is hardly any question that the Mamlūks who had already been in the service of Muslim rulers brought some of their signs with them that could have entered the Muslim territory in other ways too. (Mayer, *Heraldry*, 1933: 18-19)

### Mosque of Shaykh Faraj

Masjid ash-Shaykh Faraj is a small mosque located in the Daraj Quarter (*Hārat ad-Daraj*) of the city. This quarter is the oldest part of Gaza, and it is built over the site of the ancient city. In Gatt’s 1887 Plan of Gaza (E3) the mosque bordered on the north side of the built-up area facing vast plantations and agricultural land. Today it is located in the middle of Hārat ad-Daraj, but it does not serve as a Friday mosque. I could find no record relating to the date of its construction which took place long before the date of the following inscription that commemorates its restoration. ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, who collected local information for his book, says that he could not find any information about this small mosque. “All that we know is that shaykh Faraj was

the slave of sayyid Muḥammad Khaṭṭāb at the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> century. The latter witnessed some miracles performed by the former following which he paid him respect, and when he died he buried him in that place, and erected a mosque there (next to the tomb), and (when he—Muḥammad—died) he was buried next to him. The place thereafter became the burial place of the Khaṭṭāb family, that family, which ceased to exist in the fourteenth century.” (ʿĀrif al-ʿĀrif, 1943:347).

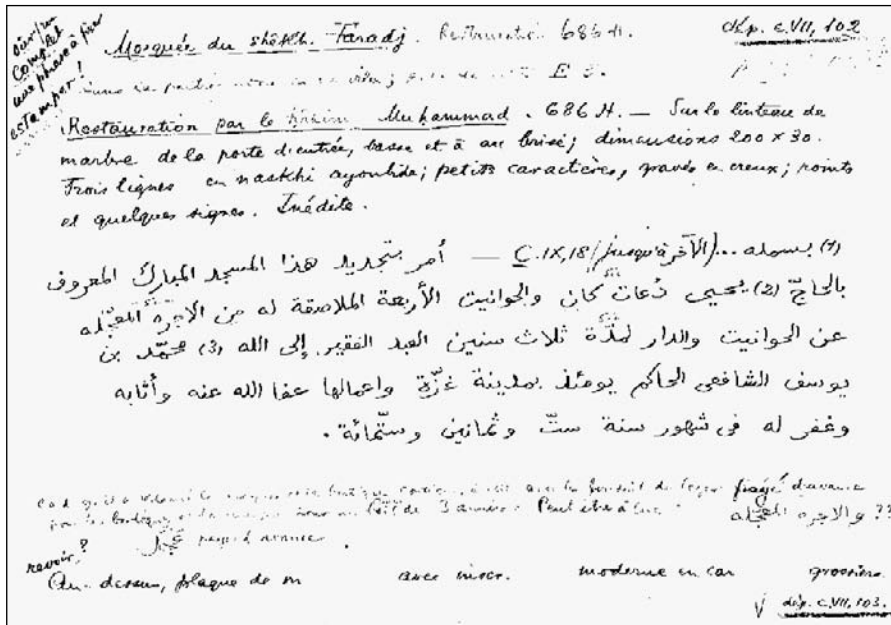
12

GAZA 686

Restoration text

686/1287-88

A marble lintel over the entrance gate of the mosque, 2.00x0.30m. 3 lines, Ayyūbid *naskhī*, small letters, incised; points and some vowels. Figs. 10, 10a (IAA photo No. 28333) Publication: MvB Coll. “Gaza” after c.VII, 102. (Pl.8). Inscription not mentioned by ʿĀrif al-ʿĀrif, *Taʾrīkh Ghazzah*, 347.



Pl. 8 Gaza 686: van Berchem's hand writing of his reading and notes

١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم انما يعمر مساجد الله من آمن بالله واليوم الآخر امر بتجديد هذا المسجد المبارك المعروف بالحاج ٢) يحيى دُعَات (!) كان (!) والحوانيت الاربعة الملاصقة له

من الاجرة المعجلة عن الحوانيت والدار لمدة ثلاث سنين العبد الفقير الى الله (٣) محمد بن يوسف الشافعي الحاكم يومئذ بمدينة غزة واعمالها عفا الله عنه واثابه وغفر له في شهر سنة ست وثمانين وستماية

Basmalah. They only shall manage Allah's places of worship who have believed in Allah and the Last Day. (Q. 9:18. Trans. Bell) Has ordered the restoration of this blessed mosque that is known (by name of) Yaḥyā Du'āt Kān, and the four shops adjacent to it, from the rent paid in advance for the shops and the house for the duration of three years, the slave who is in need of Allah, Muḥammad b. Yūsuf ash-Shāfi'ī, who at that time was the magistrate of the town of Gaza and its administrative districts. May Allah forgive him and reward him and absolve his sins. (This took place) in the months of the year 686 (=1287).

The inscription provides information about the buildings restored: the mosque, and four shops and one house that constituted the religious endowment dedicated for the maintenance of the mosque. Since the mosque itself and its endowed property needed repair, money for the work was collected from the tenants in the form of advance payments (*mu'ajjal*).

The endowment of income from land and buildings for the maintenance of religious foundations, even minor ones, was a common practice. I have dealt with the subject in the former volume of this work (*CIAP*, 3:53; 189ff), where the income from whole villages was dedicated for the maintenance of mosques *madrāsahs*, *zāwiyahs*, and other religious institutions. Shops and residential buildings adjacent to the edifice, for which their income was dedicated, were probably the safest of all endowments. Unless they were demolished, their income was on the whole, certain (unlike landed property that could easily be abandoned), and their maintenance was only seldom needed.

Ll.1-2: The name of the mosque in the inscription is rather strange and does not correspond to its current name: *masjid ash-Shaykh Faraj*. In our inscription the mosque is described as “the blessed mosque known as (by the name of) “*ḥājj Yaḥyā Du'āt Kān*.” I could find no such person nor such name in the literature I examined, and I can not venture any plausible explanation for it. The name Yaḥyā Du'āt (with long *tā'*) Kān is also very strange. There is no mistake in the reading, since the *dāl* is supplied with the vowel. (*dammah*) The word *kān* could be the Turkish (or Mongol) title that was modified into *khān*. It is, however, a strange name for a mosque.

L. 3: The restoration work of the properties concerned was ordered by a certain Muḥammad b. Yūsuf ash-Shāfi'ī described as “*ḥākim*” in the city of Gaza, and its administrative district. Max van Berchem discussed in detail the meaning of the term *ḥākim* which he chose to translate by the word “magistrate.” He emphasized that although the terms *ḥukm* and *ḥākim* represent respectively judiciary procedure and judiciary function, the term *ḥākim*, although many times meaning a judge, is not

always synonymous with *qāḍī*. In other words *ḥākim* is not always a *qāḍī* and *qāḍī* is not always *ḥākim*. Usually *ḥākim* was a title that represented a government functionary of any kind who exercised judicial authority as well, starting as high as the *wāṭī*, governor, of the province, and descending to the simple inspector of the markets (*muḥtasib*). Van Berchem quotes from two decrees dated 837/1427 and 876/1472 issued in favour of the Franciscans of Mount Sion “where the generic term” *ḥākim* distinctly designates the magistrates of Jerusalem, that is to say government functionaries, not canonical judges (الحكام بالقدس الشريف من الناظر والنائب والوالي).

This can be confirmed by two passages from Mujīr ad-Dīn who, describing the functions of the *amīr ḥājib*, says that he used “to judge between the people (*yaḥkum bayn an-nās*), and to him were referred all “matters related to perpetrators of crimes and similar affairs (*al-umūr al-mutaʿalliqaḥ bi-ʿarbāb al-jarāʿim wa-ghyriḥā*)”. (*CLA, Jérusalem, “Ville,”* 1: 235-237; “*Haram,*” 2:140, 341-342, 441; Nos. 205, 243; Mujīr, 1283:616. On the *ḥājib* see Qalqashandī, 4:19). In another place (*Opera Minora*, 1978:344f) van Berchem prepared the term *Polizeimeister*—chief of the police, to define the function of the *ḥākim* (see No. 50 below). The testimony of Mujīr ad-Dīn justifies this definition as well. I used the term “magistrate,” which relates in a more general way to internal security.

Having said that, it is not really clear what was the exact administrative function of Muḥammad b. Yūsuf ash-Shāfiʿī, the restorer of this mosque and the property endowed in its favour. On checking the names of the *qāḍīs* of Gaza at the time, we find that the *qāḍī* of the Shāfiʿī School was Jamāl ad-dīn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān b. ʿUthmān al-Mawṣilī (died in 699/1300) who filled the post from 679/1280-81 until his death. (ʿAtallah, 1986:144 and notes) I could not find any person with the name of Muḥammad b. Yūsuf holding any post in Gaza, which makes the information in this inscription unique. The passage in Mujīr ad-Dīn concerning the nomination of ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān b. ʿUthmān to the post of the *qāḍī* of Gaza is particularly important for understanding the meaning of the word “*al-ḥākim*” in this inscription.

In the year 677/1278-79, the post of the *qāḍī* of Gaza was vacated. In that same year Jamāl ad-Dīn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān b. ʿUthmān, who had become famous for his learning during his stay in Mawṣil (Mūṣul) came to Damascus and preached in its Grand Mosque and taught in two of its *madrasahs*. At the end of 679/April 1281, the grand *qāḍī* of all the Syrian provinces (*qāḍī al-mamālik as-shāmiyyah wa-al-ḥalabiyyah*) nominated him to the *ḥukm* in Gaza and also to the professorial position in the reputable *al-madrasah al-ṣalāḥiyyah* in Jerusalem, in place of the *qāḍī* Muḥyī ad-Dīn the former *qāḍī* of Gaza. It is clear that the term *ḥukm* in this report, (Mujīr, 1283:450=1973, 2:105), means the post of the *qāḍī*. And since at the time of our inscription the person in charge of the *ḥukm* was ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān b. ʿUthmān, it is impossible to decide which position was held by our Muḥammad b. Yūsuf who is described as the “*ḥākim* of Gaza and its districts.”

### Addendum

An excellent example of an endowment similar to the one described in our inscription, comes from Jerusalem. In 1968, during my survey of the Arabic inscriptions of Jerusalem, I found this inscription, which escaped van Berchem's eye, and published its photograph in 1969.

In 1979 the inscription was published without acknowledgement and with mistakes by Burgoyne and Amal Abu al-Hajj. (*Levant* 1979:123-124)

The inscription is embedded in the wall of a small mosque, facing east, in the street called The Jewish Quarter Way (*Tarīq Hārat al-Yahūd*), leading from the main bazaar in the Muslim Quarter to the Jewish Quarter. Because of the importance of this inscription and its relevance to our discussion, I decided to publish the full and correct text here.

12a

Jerusalem  
Endowment

1-10 Rabī' I 595/1-10 January 1199

A slab of marble 0.60x0.44m. embedded in the eastern wall of a small, one room mosque, known locally a *al-jāmi' aṣ-ṣaghīr* (the small mosque). 8 lines, Ayyūbid *naskhī*; small letters, incised; many points, no vowels; simple decorative element in line 1 dividing the *basmalah* from the Qur'ānic verse. Fig. 11.

١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم انما يعمر مساجد الله من ٢) آمن بالله واليوم الآخر وأقام الصلاة وآتا (!) الزكاة ولم يخش الا الله ٣) أمر بعمارة هذا المسجد (!) المبارك العبد الفقير الراجي رحمة ربه ٤) محمد بن محارب ثم اوقف على هذا المسجد ثلاثة (!) حوانيت من قبله حدها ٥) من القبلة الى قسارية (!) النصارا (!) ومن الشرق الطريق وفيه تفتح ابوابهم (!) ٦) ومن الشام المسجد ومن الغرب الى القسارية (!) وقف على الإمام والمؤذن ٧) وزيت المكان وحصره وقفا صحيحاً شرعياً في العشر الأول (!) ٨) من ربيع الأول سنة خمس وتسعين وخمس مائة

Basmalah. They only shall manage Allah's places of worship who have believed in Allah and the last day, have established the prayer and paid the *zakāt* and have feared nothing but Allah. (Q. 9:18. Trans. Bell) Has ordered the construction of this blessed mosque the poor slave who beseeches the mercy of his Lord, Muḥammad b. Muḥārib and he instituted as an endowment for this mosque three shops situated to its south. Their border on the south—( extends) to the market place of the Christians. On the east—the street into which their doors open. On the north—the mosque; on the west—(it extends) to the market place (of the Christians). The endowment is for (covering the expenses of) the *imām*, and the muezzin; the oil (for the lighting)

of the place, and for its straw mats, being a valid and religiously legal endowment (*waqf*); on the first ten days of Rabīʿ I the year 595(=1-10 Jan. 1199)

L.2: The spelling in this Qurʾānic verse is correct, but does not follow the usual Qurʾānic spelling of the words *ṣalāt* and *zakāt*. As I have already pointed out, this spelling is common in most of the inscriptions.

L.3: The *alif* in the words *hādihā al-masjid* is common to the two words; not unusual phenomena in inscriptions.

L.5: Note *abwāwhum* instead of *abwābuhā*—a grammatical mistake influenced by the colloquial language.

The exact details given here about the borders of the endowed property represent, no doubt, the far more detailed document of the *waqf* (*kitāb al-waqf*) kept in the religious court (Sharon, 1966). The same can be said about the details concerning the beneficiaries from the income of the waqf—the imām and the muezzin—and the other expenses for which this income was dedicated: the oil for the lamps and the straw mats for the floor. That *waqfs* were particularly established to provide the funds for supplying the oil for religious edifices we learn from a note by Qalqashandī. (*Ṣubḥ* 4:304) Speaking about the Prophet’s mosque in Medinah he says that the oil for its lamps used to be brought from Syria. “Then... during the caliphate of an-Nāṣir li-Dīn-Allah, 515/1180-622/1225 the oil arrived from Egypt; it was provided by religious endowments in it (...*kāna fī... khilāfat an-Nāṣir li-Dīn Allah yaṣil az-zayt min miṣr min awqāf bihā*).”

13

GAZA 687  
Great Mosque  
Restoration text

687/1288

The lintel of a gate of the Great Mosque—a block of marble, 2.00x0.70m. (approx.). 4 lines; early Mamlūk *naskhī*, small characters, points and few vowels; incised. Fig. 12. Publication: MvB Coll. c.VII, 113. *RCEA* 13:68, No. 4898 communicated by Louis Massignon. Photograph: MvB coll. “Gaza.” The following is a new reading with corrections.

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم انما يعمر مساجد الله من آمن بالله واليوم الآخر واقام الصلاة  
وآتى الزكوة ولم (٢) يخش الا الله فعسى اوليك ان يكونوا من المهتدين ولما سقط المسجد المعلق  
المعروف بانثاشا(٤) الامير المرحوم سيف الدين بلبان (٣) المستعربي انشي مكانه هذا المسجد

المبارك من مال الوقف المبارك المعروف بالامير سيف الدين المذكور في شهور سنة سبع (٤) وثمانين وستمئة (!) بنظر الامير سعد الدين كوجا الناصري الوصي اياهما الله واجرهما وغفر لهما ولمن صلا (!) فيه وترحم عليهما وجميع المسلمين

Basmalh. Q. 9:18 (complete). And when the suspended mosque, known by the name of its founder the deceased amīr Sayf ad-Dīn Balabān al-Mustaʿribī, collapsed, this blessed mosque was constructed in its place from the funds of the blessed waqf known by the name of the above-mentioned amīr Sayf ad-Dīn in the months of the year 687 (=1288) under the supervision of the amīr Saʿd ad-Dīn Kūjā an-Nāṣirī, the caretaker (*al-waṣī*) may Allah recompense them and repay them, and pardon them and whomever prays in it and invokes (Allah's) forgiveness for them and for all the Muslims.

L.1: Note that the word *zakāt* is spelt according to the Qurʾānic spelling but not the word *ṣalāt*.

Ll.2-3: The *nisbah* of the amīr Balabān is *al-mustaʿribī*. The inscription is clear. Correct accordingly *RCEA* reading (*al-mustaghribī*) and translation. This reading is also supported by Nuwayrī, as we shall soon see.

*RCEA: unshīʿa kaʿannahu. Read: unshīʿa makānahu*, and correct translation: “established in its place.” Sayf ad-Dīn Balabān al-Mustaʿribī was one of the Baḥrī amīrs, who left Egypt for Syria to organise a rebellion against the Sultan Aybak following his assassination of their leader, the amīr Aqṭāy. They came first to Gaza and from there they opened negotiations with the ruler of Damascus, the Ayyūbid an-Nāṣir Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn II (see above Nos. 6, 9). They entered into his service later that year and were rewarded by estates allocated to them in the coastal plain of Palestine. Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn II had secured the Palestinian coast through negotiations with Aybak. Balabān and his colleagues failed to convince the Damascene ruler to help them mount their rebellion, and in 655/1257, they left him and joined another Ayyūbid, al-Malik al-Mughīth of Karak, who furnished them with an army, only to be defeated by Aybak. (Nuwayrī, 29, 1992: 434ff.).

The petty politics of the time brought Balabān again to Egypt, and he entered the service of aẓ-Zāhir Baybars (658/1260-676/1277), and participated in the Sultan's battles against the Franks. He took part in the conquest and demolition of Caesarea in 663/1265, from where he was sent by the Sultan to demolish another fortress near Ḥalab (Aleppo). I could not find any more information about him after this date. (*Ibid.*, 30, 1990:268)

Two pieces of this information connect Balabān to Gaza. The first which speaks about him and other rebellious amīrs making Gaza their initial headquarters; the second refers to the estates (*iqṭāʿāt*) bestowed on them along the coastal plain which included Gaza. It is quite usual for an amīr to commemorate himself by building a religious institution and consecrate property for it in a form of a *waqf*.

L.4: The following is the information found about the amīr Sa‘d ad-Dīn Kūjā an-Nāṣirī, who is called al-Waṣī in the inscription. Massignon in the RCEA leaves the Arabic as is, regarding it as another title of the amīr. But the word means caretaker, legal guardian, and executor (of will). He must have been authorized at that time to use the funds from the *waqf* for the rebuilding of the mosque.

وفيها، (اي في سنة ٦٩٧) في يوم الإثنين حادي عشر جمادى الأولى، كانت وفاة الأمير سعد الدين كوجا الناصري. وكان يتولى نيابة دار العدل، وتولى ثغر الاسكندرية وكان بيده إمرة عشرة طواشية.

“And in it (the year 697) on Monday 11 Jumādā I died the Amīr Sa‘d ad-Dīn Kūjā an-Nāṣirī. He was entrusted with the superintendence of the House of Justice. He was the governor of the fortress of Alexandria and he had the rank of an amīr of ten.” (Nuwayrī (31) 1992:349)

### Zāwiyat Abū al-‘Azm

The *maqām* or *zāwiyah* of Abū al-‘Azm was situated on the eastern outskirts of old Gaza (Gatt plan of Gaza D6) next to Bāb al-Khalīl. However, van Berchem wrote the name “Shamshūn al-Djabbār” in a different place on the Plan (E5) called “el-Anbār”. In other words, Gatt and van Berchem are speaking about different locations. ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif (1943:354) indicated the exact location of the place “near the Muslim al-Faḥ School and to the north of the Amīriyyah High School.” From other descriptions it is clear that Abū al-‘Azm was on the western side of the Cemetery of Ibn Marwān, and therefore it is the one indicated in Gatt’s plan, and that van Berchem was told about another place, called Shamshūn al-Jabbār some 150m. to its west.

The name of the place is spelt in different ways: Abū al-‘Āzīm (Abil-‘Āzīm) (*RCEA* 13:95); “Shemshūm abū al-‘Āzem شمشوم ابو العازم” (Clermont Ganneau *AR* 2:380) and Abū al-‘Azm (‘Ārif al-‘Ārif 1943:354). Each one of these names is appropriate for Samson, whose memory was kept alive and commemorated in the sanctuary attributed to him. The name Shamshūn al-Jabbār is the best representation of the Hebrew Shimshon ha-Gibbor (שמشון הגבור) the appellation of the ancient hero whose name is so intimately connected with Gaza in the Book of Judges. ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif (*ibid*) mentions the place as a *mazār* of “Shaykh Muḥammad Shams ad-Dīn Abū al-‘Azm, one of the saints (*awliyā*) of the *maghāribah* (the people of the Maghrib, North Africa) who came to live in Gaza in the 9<sup>th</sup> century.” He adds: “Some believe that this Abū al-‘Azm is Shamshūn al-Jabbār who is mentioned in the Bible.”

14

GAZA 690

Construction and waqf text

25 Jumādā I 690/26 May 1291

About two thirds fragment of a frieze of marble, 0.80x0.40m. broken at the left hand corner, over a marble lintel of the gate leading to the sanctuary. 3 lines, the beginning of all missing, Mamlūk *nashkhī*, elegant, medium size characters, points and some vowels; in relief. Publication: MvB Coll. “Gaza,” c.VII, 62; *RCEA*, 13:95, No. 4942. Fig. 12a.

The information about the *mazār* ash-Shaykh Abū al-‘Azm from ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif’s *Ta’rīkh Gazzah*, has been quoted above. Claremont-Ganneau, (*loc. cit.*) gives no information about the place except for the name.

(١) [بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم انما يع—م مساجد الله من آمن بالله واليوم الآخر ٢)] [...] ربه الراجي عفوه ومغفرته حلال واوقف عليه الارض ٣)] [...] الم—سلمين وذلك بتاريخ الخامس وعشرين (!) من جمادى الاول (!) سنة تسعين وستماية

Basmalah. (Q. 9:18)... (...who aspires for the mercy of) his Lord and hopes for His pardon and forgiveness *ḥalāl*, and he endowed for it as a *waqf*—the land (known by the name of...?) for the sake of) the Muslims; and this (took place) on 25 Jumādā I 690 (=26 May 1291).

MvB noted that he understood from this text that a certain Jalāl(?) apparently assigned a plot of land as a *waqf* for the benefit of the sanctuary in 690/1291. He was probably the founder of the edifice to which some two centuries later the amīr Qānṣūh attached a mosque. However, Van Berchem raises the question as to whether the stone is *in situ*. He had heard from a local informant that the inscription was brought there from another building in the middle of the 19th century during some repair works in the place, which means that it was found somewhere else and fixed above the gate as a decorative element.

L.2: The word Jalāl is a guess. MvB left the word as *ḥalāl* and indicated that there is a sign (✓) above it to say that the letter is without a point either below or above.

### “13<sup>th</sup> century Cemetery”

#### “Maqbarat al-‘Awāmid—The Columns’ Cemetery”

Originally, this cemetery was situated some 330m. to the south of Bāb al-Dārūn, the southern gate of the medieval walled city (Gatt plan of Gaza A5). The name Dārūn is

the rather modern Arabic corruption of the Hebrew *darom*, or in Aramaic, *daroma*—the south. The medieval Arab writers used the name *Dārūm* and even *Dārūmā* (Marāšid, 2:507; Le Strange 1890:437). The Jews in the late Roman period used the name *darom* to designate the whole plain to the south of Lydda, the Christians extended the area included under this name to the Dead Sea comprising the whole Negev. Muqaddasī (1906:174) says that this was the name of the territory around Bayt Jibril (Eleutheropolis see also Marmardji 1951: 22, 71-72). Later, the Muslims confined the name to the fortress to the south of Gaza, which the Crusaders called Darom, and Daroma (as in Hebrew). This fortress was one of the most important strategic positions in the south and was considered the key to Egypt, which both the Crusaders and the Muslims fought to capture and keep. (Smith, 1968:58f). The Gate of Gaza on the southern part of the city called Bāb ad-Dārūn (Dārūm) led to this fortress and was naturally called after it. MvB calls the cemetery simply: “a cemetery from the 13<sup>th</sup> century.” He saw five columns there inserted into the ground, each with a funerary inscription (the following inscription is No. 1 in MvB files). For this reason the cemetery is also called “Maqbarat al-‘Awāmīd”—The Cemetery of the Columns.

According to ‘Arif al-‘Arif (1943:278) the local name of the cemetery is *Maqbarat al-Mujāhidīn*, the Cemetery of the Warriors (in the Holy War). According to local tradition, some of Saladin’s warriors who had died in the wars against the Crusaders were buried in it; hence its name. Since the city of Gaza grew considerably, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the cemetery is now in the middle of the town traversed by roads which have divided it into a few plots.

15

GAZA 691

Epitaph of a Muslim

Muḥarram 691/Began 24 Dec 1291

Marble column (*shāhid*), located in the cemetery. No details in MvB. Publication: MvB Coll. “Gaza” c.VII, 107. (No photograph)

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ کُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ هَذَا قَبْرُ الْفَقِیْرِ اِلٰی رَبِّهِ الرَّاجِیِ عَفْوُهُ الْغَرِیْبِ  
الشَّهِیْدِ مُحَمَّدِ اِخْوَابَكْرٍ [ابن ابی بکر؟] بن قنقاس (!) القرمی توفاه (!) اِلٰی رَحْمَةِ اللّٰهِ تَعَالٰی فِی شَهْرِ  
مَحْرَمِ سَنَةِ اَحَدٍ وَتَسْعِیْنِ وَسِتْمِائَةِ رَحْمَةِ اللّٰهِ

Basmalah. Every soul shall taste death. (Q. 3:185, 21:35. Trans. Arberry) This is the tomb of him who is needy of his Lord and who beseeches His forgiveness, the foreigner, the martyr Muḥammad Akhwābakr (?) [Ibn Abī Bakr?] b. Qunqās (?) al-Qiramī. He passed into the mercy of Allah the Exalted on the month of Muḥarram 691 (began 24 December 1291)

The *nisbah* of the deceased could be either Al-Qīramī or al-Qīrimī. (*Lubb*, 1840: 206)

This inscription is yet another example of a stranger, probably a soldier, who died in battle, or so it seems, for he is referred to as *shahīd* (see above Nos. 4, 9). There is a similar epitaph that was found in Balāṭah (*CIAP*, 2:10-11), dated 636/1238, and a fragment from an earlier date found in ‘Aqabah (Aylah) (*CIAP*, 1:97-98). Travellers, pilgrims, soldiers, and people in general, who died away from home, were buried by the Muslim communities in the place of their death. In most cases, their burial-sites remained anonymous. Only in a few cases, where funds were available, either from the belongings of the deceased or from contributions, a proper tomb was built and an epitaph was attached to it. It is natural that we possess only a few such inscriptions, but they reflect the frequency of strangers tombs.

On the other hand the description of the dead stranger (*gharīb*), as a *shahīd* does not necessarily mean that he died in war, since according to a *hadith* any stranger who died away from his family is a *shahīd*—*mawt ghurbah-shahadah*—the death away from home is martyrdom. (Ibn Mājah, *Sunan*, *Janā’iz*, Bāb 61 (*fīman māta gharīban*), No. 1613)

The phenomenon of strangers found proper expression in literature. In the huge Muslim Empire, even when it was divided into many political units, there was much movement of people from one place to the other, and many a time over great distances for various reasons, particularly pilgrimage (*hajj*) and commerce. It is not surprising that a particular type of literature was created compiling anecdotes and poems about strangers. One such book is—*Kitāb Udabā’ al-Ghurabā’*—the Book of Strangers, attributed to Abū al-Faraj al-Isfahānī. (See *Book of Strangers*, 2000)

The name of the deceased is Muḥammad, but van Berchem was not sure about the reading of the following word. It looks like Ajwābkr, or Aḥwābakr or Akhwābakr. None of these combinations has any meaning. The reading of ibn Abū Bakr is a van Berchem’s guess.

The name Qunqās, Qanqās or any combination of similar letters does not exist in Arabic literature. Unfortunately, I could not find a copy or photograph of this inscription.

16

GAZA 691a

Epitaph of a Muslim

21-30 Ramaḍān 691/5-14 Sep. 1292

A block of marble, 0.64x0.26m., kept in the storeroom of the Great Mosque. 9 lines, professional provincial early Mamlūk *nashīh*, points and many vowels, lines

divided by thin bands; incised. Fig. 13 (IAA photo of object No. 852/3), Fig. 13a (IAA squeeze photo No. 4188 of 852/3)

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم (٢) كل من عليها فان هذا قبر (٣) الفقير الى ربه الراجي عفوهِ  
(٤) ابراهيم بن علم الدين سنجر (٥) الجالقي توفي الى رحمة الله (٦) في العشر الأخير من رمضان  
(٧) المبارك سنة احد (!) وتسعين (٧) وستمائة (!) رحم الله من ترحم عليه (٩) وجميع المسلمين

Basmalah. All that dwells on it is perishing. (Q, 55:26. Trans. after Arberry). This is the tomb of the needy for his Lord who beseeches His forgiveness, Ibrāhīm b. ‘Alam ad-Dīn Sanjar al-Jāliqī. He passed into the mercy of Allah in the last ten days of the blessed (month of) Ramaḍān, 691 (=5-14 Sept. 1292). May Allah forgive whomever invokes pardon for him and (for) all the Muslims.

In the literature that I could check, there is no one called ‘Alam ad-Dīn Sanjar al-Jāliqī, although the name and the title belonged to many influential Mamlūk amīrs. The title ‘Alam ad-Dīn goes with the name Sanjar. No honorific titles accompany the name of the deceased or the name of his father. The tombstone, though inscribed by a professional hand, is rather simple. This could only mean that in spite of the fact that the name and the title ‘Alam ad-Dīn Sanjar usually belong to an amīr, it is not impossible that they also belonged to an ordinary soldier. The *nisbah* al-Jāliqī was also connected with the name of *amīrs* (Ibn Baṭṭūtah, 1967:108; Ibn Hajar, Dūrar, 1:75).

17

GAZA 692

Epitaph of a Muslim

c.692/1293

A fragment of a slab of marble, 0.25x0.177 (squeeze measurements), kept in the storeroom of the Great Mosque. 3 lines, provincial *naskhī*, points, some vowels and signs; incised (in the squeeze it looks in relief). Fig. 14 (IAA squeeze photo No. 4197).

(١) كل من [عليها فان... (٢) هذا قبر الفقير الى [الله تعالى... (٣) جمال الدين حيدر بن سعيد  
[...]

(Basmalah). All that dwells (on it is perishing...) (Q, 55:26. Trans. after Arberry). This is the tomb of the needy for (Allah, the Exalted...) Jamāl ad-Dīn Ḥaydar b. Sa‘īd...

L.3: the name Ḥaydar was forgotten at first by the engraver and was added later, vertically, above the *nūn* of “ad-Dīn.”

The inscription belongs to the same period of the inscription from 683. I registered it, arbitrarily under the year 692 to keep the inscriptions in order.

18

GAZA 694

“Maqbarat al-‘Awāmīd—The Columns’ Cemetery”  
Epitaph of a Muslim

5 Sha‘bān, 694/ 1 July 1294

On a marble column in the ‘Awāmīd Cemetery, (no measurements). 11 lines, provincial *naskhī*, small letters; incised. Above the first line, there are two shields with emblems pointing in the same direction. Publication: MvB Coll. “Gaza,” c. VII, 106; *RCEA*, 13:125 No. 4979; Mayer, *Heraldry* 1933:53. (No photo).

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم (٢) كل نفس ذائقة الموت هذا قبر الفقير الى (٣) رحمة الله  
الراجي عفو الله (٤) الشهيد الحاج نور الدين علي ابن الامير (٥) الاجل شهاب الدين بشارة  
ابن حُرْمِشَاه (؟) ابن (٦) ... [نـ]—صِر السلوري التركماني توفاه (!) الى رحمة (٧) الله تعالى في  
الخامس من شهر (٨) شعبان المبارك سنة اربعة (!) (٩) وتسعين وستماية رحمه الله (١٠) وارحم  
من ترحم عليه وعلى (١١) جميع المسلمين

Basmalah. Every soul shall taste death (Q. 3:185, 21:35, 29:57. Trans. Arberry) This is the tomb of one yearning for Allah’s mercy, hoping for his Lord’s forgiveness, the martyr the *Ḥājj* Nūr ad-Dīn ‘Alī the son of the most exalted amīr Shihāb ad-Dīn Bishārah b. Khurramshāh b. ... Naṣr as-Salūrī the Turcoman (*at-Turkmānī*). He passed into the mercy of Allah the Exalted on the 5<sup>th</sup> of the blessed (month of) Sha‘bān, the year 694 (= 1 July 1294). May Allah have mercy on him. And (O Allah) have mercy upon whomever invokes compassion for him and for all the Muslims!

In his notes MvB listed this inscription as No. 2 among the inscriptions found in the cemetery.

There is no doubt that the deceased, ‘Alī b. Bishārah was a Mamlūk amīr. His blazon “*Tamgha* facing to the left on undivided shield” was engraved prominently above the first line of the inscription (Emblem No. 24 in Mayer’s table, *Heraldry*, 1933:8), but his name does not figure in the sources. The name of ‘Alī’s grandfather is not very clear, but van Berchem read it Khurramshāh, which seems almost certain. Mayer preferred this name too. In his *Heraldry* (pp. 18-19) he discussed the blazons

which consist or contain the Mongolian *tamghas*, a discussion which we have already encountered above in No. 11 (Nabī Ilyās from 671).

There are two more details identifying the deceased: his *nisbah*—as-Salūrī and his ethnic origin “the Turcoman.” Although the *nisbah* of as-Salūrī is rare it is found in literature, at least once, belonging to a *faqih* in Ḥalab, Badr ad-Dīn Abū Bakr b. ‘Uthmān b. Qujmak as-Salūrī (Ibn al-‘Adīm, (10) 1988: 4346). In his biography it is stated that this *faqih* was also “a Turcoman from the cavalry of Salūr from the Turcomans of the city of Manbij.” (أبو بكر بن عثمان بن قجمك: السلوري المنبجي الحنفي، فقيه حنفي المذهب عارف بالفقه، صالح ورع تركماني من خيل سلور، من تركمان بلد منبج) It is clear that the Turcoman origin went together with the *nisbah* “Salūrī” which indicated belonging to a certain contingent of Turkish horsemen.

It is interesting that there are no titles attached to the name ‘Alī b. Bishārah except for “Ḥājj” which only indicates that he made the pilgrimage to Mecca. The presence of the heraldic blazon without any indication of rank could only mean that the heraldic shields belonged to his father, who was a Mamlūk but not to him since he was already born a free man and as such belonged to *awlād an-nās*. (A. Levanoni, 2006: 96f.) Even so, the designation at-Turkmānī wishes to emphasize that he had come from a noble Mamlūk family whose origins were Turkish.

For some reason Van Berchem did not return to study the inscription in detail. (See the other epitaphs from the “Awāmīd cemetery” below inscriptions dated 698, 699, 705. MvB c. VII, 106, and 107.)

19

GAZA 697

Grand Mosque

Construction text

Rabī I 697/17 Dec.–16 Jan. 1298

A long slab of marble, 1.90x0.25m. located above one of the windows of the southern *īwān* of the Great Mosque. 2 lines crowded monumental Mamlūk *nashkh*, points, many vowels; in relief. Fig. 15. Publication: mentioned by van Berchem in Meyer, *History of Gaza* 1907: 150; MvB Coll. “Gaza,” c.VII, 85; ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, *Ta’rīkh Ghazzah*, 335; ‘Aṭallah 1986:236.

١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم في أيام مولانا السلطان الملك المنصور حسام الدنيا والدين لاجين المنصوري ادم الله ايامه ٢) فتح هذا شبك النور المبارك في ولاية العبد الفقير الى ربه سنقر

السلحدار العلاني في شهر ربيع الاول سنة سبع وتسعين وستمية (!) اثابه الله وغفر له وجميع  
المسلمين

Basmalah. In the days of our lord the Sultan, the victorious King (*al-malik al-manṣūr*) the sword of the world and the religion (*ḥusām ad-dunyā wa-ad-dīn*) Lājīn al-Manṣūrī may Allah perpetuate his life, this window of light was opened, during the governorship of the slave, who is needy for his Lord, Sunqur the armour-bearer (*silahdār*) al-‘Alā’ī in the month of Rabī‘ I 697 (began 17 December 1297). May Allah repay him and pardon him and all the Muslims.

L. 2: *Shubbāk an-nūr*. There is no question about this reading. It seems that the expression does not simply mean a window that lets light in, an obvious reason for opening a window, but that the word *nūr* was attached to the window as a form of blessing. The opening of the window from the mosque to the *ṭwān* was part of an extensive building project, which took place in the great mosque in 697.

The sultan Ḥusām ad-Dīn Lājīn ruled for about thirteen months (December 1297 until January 1299). He was deposed and killed, making way for the second reign of an-Nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalāwun that lasted ten years. The renovations in the great mosque of Gaza were accomplished, partly at least, during his time of office, so that his name was commemorated by this inscription engraved very close to his overthrow and death.

The amīr Sunqur al-‘Alā’ī is probably the amīr mentioned by Maqrīzī a few years later in the events of the year 702/1302 during the celebrations following the victory over the Mongols (Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 2, 1997:361).

20

GAZA 697a  
Great Mosque  
Construction text

Sha‘bān 697/14 May-12 June 1298

Three slabs of marble, the central one forms the lintel of the eastern gate under the minaret of the Great Mosque, opening into the main street in the east, and two on the right and left flanking walls of the gate. All three slabs 3.30x0.40m. (approx) join together. The two on the sidewalls join the central slab of the lintel at a right angle. 2 lines; monumental, crowded, Mamlūk *naskhī*, points, many vowels some simple decorations added to fill empty spaces, bands between the lines; in relief. Figs. 16, 16a. (Photos: IAA, MvB Coll.). Publication: L.A. Mayer, *RCEA* 13:175-176, No. 5047; ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, *Ta’rīkh Ghazzah*, 334; ‘Aṭallah 1986:234.

١) بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ تَبَارَكَ الَّذِیْ اِنْ شَاءَ <ع> جَعَلَ لَكَ خَیْرًا مِنْ ذٰلِكَ جَنَاتٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهَارُ وَیَجْعَلُ لَكَ قَصُوْرًا اَمْرًا بِاِنْشَاءِ <ع> هٰذَا الْبَابِ الْمُبَارَكِ وَالْمَآذِنَةَ الْمُبَارَكَةَ مَوْلَانَا وَسَیْدِنَا السُّلْطٰنَ الْمَلِكَ الْمَنْصُوْرَ حَسَامَ الدُّنْیَا وَالدِّیْنِ اَبُو الْفَتْحِ لَاجِیْنَ الْمَنْصُوْرِ رَضِیْ اَمِیْرَ الْمُؤْمِنِیْنَ اِدَامَ اللّٰهُ اَیَّامَهُ وَنَشْرَیْ فِی الْخَافِقِیْنَ ٢) بِالنَّصْرِ الْوِیْتَهُ وَاَعْلَامَهُ وَاَعَزَّ اَنْصَارَهُ وَاَعْوَانَهُ وَوَزَارَ <ع> (!) وَاَمْرًا <ع> وَحِکْمًا وَجُنْدَهُ وَخَدَمًا وَحُكْمًا فِیْ مَهْجِ الْمَشْرُکِیْنَ سَهَامَهُ وَسَنَانَهُ وَحَسَامَهُ وَاوْزَعَهُ شُکْرًا مَا اَنْعَمَ عَلَیْهِ وَاَحْسَنَ فِی الدُّنْیَا وَالْآخِرَةِ اِلَیْهِ وَتَوَلَّى عِمَارَتَهُمَا الْعَبْدُ الْفَقِیْرُ اِلَى رَبِّهِ الرَّاجِیْ عَفْوَهُ سَنْقَرُ السُّلْحَدَارِ الْعَلَائِیِّ الْمَنْصُوْرِ بِنَظَرِهِ فِی اَیَّامِ وِلَايَتِهِ وَكَانَ الْفَرَاغُ مِنْهُمَا فِی شَهْرِ شَعْبَانَ الْمُبَارَكِ سَنَةِ سَبْعٍ وَتَسْعِیْنَ وَسِتْمِائِیَّةَ غَفَرَ اللّٰهُ لَهُ وَلِجَمِیْعِ الْمُسْلِمِیْنَ

Basmalah. (Q. 25:11 complete). Has ordered the establishment of this blessed gate and the blessed minaret our lord and master the sultan the victorious king the sword of the world and of the religion Abū al-Faṭḥ Lājīn al-Manṣūrī who is obedient to Amīr al-Mu'minīn. May Allah perpetuate his (Lājīn's) life and unfurl in the east and west his victorious banners and standards, and strengthen his helpers and his aids, his ministers, amīrs, and governors, his troops and his servants; and firmly plunge his arrows, spears and swords into the hearts of the polytheists, and reveal to him that he should be thankful for the grace and goodness which He has bestowed on him in this world and the world to come. And has taken upon himself the building of the two (the gate and the minaret), the servant who is in need of his Lord and who hopes for His forgiveness Sunqur the armour bearer (*silahdār*) al-'Alā'ī al-Manṣūrī, under his own surveillance during the period of his governorship. The work on the two (projects) was completed in the blessed month of Sha'bān 697. (Began 14 May 1298.) May Allah pardon him and all the Muslims.

This document about the works carried out in the great mosque of Gaza is more detailed than the previous one. This is understandable. The opening of a window is of minor importance compared to the building of a major gate for the mosque and a new minaret. The inscription matches the task. The sultan's name is accompanied by a long string of benedictions, including a rather rare one in which Allah is asked to reveal to the sultan the knowledge of how to be thankful for the divine grace which had been bestowed on him. I found it difficult to translate this idea expressed in a few words: وَأَوْزَعَهُ شُكْرًا مَا اَنْعَمَ عَلَيْهِ وَاَحْسَنَ فِی الدُّنْیَا وَالْآخِرَةِ اِلَیْهِ. The verb *awza'a* means to reveal (God) anything to anyone. Since all the verbs prior to this one are in the past tense and Allah is the subject of the long combined sentence, this verb too should be read in the past tense. It represents a wish for a divine revelation instructing the sultan how to thank Allah for all the goodness that He granted him in this world and in the world to come. Presumably, the building projects of the monarch in a house of worship should be taken as a response to this revelation, and the token of thanks to Allah for His benevolence and grace.

L.1: رَضِیْ اَمِیْرَ الْمُؤْمِنِیْنَ. It was extremely important to the Mamlūk sultans to get the approval of the titular 'Abbāsīd Caliph who resided in Cairo. Although the

Caliph was but a figurehead without any power whatsoever, he was still regarded as a source of legitimacy which every sultan sought when he came to power. The Caliph could hardly refuse to declare his consent, and although his support of any sultan was a ceremonial act, its significance for the Mamlūk sovereign was far more important than the particular caliph who issued it. The caliph at the time was the second ‘Abbāsīd caliph in Egypt, Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad al-Ḥākīm (I) bi-Amr Allah al-Qubbī. He was the first to be installed in a pompous ceremony by Baybars on 9 Muḥarram 661/24 November 1262, and was given a royal residence in Cairo. The sultan as well as the major dignatories of the state swore allegiance to him as caliph and an order was issued by Baybars that his name should be mentioned in the Friday sermon (*khutbah*) throughout the empire. He died on 18 Jumādā I 701/21 December 1301 (*Nujūm*, 7:118-119). During his almost 40 years in office, he was asked to give his caliphal ratification to no less than eight sultans (even nine, if one counts the two terms of an-Nāṣir Muḥammad). Lājīn was the last, since he was followed by an-Nāṣir Muḥammad who had already been ratified in his first reign (694/1294).

The usage of the term *raḍiyy* to describe the position of the sultan vis-à-vis the Caliph reflects exactly the notion of consent. The dictionary meaning of the word is “responsible, lover, obedient.” In this case, the sultan is described as the one who loves and obeys the caliph and at the same time as he who gained the caliph’s pleasure and approval.

21

GAZA 698

“Maqbarat al-‘Awāmīd—The Columns’ Cemetery”

Epitaph of a Muslim

698/1299

Epitaph of Muḥammad al-‘Ajamī. MvB Coll. “Gaza,” c. VII, 106 (not copied). MvB note: “Tomb of Ḥusām ad-Dīn Muḥammad al-‘Ajamī. This is all in my carnet.”

22

GAZA 699

“Maqbarat al-‘Awāmīd—The Columns Cemetery”

Epitaph of a Muslim

Tomb of the Amīr Nūr ad-Dīn Kaykaldī

18 Sha‘bān 699/27 May 1300

Marble column (*shāhid*) in the ‘Awāmīd Cemetery. 11 lines Mamlūk *naskhā*, points, some vowels; incised. Publication: MvB Coll. “Gaza,” c.VII, 107. (No photograph)

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم (٢) كل نفس ذائقة الموت (٣) هذا قبر الامير الكبير (٤) المرحوم  
[نو]ر(?) الدين (٥) كيكلدي الرومي الظا[هر]ي (٦) السعيدي السلحدار (٧) توفي الى رحمة  
الله في (٨) ثامن عشر شعبان سنة (٩) تسع وتسعين وستماية (١٠) رحم الله من ترحم عليه  
(١١) وجميع المسلمين

Basmalah. Every soul shall taste death (Q. 3:185, 21:35, 29:57) This is the tomb of the deceased, the great amīr, Nūr ad-Dīn Kaykaldī, ar-Rūmī (“the Greek”) az-Zāhirī, as-Sa‘īdī, the armour bearer. He died on 18 Sha‘bān 699 (=27 May 1300), May Allah have mercy on whomever invokes mercy for him and for all the Muslims.

I could not find material about this amīr. His *nisbah* az-Zāhirī refers to his master the Sultan az-Zāhir Baybars. After the death of Baybars he became the Mamlūk of his son and successor, as-Sa‘īd Bereke Khān, hence his *nisbah* as-Sa‘īdī. He is also called ar-Rūmī which could mean that he was of a Christian origin. MvB note reads: “This can not be Kaykaldī an-Najmī of ‘Alī al-Bakkā (Hebron) who was still alive in 702.” (See *RCEA* 13:233-234, No. 5146)

23

GAZA 705

“Maqbarat al-‘Awāmīd—The Columns Cemetery”

Epitaph of a Muslim

705/1305-6

Tombstone of Ismā‘īl b. Muḥammad al-Qiramī. Publication: MvB Coll. “Gaza,” c.VII, 107. Not copied; no details, no photo. MvB note: “Nothing to do with Muḥammad al-Qiramī of Jerusalem.” (died 788).

The tomb of Muḥammad al-Qīramī is in the same cemetery with an epitaph dated 691/1292 (above: No. 15). It is very possible that the present epitaph belongs to his son—Ismaʿīl b. Muḥammad al-Qīramī.

### Great Mosque

In MvB files there is an entry and a photograph of an inscription over the lintel of one of the windows of the Great Mosque. In my files there is another photograph of a sister inscription containing exactly the same text and the same style of writing. But the two photographs are not reproductions of the same inscription. The one photographed by van Berchem is damaged in the middle. A large hole destroyed two words in the middle of the second line. The photograph in my files, which came from the archives of the IAA, is complete. Since MvB's photograph was taken prior to the one of the IAA, one has to rule out the possibility that the inscription had been photographed before the damage. However, the very end of both inscriptions, containing the date, was covered by plaster when the mosque underwent repairs. Max van Berchem left a reading of one inscription but there is no sign that he encountered any damage. He also left no sign that the end of the inscription was covered. His reading is confident and the date—706 is clear. In the *RCEA* there is the reading of the identical inscription by L. A. Mayer. This reading is less confident. It seems that it is the reading of the damaged inscription since there is a gap in the reading of the damaged area although Mayer reads one word **وانشاه** in line 2 which was one of the words damaged by the hole. The only explanation is that Mayer reconstructed the word, but the added letters do not appear in square brackets. The lines are also not numbered. Part of the inscription was left without translation. It seems that Mayer was unable to offer a certain reading for the end of the inscription, and he decided that its date was 736/1336. But since the number thirty is nowhere to be seen in the inscription he added it in square brackets. In other words, like van Berchem, he recognized the date six (*sittah*) and seven hundred (*sab' mi'ah*) but for some reason added the number thirty (*wa-thalāthīn*).

24

Gaza 706, 706a  
Construction text

706/1306-1307

Two slabs of marble, 1.94x0.21m. (MvB measurements 2.00x0.20) forming the lintel under the arch of two windows opening from the mosque to the portico. Each inscription 2 lines, early Mamlūk *naskhī*, small letters, points, and some vowels; in

relief. Simple decorations added to fill empty spaces. The inscriptions do not seem to be *in situ*, first because they are over a window, not a door, and secondly because they are nowhere near the *mihṛāb*. Figs. 17, 17a. Publication: MvB coll. “Gaza,” c.VII, 84; L.A. Mayer in *RCEA* 15:58, No. 5686 (incomplete; the identical inscription 706a most probably from another window).

١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم انما يعمر مساجد الله من امن بالله واليوم الاخر واقام الصلاة (!)  
 واتا (!) الزكاة (!) ولم يخشا (!) الا الله وعسا (!) أولائك ان يكونوا من المهتدين جدد هذا ٢) الباب  
 واخلراب في ايام مولانا السلطان الملك الناصر خلد الله ملكه وكان السبب في ذلك (!)  
 وانشاه (!) العبد الفقير الى الله تعالى ابراهيم بن محمد الحاجب كان عفا الله عنه وكان الفر [أ] غ  
 منه في سنة ستة (!) وسبع مائة

Basmalah. (Q, 9:18 complete). This gate and the *mihṛāb* were renewed in the days of our lord the sultan al-Malik an-Nāṣir, may Allah perpetuate his kingship, and the person who caused its happening and its establishment, was the slave who is in need of Allah the Exalted, Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad the former chamberlain. May Allah pardon him. The conclusion (of the project) was in the year 706 (=1306-07)

L.1: The opening Qur’ānic verses of the inscription contain diversions from the spelling of the canonical text, and one clear grammatical mistake. In spite of the fact that Q, 9:18 is a very common opening in construction texts, the writer of the inscription deviated from the Qur’ānic spelling, in the words *ṣalāt* and *zakāt*. This, however, is common in inscriptions as I have already noted a few times before. Less common are other divergences in the words *wa-ātā* and *wa-‘asā* ending with a long *alif*, and the verb *yakhshā* which was written with an *alif* after *wa-lam* contrary to the Qur’ānic text and the grammatical rules which demand that the ending of the verb be with a short vowel. Since neither van Berchem nor the *RCEA* quote the Qur’ānic verse, these small, but significant variants, went unnoted.

L.2: It is rather unusual that the Sultan an-Nāṣir Muḥammad is mentioned in this inscription without any honourific title except the word *mawlānā*, our lord, which is less than the minimum title, if one compares this inscription with some of the inscriptions from his third reign, 709/1309–741/1340, such as the minaret of the great mosque in Ramlah dated 718/1318 (*RCEA* 15:127-128 No. 5401). However, there is another inscription from Gaza from the same year (718/1318) (No. 27 below) which shows the same scarcity of titles but at least mentions an-Nāṣir’s father al-Malik al-Manṣūr (Qalāwun).

*Wa-kāna as-sabab*. Correct Mayer who read *wa-taḥassana as-sabab* by mistake. MvB’s reading is the correct one!

ذلك written with an *alif* after the *dhal*. The variant was noted by MvB but not by Mayer.

The sentence **وكان السبب في ذلك وانشاه** can be read in two ways: the last word can be read as a verb **انشأه** and translated accordingly “and he established it;” it can be read as a verbal noun *inshā’ihi* “its establishment.” Such a reading gives more solidity to the sentence. I opted in my translation for this latter reading since it does not change the meaning of the sentence either way. The fact that the reading *ansha’ahu* seems more fitting to the text should not exclude the other reading since in any case the *hamzah* in both cases is missing whether it comes above the *alif* or after it before the *hā*. As far as I can remember, the *hamzah* sign was always left out of inscriptions until modern times.

**الحاجب كان** The verb *kana* here means that the person in charge was a *former ḥājib*, which means to say that at the time of his involvement with the building project he was no longer a chamberlain. (On *ḥājib* and *amīr ḥājib* see Qalqashandī, 4:185.)

Note that the *sab’umi’ah*, was written in two words, a deviation from the practice to write the hundreds in one word

Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-Ḥājib: I could not find anything about him in the sources.

25

GAZA 707-709

Great Mosque

Foundation text of a castle

ca. 707-709/1307–10

A slab of marble, 0.80x0.30m. Fixed about 1.50m. above the ground over a pillar at the southeastern angle of the portico, in the court of the mosque. A fragment of a beautiful inscription. 2 incomplete lines, Mamlūk *naskhī*, monumental, elegant, large characters, lines divided by band, points and some vowels; in relief. Fig. 18. Publication: MvB coll. “Gaza,” c.VII, 78.

The inscription contains no date but it can safely be dated to the period of the builder 707-709. The following reading attempts to complete the places that van Berchem left open (see discussion below).

[بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم تبارك الذي ان شاء > جعل لك خيرا من ذلك جنات ١) تجري  
من تحتها] — الانهار ويجعل لك قصورا أكمل عمارة هذا القصر في ايام [مولانا السلطان  
الملك الناصر ناصر الدنيا والدين ابي الفتح محمد ٢) ابن السلطان الشهيد الملك المنصور قلاون  
خلد الله ملكه وسلطانه باشارة الـ] — عبد [الـ] فقير الى الله تعالى الامير ركن الدين بيبرس  
العلائي نائب [مدينة غزة في سنة ثمان وسبعماية (؟)]

(Basmalah. Blessed be He who, if He willeth, will appoint for thee something better than that— Gardens through which) the rivers flow; and will appoint for thee castles (Q, 25:11. Trans. Bell) The building of this castle was finished during the days (of our lord the Sultan al-Malik an-Nāṣir the protector of the world and the religion Abū al-Faṭḥ Muḥammad the son of the martyred Sultan al-Malik al-Manṣūr Qalāwun may Allah perpetuate his kingship and rule by the orders of) the slave who is in need of Allah the Exalted, the amīr Rukn ad-Dīn Baybars al-‘Alāī the governor of (the city of Gaza in the year 708/1308(?))

I read the beginning of the main inscription using the passive voice since the *kasrah* under the word *ukmila* is clear. However if the *kasrah* does not belong here, then the inscription can also be read in the active voice with the verb *akmala* as the key verb of the long sentence. In this case the verb connects directly with *al-‘abd al-faḡr* as the subject of the sentence, and the word *bi’ishārat*, suggested in my reconstruction, should be deleted.

The choice of the Qur’ānic verse is very appropriate since it contains the word *quṣūr*, castles, that serves as a divine reference to the building project in the *qaṣr* of Gaza.

There is no doubt that the inscription is not *in situ*. It was originally fixed somewhere in the castle, and this part was taken from its ruins and fixed on the pillar inside the Great Mosque.

The castle mentioned here is the Castle of Gaza, a Crusader castle built in 544/1149, before the fall of Ashqelon (‘Asqalān). (Zetterstéen, 245) The inscription commemorates an extensive building project in the castle, which must have been in ruins, and once the restoration had been completed, Baybars al-‘Alāī took the credit for it. His full name and titles were Rukn ad-Dīn Baybars al-‘Alāī al-Ḥājib. In 707/1307-8 he was nominated to the governorship (*niyābah*) of Gaza (Maqrizī, *Ṣulūk* 2:39), but was replaced in 709/1309-10 (*ibid.*, 52), soon after Al-Muẓaffar Baybars II seized the Sultanate. During the latter’s 11 months of rule, Baybars al-‘Alāī remained loyal to an-Nāṣir Muḥammad, and was involved in the intrigues which brought him back for the third time to the throne in Ramaḡān 709 (*ibid.*, 67, 71). In 711/1311 he was nominated the governor of Ḥumṣ for a short time (*ibid.*, 100). He died in Karak in 712/1312-13. (Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar*, 1:509, No. 1379; Zetterstéen, 140, 143; ‘Atallah, 1986:279)

Large parts of this beautiful inscription are missing on the right and on the left. Originally it was a two line inscription, three times as large (some 2.50m. long), with at least 60 letters missing from the beginning of the lines and about 50 letters from their end. The letters of the Basmalah, and of Q, 25:11 give us an idea about the number of the missing letters at the beginning of the lines. The letters forming the titles of the sultan in the first line, and the date with some additions in the second line, which could not be less than 50 each, form the end of the lines. This is the basis of my reconstruction. The year 708 is a guess, which cannot be too far from the

truth taking into consideration the term of Baybars al-‘Alā’ī’s governorship, which supplies the time frame of the inscription.

### **Jāmi‘ ash-Sham‘ah—Jāmi‘ Bāb ad-Dārūn**

The mosque is located near the site of ad-Dārūn gate in the corner of the Carpenters neighbourhood (*Ḥayyan-Najjārīn*) in az-Zaytūn Quarter (Gattplan of Gaza B5). Neither Mayer nor ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif could ascertain why the mosque is called the “Mosque of the Candle.” (‘Ārif al-‘Ārif 1943:340; Mayer, *JPOS* 11:147 n.1) Max van Berchem called the mosque “the Mosque of the amīr Sanjar al-Jāwī” and added: “*aujourd’hui Djāmi‘ Bāb al-Dārūn. Cet edifice semble avoir entièrement disparu.*”

26

GAZA 714

Foundation text of Jāmi‘ Sanjar al-Jāwī

Dhū al-Ḥijjah 714/ March 1315

A slab of marble, 1.52x0.27m. used as a lintel over the gate of Jāmi‘ ash-Sham‘ah. 2 lines, elegant Mamlūk *nashīh*, full diacritical points, no vowels. The left-hand portion has been broken off and is missing. Figs 19, 19a, 19b (IAA photos Nos. 1849, 1850 taken in 1931). The inscription is obviously not *in situ*. Publication: Mayer, *JPOS* 1931, 11:147-148, No. 11, pl. IV 2 (mentioned before in L.A. Mayer’s report about the antiquities of Gaza in IAA Gaza files from 12 May 1922); *RCEA* 14:88, No. 5339; MvB Coll. “Gaza,” env. 24, c.VII:91-92; ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif 1943:340; ‘Aṭallah 1986:228-229. Cf. van Berchem, *CIA, Egypt* 1:220; *Jérusalem “ville,”* 1:234, n. 2.

١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم انما يعمر مساجد الله من آمن بالله واليوم الآخر واقام الصلاة واتا  
الزكاة ولم يخش الا الله فعسى اولئك ان يكونوا (!) من المهتدين امر بانشا > هذا المـ [مسجد]  
[المبارك ... ٢) مرضات الله واتباع سنة رسول الله العبد الفقير الى الله تعالى سنجر بن عبد  
الله الجاوي الملكي الناصري نائب السلطنة الشريفة بالاعمال الساحلية والجبالية بغزة المحروسة  
اعز الله انصاره بتاريخ الحجة سـ [نة] اربعـ [ة عشر وسبعماية ...]

Basmalah. (Q. 9:18 complete). Has ordered the establishment of this blessed mosque seeking the pleasure of Allah, and following the *sunna* of the Messenger of Allah the slave who is in need of Allah the Exalted, Sanjar b. ‘Abdallah al-Jāwī the Mamlūk of al-Malik an-Nāṣir the governor of the mountainous and the coastal districts in Gaza, the (divinely) protected, may

Allah strengthen his victories, in the date of (Dhū) al-Ḥijjah of the year (71)<sup>4</sup> (began 8 March, 1315).

Max van Berchem, as we have just mentioned, asserted that the inscription was brought from the ruins of Sanjar al-Jāwli's mosque. 'Ārif al-'Ārif (*loc. cit.*) repeated the same information independently stating that the ruins of Sanjar al-Jāwli's mosque were still visible in 1850. He also says that stones from the ruined mosque, which he believed was the original mosque of al-Jāwli, were used in the reconstruction work in the mosque of Sayyid Hāshim after its destruction during World War I. (*cf.* also *ibid.* 338). The mosque of al-Jāwli was mentioned by Ibn Taghrī Birdī (*Nujūm*, 10: 110): "Sanjar al-Jāwli ... وهو صاحب الجامع في غزة: "Sanjar al-Jāwli ... and he is the builder of the Friday mosque in Gaza." (See, Mayer, *Heraldry*, 1933:197-98).

As-Sakhāwī mentions the Khaṭīb Yūsuf b. 'Alī b. Sālim al-Ghazzī who in A.H. 844 served as the preacher of the Jāmi' Sanjar al-Jāwli at Gaza. (Sakhāwī, *Daw'* 10:324, No. 1220; 3:142)

The inscription is only slightly damaged on the left; only 8-9 letters are missing in the first line, which means that about the same number of letters, but not exceeding 11-12 letters are missing in the second line. Mayer was absolutely right when he decided that the date could only be 714. Any other number could not fit into the small damaged space. This fits well with the first term of office of Sanjar al-Jāwli, from 711 to 720, that is to say during the Sultanate of al-Malik an-Nāṣir Muḥammad who is mentioned in the inscription in the titles of Sanjar (*al-malikī an-nāṣirī*).

Since the second term of Sanjar's governorship was, after 740, under aṣ-Sālih 'Imād ad-Dīn Ismā'īl (743/1342–746/1345), the only other date could be 744. This would necessitate the insertion of 16 letters into an insufficient space, besides the fact that the second term of al-Jāwli's office was too short to enable the completion of such a building project. However, the most important proof for this reading is the fact that the mosque already existed, and it was in use when Ibn Baṭṭūṭah visited Gaza in 726/1326. In his report he says:

سنة ست وعشرين وسبعمائة ... وصلنا الى مدينة غزة وهي اول بلاد الشام مما يلي مصر  
متسعة الأقطار كثيرة العمارة حسنة الأسواق بها المساجد العديدة والأسوار عليها وكان بها  
مسجد جامع حسن والمسجد الذي تقام الآن به الجمعة فيها بناء الامير المعظم الجاولي وهو  
انيق البناء محكم الصنعة ومنبره من الرخام الابيض.

In the year 726 we (traveled from Qaṭyā and)... reached the city of Gaza which is the first town in Syria (*bilād ash-shām*) arriving from the Egypt. It is spacious, abundant with buildings and possessing pleasant markets; it has many mosques and encircled by walls. It had a beautiful Friday mosque, but these days the Friday service is conducted in the mosque built by the

honourable amīr al-Jāwālī. It is an elegant building, strongly constructed, and its pulpit is from white marble. (Ibn Baṭūṭah, *Riḥlah* 1967:50–51 = ed. Cairo, 31)

L.1: The widely used Qurʾānic verse, in addition to containing a mistake (*yakunū* instead of *yakūnū*) does not follow the usual Qurʾānic spelling in the words *ṣalāt* and *zakāt*, but this is a very usual practice in most of the inscriptions quoting this verse.

L.2: Sanjar al-Jāwālī (also: al-Jāwulī).

The following information, was gleaned from Maqrīzī, *Khīṭat*, 2:398 and his biography in *Manhal*, 6:74-76. See also: Mujīr, 1283:58, 390, 607; 1972, 1: 62; 2: 38, 281.

Sanjar b. ʿAbdallah, ʿAlam ad-Dīn Abū Saʿīd al-Jāwālī. According to his name, he was a first generation Muslim (“Ibn ʿAbdallah”). Ibn Taghrī Birdī (*Manhal*, 6:74) says that he suspected that his origin was “from the Kurds” (*wa-azunnuhu min al-akrād*), and that his father’s nickname was *al-mushidd*. This information does not seem very reliable even in the eyes of Ibn Taghrī Birdī himself. He was born in 653/1255. His *nisbah* refers to the fact that he was a Mamlūk of Jāwālī, one of the amīrs of Baybars I. After the death of his master, he transferred his allegiance to the house of Qalāwun, and in the time of al-Ashraf Khalīl he went to Karak with the Baḥriyyah Mamlūks until the time of the Sultan al-ʿĀdil Kitbughah whereupon he came back from Karak, and the Sultan nominated him to be the head of the sultanīc *khūshkhānah*. He befriended the Amīr Salār and became his “brother.” His first position was that of the Amīr of Shawbak without the title “amīr” (*bi-ghayr imrah*). He rose in position, became amīr and a lesser major-domo (*ustādār ṣaghīr*) under the amīrs Salār and Baybars II who treated the Sultan al-Malik an-Nāṣir disrespectfully and pushed him to abdicate, and go into exile in Karak, thus ending the the Sultan’s second reign. Sanjar, however, remained faithful to the Sultan, went with him to Karak (*Manhal*, 6:75). He used to enter freely into his presence, looked after his needs and cared for his food. When Sultan an-Nāṣir Muḥammad returned from Karak, ten months after Baybars II had deposed him, to assume his reign for the third time for nearly 32 years, he nominated Sanjar in Jumadā I 711 as the governor (*nāʾib*) of Gaza. The Sultan added to his *niyābah* of Gaza the coastal plain as well as the mountainous regions, which included Jerusalem, the district of Hebron, and the mountain of Nābulus. This is why Sanjar is called in the Gaza inscriptions: “the governor of the mountainous and coastal districts and the city of Gaza.” He was given huge fiefs with an unusually large income. He entered into a fight with Tankiz the powerful *nāʾib* of Syria concerning a house in Damascus, which the latter wanted to buy and Sanjar, who owned it, refused to sell. The Sultan interfered in favour of Tankiz. Sanjar was arrested at the end of 720 and thrown into prison for some 8 years. He was released in 729 and was given the rank of *amīr* 40, later he became *amīr* 100 *muqaddam* (commander) of 1000. After the death of an-Nāṣir Muḥammad in

741/1340, and an interregnum of three short lived Sultans, he continued serving the son of an-Nāṣir Muhammad, as-Ṣāliḥ ‘Imād ad-Dīn Ismā‘īl (743/1342–746/1345) in various high capacities. He was first nominated to the *niyābah* of Ḥamāh and after three months he was transferred to Gaza but he stayed in it for about three months as well, when he was called to assume his high positions in Cairo, including the superintendence of the *Māristān*. His second term of governorship in Gaza was too short to build anything beyond what he had built during his first term of ten years in office, between the beginning of 711 and the end of 720. Ibn Taghrī Birdī (*Manhal*, 6:75) gives the impression that Sanjar was the governor of Gaza for many years in the second term of office (*wa-aqāma bihā sinīn*). This sentence does not appear in one of the *Manhal* manuscripts, and was added to the main manuscript on which the present edition is based. (*ibid.*, note 3) The sentence no doubt refers to the “many years” of Sanjar’s rule in Gaza, not to the short period of three months mentioned by Maqrīzī whose biography is more detailed.

Soon after, he received a call to deal with the rebellion of the Sultan’s brother an-Nāṣir Aḥmad in Karak. He besieged the castle, succeeded to destroy part of the wall, and captured the rebel alive. He slaughtered him and sent his head to the Sultan (his brother). After returning to Cairo, he continued to carry out his duties in his former offices until his death on Thursday 9 Ramaḍān 745/14 January 1345. He was also a scholar, wrote an interpretation on the *Musnad* of Shāfi‘ī, and reached such a high position in the study of Islamic law that he could issue *fatwāhs* according to the school (*madhhab*) of Shāfi‘ī.

His buildings: In Gaza—a mosque “most beautiful” (“*fi ghāyat al-ḥusn*”). Also in Gaza: *ḥammām* (“pleasant”—*malīḥ*); *madrāsah* for the Shāfi‘ī *faqīhs*; and a *khān*. Maqrīzī emphasizes the fact that Sanjar was responsible for “making Gaza a metropolis” (*maddana ghazzah*), building in it the *maydān* and the castle (Fig. P27) as well as a hospital (*māristān*) for which he dedicated many pious endowments in the name of al-Malik an-Nāṣir Muḥammad, and made a provision that it should always be under the supervision of the governors of Gaza.

In Hebron he built a mosque with a ceiling of beautifully dressed stones.

In Qāqūn he built a huge *khān* (*khān ‘azīm*). (Maqrīzī, *Khīṭat*, 2:398)

In Qaryat al-Kathīb (on the way from Jerusalem to Jericho) he also built a *khān* (*CIAP* 3:102-103).

In the Forest of Arsūf—he built *Qanāṭir* (archway, a bridge on arches).

In Baysān (Beth Shean)—Ḥamrā’ Baysān—he is responsible for the building of the *khān* of Salār (not Raslān which is a copyist mistake. See Mayer, *QDAP* 1, 1932:96), since in his early career, he belonged to the close entourage of the amīr Salār (died in 710/1310. See his long biography in *Manhal*, 6:5-13), and always spoke very highly of him. (On the *khān* and its inscription see *CIAP* 2:228-233). In

addition to these building projects, he also built many other buildings in Cairo. (See, the summary of his biography in Mayer, *Heraldry* 1933, *loc. cit.* and more references there.)

The general view seems to be that this inscription is not *in situ*, yet it could not have come from one of “the numerous buildings erected by Sanjar in Gaza” as Mayer remarked (*JPOS* 11:147). It commemorates the building of a mosque, since the verse Q, 9:11 appears only in inscriptions referring to the building of mosques. It is doubtless that this is the inscription from Sanjar’s “most beautiful mosque,” which had been transferred after its destruction to ash-Sham’ah Mosque.

27

GAZA 718

Great Mosque

Construction text

718/1318

A slab of marble, 0.79x0.54m. embedded in the northern side of the *minbar*, or the raised platform, in the court of the Great Mosque 2.75m. above the ground. The inscription is not *in situ*. It was brought to the mosque with two other inscriptions from elsewhere during restoration works, and built onto the *minbar*. 5 lines, Mamlūk *naskhī*, points, no vowels; in relief. Fig. 20 (IAA Photo). Publication: L.A. Mayer, *RCEA* 14:127, No. 5400; MvB Coll. “Gaza” c.VII, 85-86 (*cf. CIA Jérusalem “Ville”* 1:234, n.2; Meyer 1907:150. See below No. 34 for the year 731-32.)

(١) بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ عُمِّرَتْ هَذِهِ الْاَقْبَاةُ >المباركة بالجامع ٢) المعمور بغزة في ايام  
مولانا السلطان بن السلطان الملك الناصر ٣) ابن الملك المنصور خلد الله سلطانه باشارة المقر  
العالي كافل الممالك ٤) الشريفة الشامية عز نصره العبد الفقير الى الله تعالى سنجر الجاوي  
الناصرى نائب ٥) السلطنة المعظمة الساحلية والجبالية غفر الله له في شهور سنة ثمان عشر [ة]  
وسبعماية

Basmalah. These blessed vaults were built in the well-attended mosque in Gaza in the days of our lord the Sultan the son of the Sultan al-Malik an-Nāṣir the son of al-Malik al-Manṣūr—may Allah eternalize his rule—following the instruction of his most high excellency, the supreme governor of the noble provinces of Damascus—may his victory be glorious—(by)the slave who is in need of Allah the Exalted, Sanjar al-Jāwī an-Nāṣirī the vice-regent of the magnificent Sultanate in the littoral and mountainous regions—May Allah pardon him—in the months of the year 718 (=1318).

The building of the vaults in the Great Mosque of Gaza is connected with the name of two officials: Tankiz the governor general of the province of Damascus, and Sanjar al-Jāwli the governor of Gaza. An enmity developed between the two, as has been mentioned above (No. 26, Gaza 714), at about the time of the engraving of this inscription. Sayf ad-Dīn Tankiz is not mentioned by name in the inscription. It is only said that the project of building the vaults was according to the directive (*bi'ishārat*) issued by “His Most High Excellency the Supreme Governor (*kāfil*) of the noble provinces of Damascus,” an explicit reference to Tankiz who held the title of *kāfil al-mamālik as-shāmiyyah*, (an additional title of the official *nā'ib as-sultānah*). The actual work was carried out under the supervision of Sanjar (mentioned by name) who was also a powerful amīr and much appreciated by the Sultan an-Nāṣir Muḥammad. Although Sanjar al-Jāwli was close to the sultan, Tankiz was closer and far more powerful. As the governor general of Damascus he was “amīr of thousand” and the most important amīr of all the Syrian provinces, and probably the most influential personality in the realm. The inscription does not have one word that defines the function of Sanjar in promoting the project or executing it, and it seems that words like *bi-nazar* or *bi-mubāsharat* or similar terms, defining his direct involvement with the actual building, were unintentionally left out. It is clear that Sanjar occupies third place in the order of the names that appear in the inscription, after the names of the Sultan, and the titles of Tankiz. It is strange that the name of the latter does not appear in the inscription and one is tempted to speculate that Sanjar, who was the man on the spot, omitted it intentionally, taking into consideration that there was some bad blood between those two. Tankiz was nominated the governor general of the province of Damascus in the year 712/1312, and Sanjar had been nominated the governor of Gaza and the “Mountainous and Coastal Districts” a few months earlier, in 711/1311. Tankiz retained this office until his arrest and execution in 740/1340. During this period he was not only the Sultan’s close friend, but was also connected with him through marriage. His two sons married two of the Sultan’s daughters. In 720/1320, when Sanjar and Tankiz confronted each other openly, the Sultan backed the latter and arrested Sanjar. Finally Tankiz himself fell out of favor, accused of conspiring against the Sultan, and was put to death in 740/1340. (For more details see *EI*<sup>2</sup>, *q.v.* “Tankiz”).

Construction (or *waqf*) inscriptions were meant to commemorate not only the projects mentioned in them, but also, or mainly, the people responsible, in one way or another, for their accomplishment. When an inscription was attached to a holy place, the name of the person responsible for the building in that place was mentioned in the inscription, not only to commemorate his deeds but also in order to bestow the blessing (*barakah*) of the holiness of the place on him. I am not sure what happened in the case of the present inscription, but if, as I believe, the omission of

Tankiz's name was intentional then it amounts to a statement by Sanjar that carries much weight.

L. 1: The plural *aqbā'* is very strange. I could not find this plural form in the classical dictionaries. There are two plurals of *qubba*—*qubab* and *qibāb*. However, in this case the singular is *qabw*, the usual plural of which is *aqbiyah* (*Lisān*, s.v. *q-b-w*). *Qabw* means specifically a vault and sometimes even a vaulted cave or underground room. The inscription commemorates the building or repairing of some vaults in the mosque and the plural that was used is nearer to *aqbiyah* (plural of *qabw*) than to *qubab* or *qibāb* (plural of *qubba*). *Aqbā'* represents a new form which is perfectly logical, since, in time, more plurals of *qabw* were created including *aqbā'*. They were all listed by Dozy, *Supplement* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), 2:307: “قبو pl. اقبة, قبوات, قباوة, قباة: voûte, toit voûté, arcade, cave, caveau...”

Ll. 4-5: Sanjar al-Jāwli appears in the inscription with his full name and his titles. After the Sultan extended the territory under his governorship to the mountainous and littoral regions of Palestine, and he could use the title of *nā'ib as-sultānah*. (see above No. 26.)

### **Mazār ash-Shaykh 'Aṭīyyah**

This sanctuary, in the Zaytūn quarter, is located 35m. south of the southwestern corner of Khān az-Zayt, on the west side of the road. (IAA files: “Gaza, esh-Sh. 'Atiyeh”) It used to be a mosque. According to local tradition, this was the birthplace of the imām Muḥammad b. Idrīs ash-Shāfi'ī (b. Gaza 150/767; d. Fustāṭ 204/820. *EI*, q.v.). In time, the mosque was deserted and the house, which contains two graves, supposedly of the imām's daughter and of his servant Shaykh 'Aṭīyyah, became a *mazār*, and was offered for rent. ('Ārif al-'Ārif 1943:351, 354) Over the lintel of the entrance gate there are two slabs of stone, one long one on the left and a narrow one on the right, with inscriptions which do not belong to each other. The inscribed slabs were brought from somewhere else in Gaza and fixed at their present place. The inscription on the long slab is almost completely defaced. Only the *basmalah* remained of it. (Fig. 21 left) In what follows is the discussion of the fragment of the readable inscription on the narrow slab (Fig. 21 right).

28

GAZA 721

Epitaph of a Muslim

Ramaḍān 721/Began 24 Sep. 1321

The bottom half of a slab of limestone, 0.233x0.255m. (actual size). Three lines. provincial Mamlūk *naskhī*, a few points no vowels; in relief. Fig. 21. (IAA photo No. 8267)

١ المعرفة/المعروف (؟) ... ٢ توفاه (!) في شهر [هـ] ٢ رمضان (؟) سنة احد (!) وعشرين وسبع  
ما [ية]

The knowledge He died on the month of Ramaḍān(?) 721 (began 24 September 1341)

The epitaph was found somewhere in the city, and fixed over the entrance gate of the building probably as a decorative element, next to the long slab on its left. However, it is possible that, together with the inscription on the left, it was used as building material, for it was cut to fit the height of the long slab. Both were covered with plaster either partly or even completely.

L.1: The writing seems clear, and should contain the name of the deceased. My attempt to read it failed.

L.2: **توفاه** seems to me the only possible reading, this is a common mistake influenced by colloquial usage.

L.3: The month of Ramaḍān looks the most plausible reading of the unclear word depicting the name of the month. The number twenty was written with the *‘ayin* on top of the line sending down a tail which connects it to the rest of the letters to make *‘ishrīn*. The date seems to me sure.

### Mosque of ‘Alī b. Marwān

In the files of the IAA archives from the British Mandatory period, the name of the mosque is sometimes recorded as ‘Alī Marwānā. However, in an inscription from the mosque of Ibn ‘Uthmān, dated 797 (No. 52 below for the year 797), the mosque is called Shaykh Ibn Marwān (Mayer, *JPOS* 9, 1929: 220). The name used by ‘Arif al-‘Arif, Mayer, van Berchem and Gatt is ‘Alī b. Marwān (Gatt Plan of Gaza, EF6, *ZDPV* 11, 1888: 152) which is the correct name of the edifice. (See above introduction to this entry and below No. 94 Gaza 1217, for more details). According to ‘Arif al-‘Arif, (1943:341) the founder of this mosque was ‘Alī b. Marwān al-Ḥasanī who arrived in Gaza from the Maghrib and died on Monday, 27 Dhū al-Qa‘dah 715/22 February 1316. The people in Gaza regarded him a saint during his lifetime and his tomb became a site of *ziyārah* after his death.

725/1324

Inscription above the entrance gate of the minaret. Publication: 'Ārif al-'Ārif, *Ta'riḫh Ghazzah*, 341. No photo.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم جدد عمارة هذه المنارة المباركة وايوان القاعة والمنبر والمحراب  
الشريف في جامع ابن مروان رضي الله عنه الفقير الى الله تعالى محمد بن عبد الله سنة  
٧٢٥

Basmalah. Has renewed the building of this blessed minaret, and the *ṭwān* (recess like room) of the main hall (*qā'ah*) and the *minbar* and the noble *mihṛāb* in the Friday mosque of Ibn Marwān, may Allah be pleased with him, he who is in need of Allah the Exalted, Muḥammad b. 'Abdallah in the year 725/1325.

There is no photograph of this inscription which is recorded only by 'Ārif al-'Ārif. The date in digits represents the date in the inscription, which was written in words most probably: سنة خمس وعشرين وسبعماية.

In the files of the IAA there is a photograph from 15.1.1931 of a squeeze of an inscription on which was written that it came from the gate of the minaret of "Alī Marwān mosque." But it is another inscription. See next entry (No. 30) in which I shall discuss both inscriptions.

ايوان القاعة The *qā'ah* was the largest room in the house, with a corridor (*ṭwān* or colloq. *ṭwān*) or two attached to it. (For details see below No. 72. Lane 1906:17-18)

707?/1307 or 726?/1326

A slab of marble, 0.71x0.25 (squeeze measurements), fixed over the gate of the minaret. 3 lines, monumental, thick, interwoven, Mamlūk *naskhā*, many points and signs, a few vowels; in relief. Squeeze taken on 27.1.1931 by L.A. Mayer for the

Department of Antiquities, of the British Mandatory Government of Palestine.  
Fig. 22 (IAA squeeze No. 1854)

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم جدد عمارة هذا الباب المبارك والماذنة وا[قبية]....؟ (٢) ابع (؟)  
واووين (!) القاعة والمخازن الستة الفقير الى الله تعالى محمد بن بكتمر يو/بن؟.... (٣) وجعل  
المتحصّل/المحصّل من ذلك في كل شهر للمؤذن خمسة وللإمام (!) عشرة وباقي ذلك ؟.....؟  
سنة سبع وسبعماية (؟)

Basmalah. Has renewed the building of this blessed gate and the minaret and the vaults of (?)  
--- and the recess rooms of the central hall and the six storerooms, he who is in need of Allah  
the Exalted, Muḥammad b. Baktamur --- and he allocated from the revenue of that (property)  
every month to the muezzin—the (sum of) five and to the imām ten, and the rest (of the  
income) is for Allah (?) ..... the year 707(?) (=1307 ?)

There can hardly be any doubt that this inscription is the sister inscription of the former one dated 725/1324. Unfortunately the squeeze which was taken in 1931 represents only the right side of the inscription. It seem that when the squeeze was taken the inscription had already been damaged and a few words on the left side had been lost. I am unable to read the last words in line 3 confidently. They give the impression that the inscription was not properly finished. One is tempted to read the word *sab'mi'ah* (seven hundred) there at least, but this reading is far from being certain. I fixed the date 726/1326 because of the former inscription, which commemorates the work of probably the same person: mainly the building of the minaret and the *iwān* of the main hall. It is possible that Muḥammad b. 'Abdallah and Muḥammad b. Baktamur are the same person, provided that Baktamur was not a Muslim.

However, we know of one Baktamur who was the governor of Gaza, an office to which he was nominated on 5 Muḥarram 710/ 4 June 1310. He was then promoted to be the great Ḥājib of Damascus in 711/1311. Four years later, in 715/1315, he was arrested. In 723/1325 he become the governor of Alexandria and died in 724/ 1324. (Mayer, *Heraldry*, 1933: 98-99; Durar 1:48(?); Zettersteén. 1919: 147, 152, 172). I mention him because he was the governor of Gaza for sometime, but that does not mean that Muḥammad was his son. Strangely enough, a few amīrs called Baktamur served under an-Nāṣir Muḥammad during his third reign at about the same period. (see Mayer, *Heraldry*, 1931: 17, 48, 98, 191). So it is impossible to pinpoint who this Muḥammad b. Baktamur was. If I am correct that the Muḥammad b. 'Abdallah of the inscription dated 725 (No. 29) above is identical with the Muḥammad b. Baktamur then it means, nominally at least, that Baktamur was not Muslim.

All these are guesses, based on the fact that the two inscriptions seem to commemorate the same project in the same mosque. It is surprising, however that

neither van Berchem nor ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif mention this inscription which appears for the first time in the records of the IAA in 1922. L. A. Mayer, then a junior inspector for the British Mandatory Department of Antiquities, carried out the first survey of the Muslim monuments in Gaza. In his report, dated May 12<sup>th</sup> 1922, he made a preliminary list of the Arabic inscriptions of Gaza, in which he mentions (in item no. 6 of the list) “Sheikh ‘Alī Marwān 707 (?) A.H.” He later took a squeeze of the inscription, the reading of which I offered above.

I can understand why Mayer thought that he could see at the end of line 3 something that looked like 707 or even 706, which is not impossible if indeed the writing represents a date. As I have mentioned already, the inscription is not complete; its left side is missing. It is difficult to determine the exact size of the missing part, but it seems to me that it is not more than a word or two.

I register the present inscription under the year 726 only because of the similarity to the former inscription from 725 (names and the reference to the minaret). However, the differences between the two inscriptions are considerable and Muḥammad b. ‘Abdallah of the inscription from 725 is not necessarily Muḥammad b. Baktamur who built considerably more and dedicated the income from the property for the maintenance of the muezzin and the imām and for other charitable purposes (*lillāh*). The date 707 (or 706) is therefore possible.

The text of the inscription is interesting. It begins with the usual *basmalah* but does not contain any Qur’ānic verses and moves straightaway to describe the work.

L.1: It is possible that the word at the end, of which only a remnant of two letters is visible, is *aqbiyah*—the vaulted rooms.

L.2: *Awawīn*, should have been *awāwīn*, but the reading is sure. The letters at the beginning of the line are the continuation of a word which began at the end of line 1 for which I don’t have any good suggestions.

L.3: *waja’ala al-mutaḥaṣṣil min dhālika*. The reading seems to me certain. The word *mutaḥṣil* means: yield, revenue, returns (when it comes with *min*); it fits perfectly in the text. The meaning is clear: there is a property, either in the mosque area or next to it, which yields income that the builder dedicated to charity and for the needs of the mosque. (see Gaza No. 52 797a below).

The numbers five and ten should be read in this order although at first glance one tends to read them together as fifteen (*khamṣ ‘ashrah*). The *tā marbūtah* on top of the line can only be connected to the letters of *‘ashr* to make them *‘asharah*. The amounts represented by these numbers can only be connected to the muezzin and the imām. Unfortunately there is nothing in the inscription to tell us which coins these numbers describe: dinars or dirhams?

I cannot think about any other object other than money to which the numbers refer. As far as *wa-bāqī dhālika lillāh* I am not completely sure about the reading but I cannot suggest a better one, and even more so as far as the end of the inscription is concerned.

31

GAZA 730-741  
Great Mosque  
Construction text

730-741/1329-1340

Three fragments of a few slabs of marble, A. 68x0.46; B. 0.68x0.2; C. 0.87x0.32 (approx), part of a long inscription forming a frieze or a decorated panel over a gate or a window. Fragment A gives the idea of the size and shape of the inscription. It was engraved on the upper part of a wide panel leaving the lower part, which is as wide as the inscribed part, completely clear. The two other fragments, B and C, represent only the top part of the original slabs from which they were broken. 1 line, beautiful monumental Mamlūk *naskhīz*, points, vowels, decorative elements in the empty spaces between the letters; in relief. A frame designed in the shape of sow teeth, creating a harmonious sequence, surrounded the inscription. Fragment B is broken into three pieces. The inscription is now kept in the storeroom of the Great Mosque; it was retrieved from the ruins of the mosque, or from other ruins nearby, during the reconstruction work in the 1920s. (See No. 97) Figs. 23 Gaza 730-741 1<sup>st</sup> frag.; 23a Gaza 730-741 2<sup>nd</sup> frag.; Fig. 23b Gaza 730-741 3<sup>rd</sup> frag. (IAA photos. 847, 842, 849)

A. بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ اِنَّمَا یَعْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللّٰهِ مِنْ اٰمَنٍ بِاللّٰهِ وَالیَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ... [B]  
[أمرَ بعمارة هذا] الجامع المعمور بذكر الله تعالى على هذه المنابر المصححة [فـ] أي أيام  
مولانا [نا] و C. [سیـ]—دنا السلطان ابن السلطان الملك الناصر ابن الملك المنصور خلد الله  
سـ [سلطانه...]

Basmalah. Q. 9:18 (first part?) The reconstruction (or the building) of this mosque, which is replete with the mentioning of Allah the Exalted, on these repaired minbars was ordered in the days of our lord and master, the Sultan the son of the Sultan al-Malik an-Nāṣir son of al-Malik al-Manṣūr may Allah perpetuate his Sultanate...

At the bottom of fragment B, part of the decorative frame was left blank and the following text was professionally incised in cursive letters in the open space:

حرّر (or تحرير) العبد الفقير الى الله تعالى

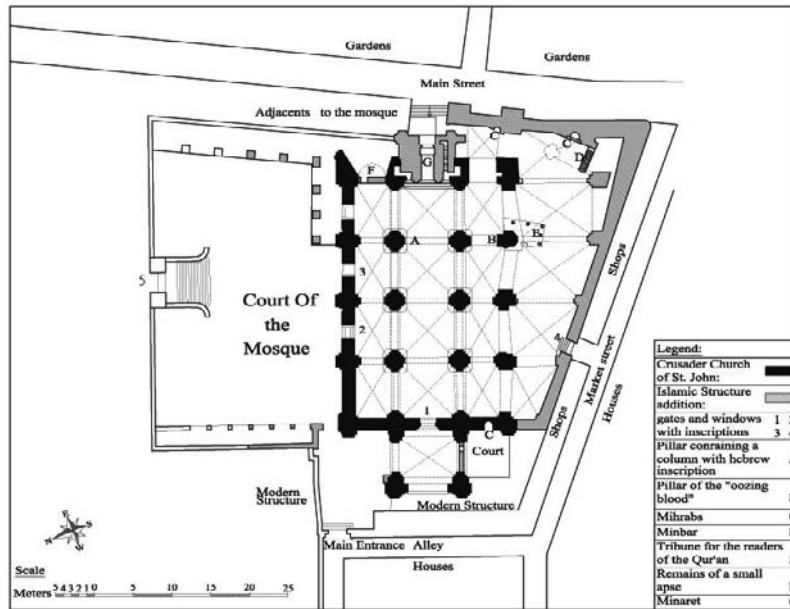
Written by the slave who is in need of Allah, the Exalted...

The name of the person who composed the text of this inscription (*harrara*) was lost. In inscription No. 59, the same kind of text was inscribed vertically on the side of the inscription.

I am almost sure that this inscription commemorates the extensive repairs undertaken by Tankiz in 730/1329. (See No. 32 in which we read: أمر بإنشاء هذه الزيادة المباركة بالجامع المعمور بذكر الله تعالى etc.) The text and the style of the script all lead to the conclusion that the inscription belonged to that period in the third reign when Gaza underwent a process of great development, growth and prosperity which had already begun during the governorship of Sanjar al-Jāwī in the early years of an-Nāṣir's third reign. (See above No. 27).

### Great Mosque and Bazaar Street

In 730/1329, the Great Friday Mosque of Gaza, formerly the Crusader Church of St. John, was enlarged by the addition of a wing on the south-western side in the direction of the bazaar, after the removal of the original south-western wall of the church. (See attached plan of the Great Mosque below.) The added space altered the original plan and disfigured the building, destroying the classical, symmetrical, basilical arrangement of a nave flanked by two aisles (Clermont-Ganneau, *AR* 2:383). The new aisle was narrow on the north-west and wide on the south-east flanks, where two *mīhrābs* (C C on the plan) and a *minbar* (D on the plan) were fitted. The apses of the church were removed, and a minaret was built in the area of the central apse. The southern wall of the annex was built in such a way that it removed the right apse and protruded beyond the original line of the building. The remnants of the left apse in the south-eastern corner were still visible at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Since the mosque was badly damaged by the British artillery during the second battle of Gaza in April 1917 and rebuilt in 1926 (ʿĀrif al-ʿĀrif 1943:226, 336-337), many of the ancient parts, which Clermont-Ganneau saw in 1870, have disappeared. (*AR* 2:383ff). The new wing of the mosque was built with a large gate, which opened onto Bazaar Street and Khān az-Zayt. This gate was chosen to bear the inscription commemorating the enterprise that was supervised by the great Tankiz, the governor general of the Province of Damascus for the Sultan an-Nāṣir Muḥammad. When Jamal Pasha (Ahmet Cemal Paşa), the Ottoman Governor of Syria during World War I, decided to widen the main street of Gaza, he laid it through the Khān, badly damaging it. (Figs. P2, P3, P4 Gaza Panoramic details IAA Photos Nos. 12116, 12117 12118). Following that, the gate was blocked and fell out of use. (Mayer 1931:144, n.2)



Plan of the Great Mosque (Drawing: architect Daniel Sharon)

32

GAZA 730

Foundation text

Muḥarram 730/25 Oct.-24 Nov.1329

4 slabs of marble, the complete dimensions of which are missing. The only existing measurements 4.79x0.33m. (measured on squeeze) represent 3 slabs which existed when Mayer saw the inscription (Fig. 24c), since in his time the slab “between the third and fourth... is missing.” However we possess a picture of the full inscription *in situ*, which van Berchem took at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Figs. 24d, 24e). In this photo, nothing is missing. The slabs were embedded in the south-western rear wall of the Great Mosque; the second forming the lintel of the, now blocked, entrance door to the mosque from the Bazaar Street (4 on the Great Mosque plan), the third was attached to the wall perpendicular to the gate and the fourth round the corner on the left of the gate. The last slab must have been removed at a certain stage during one of the frequent repairs of the mosque, and then rebuilt into the same wall, but the builders left a small gap between it and the corner of the gate structure, giving the (false) impression that the inscription is not complete. 2 lines, elegant monumental Mamlūk *naskhī*, complete with points and many vowels and

some ornamental elements; in relief. The inscription is framed and a band divides between the two lines. Figs. 24a, 24b, 24c, 24d, 24e (IAA photos Nos. 8226, 8227 courtesy IAA; Mayer's photo, MvB photos) Publication: L.A. Mayer, *JPOS* 1931, 11:144-146. pl. IV.1-2=Fig. 24c; *RCEA* 14:266, No. 5587; MvB Coll. photographs in "Gaza;" 'Ārif al-'Ārif, *Ta'rikh Ghazzah*, 335.

١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم انما يعمر مساجد الله من آمن بالله واليوم الآخر واقام الصلاة (!) واتي الزكاة (!) ولم يخش الا الله امر بانشاء <ء> هذه الزيادة المباركة بالجامع المعمور بذكر الله تعالى مولانا السلطان الملك الناصر ناصر الدنيا والدين محمد ابن مولانا السلطان الشهيد الملك المنصور قلاون خلد الله تعالى ملكه باشارة ٢١) لمرّ الاشرف العالي المولوي الاميري الاجلي الكبير العسدي النصيري المحترمي المخدومي المجاهدي المرابطي المناغري المؤيدي الناصري المنصوري السيفي مولانا ملك الامراء <ء> تنكز الناصري كافل الممالك الشريفة بالشام المحروس اعز الله انصاره وكان الفروع (!) منه في شهر المحرم سنة ثلاثين وسبع مائة

Basmalah. Q. 9:18 (first part until illā Allah). Has ordered the construction of this blessed annex to the mosque, which is replete with the (worshippers) mentioning the name of Allah the Exalted, our lord the Sultan al-Malik an-Nāṣir, Nāṣir ad-Dunyā wa-ad-Dīn Muḥammad the son of our lord, the martyred Sultan, al-Malik al-Manṣūr Qalāwun, may Allah eternalize his kingship. (This was done) under the directives of his Excellency the most noble, the elevated, the lordly, the most magnificent and great amīr, the helper, the supporter, the honoured, the well-served, the fighter in the Holy War, the warrior at the frontiers, the warden of the border fortresses, the supported (by Allah), the protector, the victorious Sayf ad-Dīn, our lord the king of amīrs, Tankiz, the Mamlūk of al-Malik an-Nāṣir, the viceroy of the noble provinces of the (divinely) protected Syria; may Allah make his victories glorious. It was completed in the month of Muḥarram the year 730 (began 25 October 1329).

L.1: When Mayer saw the mosque in 1922, he observed that "of the annex (*ziyādah*) mentioned in the text only the door is visible in the Bazaar street. What it consisted of may be seen on the sketch plan published by Clermont-Ganneau" (*AR*, 2:384) and on the attached plan above in the part indicated as "Islamic structure addition."

L.2: Sayf ad-Dīn Tankiz, one of the most influential political and military personalities during the third rule of an-Nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalāwun (709/1309-741/1340). He was the favorite of the Sultan, so much so that his two sons married two of the Sultan's daughters and his influence in the court in Cairo was so great that he could easily remove his competitors in Syria with the full backing of the Sultan. However, in one case, in 730/1330, the Sultan was displeased with him for showing disrespect to the amīr, Sayf ad-Dīn Aruqtāy (died 750/1348), the governor of Ṣafad whom an-Nāṣir favoured too, and he made Tankiz pay the insulted amīr particular respect and attention, and ordered the other amīrs to show him reverence and present him with gifts. (Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 2(2) 1942:332; *Manhal* 2:328; Zettersteén, 183) Tankiz

grew so strong that, in spite of the close friendship between him and the Sultan, the latter suspected that he wished to organize a revolt against him. He therefore summoned him to Cairo, arrested him and imprisoned him in Alexandria and soon afterwards executed him in Dhū al-Ḥijjah 740/May-June 1340.

Tankiz was a great builder and during his long rule over the province of Damascus (712/1312-740/1340), as Nā'ib as-Salṭanah, he changed the face of the city with many public buildings. In addition to nine *ḥammāms*, he built a large mosque which was called after him (and in which he was eventually buried), a mausoleum for his wife Sitt Sutaytah (in 730/1330 after her death) which included a *ribāṭ* for women. Many other building projects in Jerusalem, Cairo and elsewhere bear his name (*CIA, Jérusalem, "Haram"* 2: 120,421, Nos. 173, 174, 282. These projects represent the years 721/1321 and 726/1326).

Before falling out of favour he used to travel annually to the court in Cairo and influence the Sultan's decisions in matters concerning the empire as whole and not only his own province. (For biography and references see "Tankiz" *EI*<sup>2</sup>)

The word *al-furūgh* instead of the usual *al-farāgh* is unusual, but it is not incorrect. The two forms have the same meaning: termination, finishing, completion.

33

GAZA 730a

Qur'ānic verse

ca.730/1329

Two slabs of marble, (A)0.34x0.253 (B)0.365x0.305 belonging to the same inscription and completing each other. The slabs were retrieved from the ruins of the original Great Mosque during the restoration work in the 1920s, and are kept in the storeroom of the mosque. Each one of the slabs is complete, which indicates that they belonged to a long panel bearing a decorative inscription. It had been composed of a few marble slabs or tiles, fixed next to each other. The original panel was framed with two bands on top and bottom decorated with delicate, foliage elements. In addition, the field bearing the inscription on each slab was also framed, so that the inscription is well-defined within two frames, one highly decorative which ran along the whole panel and one which ornamented each of its marble slabs individually. 1 line, elaborate, monumental, artistic Mamlūk *naskhī*, points, some vowels and plenty of delicate foliage decorations in the spaces between the letters; in relief. Fig. 25 (IAA photos Nos. 836/7-846)

(A) يا ايها الذين آمنوا اذا نودي (B) للصلاة (!) من يوم الجمعة فاسعوا الى ذكر الله

O believers, when proclamation is made for prayer on the Day of Congregation, hasten to Allah's remembrance...(Q, 62:9. Trans. Arberry)

It is very possible that this beautiful inscription was part of the renovations undertaken by Tankiz in 730 for an-Nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalāwun, or earlier by Sanjar in 718. (See No. 27 and No. 32 above)

34

GAZA 731-732

Great Mosque

Restoration text

731-732?/1331-32

Three fragments of marble, (A: 1.50x0.30m.; B: 1.4x0.30m. C:?) originally embedded in the northern side of the *minbar* in the court of the Great Mosque together with two other inscriptions, one from the year 718/1318, and the other an undated *basmalah*. The present inscription is also undated but probably the suggested date above is the correct one. When van Berchem saw the inscription, its three parts were embedded near the ground on one of the pillars of the *minbar*, or raised platform, in the court of the mosque. Part of the slab "C" was entrenched in the earth. In the course of the extensive restoration works, which took place in the mosque in 1345/1926, two slabs with the beginning and the end of the inscription ("A" and "C") must have been misplaced and eventually lost. Only the middle slab (indicated "B") survived and was built into the wall of the *minbar* with the two other inscriptions as decorative elements. 2 lines, beautiful, interwoven Mamlūk *naskhī*, points, some vowels; in relief. Heraldic emblems, polo sticks as a central element in the middle of line 2 (fragment B) and three smaller emblems: polo stick flanked on both sides with cups probably at the end (according to MvB and Ben Horin's reports). Figs. 26, 26a. Publication: MvB Coll. "Gaza," env. 24, c.VII, 75, 76, 83. The reading below follows MvB's reading (copied by Ben Horin).

(١) A: بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم انما يعمر مساجد الله من آمن بالله واليوم الآخر واقام الصلاة واتى الزكاة B: ولم يخش الا الله فعسا (!) اولئك ان يكونوا من المهتدين جدد هذى (!) المسجد المبارك العبد الفقير الى الله تعالى [الأمير حسام الدين طرنطاي] C: الجوكندار متولي غزة المحروسة وذلك في ايام مولانا السلطان [سلطان الاسلام والمسلمين الملك الناصر ناصر الدنيا والدين] (٢) A: قامع الكفرة والمشركين محبي العدل في العالمين محمد ابن سيدنا ومولانا

السلطان الشهيد ... B: [المـ]ك المنصور قلاون الصالحى خلد الله ملكه وادام اقتداره  
ولا برح مؤيداً منصوراً...

Basmalah. (Q, 9:18 complete). Has restored this blessed mosque, the slave who is in need of Allah, the Exalted, the (amīr Ḥusām ad-Dīn Ṭurunṭāy), the polo-master, the governor of the (divinely) protected (city of) Gaza, and this (took place) in the days of our master the Sultan (the Sultan of Islam and the Muslims al-Malik an-Nāṣir, Nāṣir ad-Dunyā wa-ad-Dīn,) he who subdued the infidels and the polytheists, the reviver of justice in the world, Muḥammad the son of our lord and master the martyred Sultan... al-Malik al-Manṣūr Qalāwun aṣ-Ṣāliḥī, may Allah immortalize his kingship and perpetuate his potency and may he forever be (divinely) supported and victorious...

L. B1: فعسا *sic!* Correct Ben Horin (MvB?): فعسى. The word هذى (for هذا) with this peculiar mistake is rare.

The amīr who ordered the restoration must be Ṭurunṭāy al-Jūkandār, the only *jūkandār* who governed Gaza during an-Nāṣir's reign. He was appointed to the post on 15th Ramaḍān 731/22 June 1331 (Ṣafadī, *A'yān al-'Asr*, as quoted by Mayer *JPOS* 1923, 3:75) and replaced at least in Muḥarrām 733/ Sep.-Oct. 1332 by Ṭaynāl. (Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* 2:358) The amīr in the inscription is called *mutawālī* and not *nā'ib* Ghazzah. It befits this period, since the governors of Gaza were *de facto* subordinate to the governor of Damascus, the great amīr Tankiz. Ṭaynāl had been the governor of Tripoli until he was transferred to Gaza. This was an act of humiliation and punishment for him after he had aroused Tankiz's anger against him. Concurrent with Ṭaynāl's transfer to Gaza, a Sultanic order was issued that officially confirmed the subordination of Gaza to the governor of Damascus; and the direct reporting of the governor of Gaza to the Sultan was severed. (Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 2: 358; cf. *ibid* 2:137) Already in 714/1314, the Sultan had ordered the governors of the major provinces of Syria to report to Tankiz, instead of directly to the court in Cairo. Gaza is not mentioned in connection with this order. Only after the humiliating appointment of Ṭaynāl, who as the governor of Tripoli had refused to accept the supremacy of Tankiz, was it formally joined to the rest of the Syrian provinces, thus making Tankiz the sole, supreme governor of all the Syrian territories.

### Zāwiyat as-Sayyid Aḥmad al-Badawī

In a short report, dated 1 August 1943, Husseini, antiquities inspector for the British Department of Antiquities, wrote after visiting the "Zāwiyat esh-Sheikh el-Badawī (زاوية الشيخ البدوى)" (IAA archives "Gaza" No. 252): "In enclosed yard of Zāwiyah is a grave built of marble slabs. At west end is an inscribed marble panel (Fig. P29 IAA photo. 28.334). West side of grave built with limestones; at the bottom of s/w corner part of a worn inscription." Fig. 27 (IAA photo No. 28.335)

## AS-SAYYID AL-BADAWĪ

Abū al-Ma‘ālī (also Abū al-‘Abbās, and Abū al-Fityān) Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Ibrāhīm (According to Ibn al-‘Imād: Aḥmad b. ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. Abū Bakr) al-Ḥusaynī al-Badawī (and in his position as a ṣūfī saint: *al-qutb*—“the Pole,” *al-qudsī*—“the Holy one,” and *al-farrāj*—the Liberator (of prisoners) and other titles). His family traced its origins to the Prophet’s grandson al-Ḥusayn (hence the *nisbah* al-Ḥusaynī and the title “Sayyid”). According to al-Manāwī in his *Ṭabaqāt* (quoted by Ibn al-‘Imād 5:345), his family belonged to the Syrian tribe of Banū Barrī. His epithet al-Badawī, however, was given to him because he permanently covered his face with two veils (*lithām*), hence also his title “*al-mulaththam*.”

Badawī is the most popular saint of the Muslims in Egypt, whose name is attached not only to his own tomb at Ṭanṭā in the Egyptian delta, but also to other sanctuaries in Egypt, Syria, and Palestine none of which have anything to do with him. However, it is quite common to find names of saints and holy people throughout Syria, Palestine, Egypt and elsewhere in the Middle East attached to several sites (with and without a tomb), usually remote from each other (see e.g. *CIAP* 1:127). The holier the person is the more sites are attached to his or her name. The only true tomb of Badawī is therefore the one at Ṭanṭā where he spent the last 40 years of his life (634/1236-37–675/1276), and established himself as a great saint.

He was venerated by many of his contemporaries, including the Sultan az-Zāhir Baybars, who rushed to welcome him “with his army” when he came to Egypt, and some say that he kissed his feet. Badawī was famous for his unusual ascetic behavior, which is reminiscent of the Christians hermits. He never married, emphasizing his resolution “not to marry any other woman than one of the virgins of Paradise (*min al-hūr ‘in Q*, 56:22)”. In his teachings, he emphasized the importance of faith and nocturnal prayer, which he demonstrated in his own personal method of worship (*‘ibādah*). He spent long periods which extended over many weeks standing in meditation on the roof (*sath* pl. *suṭūh*) hence gaining for himself the honorific title of *suṭūhī*. This title also came to designate his disciples who were called *aṣḥāb as-sath* or *suṭūhīyyah*.

The enthusiastic biographer emphasizes that before he went to Egypt, Badawī had a vision: “He used to spend 40 days without eating or drinking or sleeping, and most of the time lifting his face to heaven (following the movement of the sun) until his eyes became (red) like two pieces of burning coal. Then he heard thrice a voice saying to him: ‘Up you get and follow the rising place of the sun and once you reach it follow it to the place of its setting, and go to Ṭanditā [Ṭanṭā, Ṭantā] for there is your place, O young man!’ (He had this vision when he was still at Mecca MS) whereupon he left for Iraq. There he was met by al-Kīlānī and ar-Rifā‘ī, the two ṣūfī saints (*al-‘arifān*), that is to say (they met him) in their spiritualities (*bi-rūḥaniyatihimā*).

They said to him: ‘O Aḥmad, we possess the keys to Iraq, India, Yemen, the East and the West; chose whichever you want.’ He answered: ‘I shall receive the keys from no other but from The Opener (*al-fattāh*, i.e. Allah) Himself. Thereupon he traveled to Egypt.’ (Ibn al-‘Imād, *ibid.*)

He left no intellectual legacy of any importance (*Hizb*, *Waṣāyā*, and *Ṣalwāt* are the works attributed to him) but this did not effect the unusual veneration that extended far beyond his circle of disciples. According to Lane, the Muezzin calling for prayer, used to close his *adhān* with the words: “And may God, whose Name is blessed and exalted be pleased with thee O our lord El-Ḥasan, and with thee O our lord El-Ḥoseyn, and with thee O Aboo Farrāg, O Sheikh of the Arabs, and with all the favourites [the ‘walees’] of God, Amen.” “Aboo Farrāg”—Lane noted—“is the surname of a famous saint, the Seyyid Aḥmad El-Bedawee, buried at Tanṭā (*sic!*) in the Delta. It implies that he obtains relief to those who visit his tomb, and implore his intercession.” (Lane, 1908: 77 and note 1).

As becomes a saint of his stature, Aḥmad al-Badawī’s biography is rich with many legendary details (as we demonstrated above in the quotation from Ibn al-‘Imād’s *Shadhārāt adh-Dhahab*). He was born in the city of Fez (Fās) in 596/1199-1200, to a family who migrated to North Africa, either from Syria or from Arabia. In 603/1206, when he was seven years old, his parents went on a pilgrimage to Mecca which they reached in 607/1211 after a journey of more than four years. They remained in Mecca, where his father died in 627/1230. As a young man Aḥmad must have been rather frivolous, distinguishing himself as a daring horseman which earned him the nicknames: “*al-‘attāb*” (bold horseman) and *abū al-fityān* (father of knights, *chevalier*).

However, when he experienced the vision, which called him to go to Iraq and Egypt, he had already undergone a transformation of the heart and demonstrated excessive piety. It is said that in Iraq, he succeeded in subduing Fāṭimah bint Barrī who had resisted all men, but he refused her offer to marry him. This incident became the basis for a highly popular, romantic story involving the two of them. In his long and detailed article about Badawī in the first *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, K. Vollers remarked that as his cult developed it absorbed what seemed to scholars (Maspero, Ebers, Goldziher) “old Egyptian elements” and that the incident with Fāṭimah “signifies more than the mere taming of a Bedouin Amazon.” (See there for more details, including an example of the licentious elements of Badawī’s cult, which have been pointed out by Goldziher).

Since Badawī was also a venerated saint in Palestine, popular legends developed around him throughout the country. Here also he was called *al-mulaththam* (“the Muffled (of mouth)”). (Canaan, 1927:274) He was also said to walk on the sea (*ibid.*, 256) and was thus nicknamed: *khāyid al-biḥār* (the plunger of the seas). He appeared in the form of a green bird, and he received his inspiration from Jesus (‘Īsā), hence

his ability to walk on the water. (*ibid.*, 246, 276). In Palestine, and Syria the followers of his *Ṭarīqah* were members of the Zu'biyyah family, natives of the Ḥawrān. The story about Fāṭimah and the saint is told differently in Palestine as recorded by Canaan:

Aḥmad el-Badawī had a clever woman Fāṭmeh the daughter of el-Barrī, as one of his disciples. As soon as she was elevated by the master to the rank of sainthood, she left him and began to be honoured more and more by the people, many of whom became her devoted followers. She and her disciples had many religious quarrels with el-Badawī from the very beginning. Therefore her group was called by the *aqtāb* by the despised name of “foreigners,” *ʿdjam*. The following verse refers to her (in the original, transliterated. MS):

السيد ألي مقامه مجمع الأقطاب
لولا ما سلب بنت البري خاطره ما طاب  
روح يا مردي واتقلب عالاعتاب
وان مسك ضيم يقالك علينا (ا)عتاب

The master whose shrine is the meeting place of the *aqtāb*  
 Had he not captured the daughter of al-Barrī, he would not have been satisfied.  
 Go, O thou who lovest me and turn yourself (as a sign of humiliation) on the thresholds,  
 And should difficulties befall you, then have you the right to be angry with us.

This Fāṭmeh is supposed to have her shrine in Zakariā (west of Jerusalem MS). No male visitors are admitted in the shrine. She is supposed, according to what was told Masterman and Macalister (QS 1915:175), to have come from Persia, but compare what is said above. (Canaan, *op.cit.* 251-252)

In spite of Canaan's reservations it seems that the legend told to Masterman and Macalister is the missing link between the classical story about the adventure of Badawī with the Iraqi “Amazon” and its appearance in a different form in the Palestinian legend. Here Fāṭimah bint Barrī assumes a saintly figure, having her own all-women sanctuary, and competing with Badawī himself, whose shrine is lauded as the meeting place of the “Poles”. Canaan had no information about Badawī's *zāwiyah* in Gaza, which no doubt represents his migration as an independent saint to Palestine as well. (*ZDPV* 11: 152, 158)

Aḥmad died at Ṭanṭā on 12 Rabī' I 675/24 August 1276. This date is not necessarily true since it marks the anniversary of the Prophet's death. His *mawlid* that is celebrated three times on different dates attracts huge multitudes from all over Egypt to Ṭanṭā, a clear testimony to the many followers of his *ṭarīqah*. His tomb is one of the most popular sites of *ziyārah*, and so also the tombs ascribed to him in Tripoli in Syria (Burckhardt, *Travels in Syria* 1822:166), near Aswān and this *zāwiyah* in Gaza. As mentioned above, none of these places, beside the tomb at Ṭanṭā, have anything to do with him, but his name, once attached to them, turned them into sites of pilgrimage. (Ziriklī 1:175 and note 1; *Shadharāt adh-Dhahab* 5: 345-46; Ibn Taghrī Birdī, *Nujūm* 7:252; Vollers, *EI* and the references there)

The Zāwiyah is located in the Daraj Quarter next to a mosque known locally as Masjid az-Zāwiyah al-Aḥmadiyyah, after the name of Aḥmad al-Badawī. The mosque and the Zāwiyah now form one complex.

35

GAZA 731-732a  
Foundation text

731-732/1331-32

A slab of marble, 1.25x0.33m, over the front door of a room to the right of the entrance hall of Zāwiyat as-Sayyid Aḥmad al-Badawī sunk into a beveled frame of limestone. 2 lines, elegant, Mamlūk *naskhī*, points, no vowels, some decorations; in relief. Figs 27, 27a. Publication: MvB Coll. “Gaza” c.VII, 104-5; Mayer, *JPOS* 1923, 3:74-76 (plate 2); ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, *Ta’rīkh Ghazzah*, 348.

(١) بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ تَبَارَكَ الَّذِیْ اِنْ شَاءَ <ء> جَعَلَ لَكَ خَیْرًا مِنْ ذٰلِكَ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي  
مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهَارُ (٢) نَهَارٌ وَيَجْعَلُ لَكَ قَصُوْرًا اَنْشَأَ هٰذَا الْمَكَانَ الْمُبَارَكَ الْعَبْدَ الْفَقِیْرَ اِلَى اللّٰهِ تَعَالٰی  
طَرْنَطَايِ الْجُوْكَنْدَارِي

Basmalah. Blessed be He who, if he will, shall assign to thee better than that—gardens underneath which rivers flow, and He shall assign to thee palaces. (Q, 25:11. Trans. Arberry) Has established this blessed place the slave who is in need of Allah, the Exalted, Ṭurunṭāy the polomaster...

L.2: الجوكنداري MvB: الجوكندار. The *yā'* at the end is there but it is almost lost in the ornamental elements.

There are two biographies of Ḥusām ad-Dīn Ṭurunṭāy al-Jūkandārī. Ibn Ḥajar (*Durar* 2:217, No. 2011) mentioned him in one sentence: “He was *wālī* (governor) of Gaza in the days of Tankiz.” Ṣafadī, in his *A’yān al-‘aṣr* (s.v., “Ṭurunṭāy”) dedicated a long and detailed biography to him. The reference to him as al-Jūkandārī with the *yā'* of the *nisbah*, employed to create the *nomina relativa* (Wright, *Grammar*, 1 § 249ff) does not mean that he was not a polomaster himself. This *nisbah* form could well be what van Berchem, discussing a waqf inscription from Jerusalem dated 695/1295, called “*relatif formel*”. In that inscription, the famous Amīr Sanjar, who dedicated the waqf, was referred to as ad-*Dawādārī* although he was definitely a *dawādār* (*CIA Jérusalem*, “*Ville*” 1:214, 218 n.4). In aṣ-Ṣafadī’s biography, Ṭurunṭāy is called *al-jūkandārī*, but Ibn Ḥajar calls him *al-jūkandār* which means that there is no difference between the two.

Ṭurunṭāy was appointed to the governorship of Gaza on 15 Ramaḍān, 731. He held office at least until Muharram 733 when Ṭaynāl was appointed in his stead. (Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* ed. Ziyādah, 2:358; ed. ‘Aṭā, 1997, 3:164. On Ṭaynāl who was the governor of Gaza from 733 until 735 (*Durar* 2:232 No. 2066) after losing the prestigious position of the governor of Tripoli, (see Şafadī, *op. cit.* s.v. “Ṭaynāl,” and *idem*, *Wāfi* 16:296.) When Mayer published this inscription he quoted Ṭurunṭāy’s biography in full from the Istanbul manuscript of Şafadī’s *A’yān*, a copy of which he consulted at the Egyptian Library in Cairo in February 1923 “as it seems unlikely that the manuscript of Şafadī will be published,” he remarked. The book *A’yān al-‘aṣr* appeared in Beirut in six and in four volumes, 75 years after Mayer wrote these words. Mayer recognized the importance of this biography since it contains the original diploma nominating Ṭurunṭāy to the governorship of Gaza, which was composed and written by Şafadī himself. It is useful to quote here some of Mayer’s notes which follow his edition of Ṭurunṭāy’s biography in Arabic.

“Ḥisām (*sic!*) Ad-Dīn Ṭurunṭay was the wālī of Gaza during the governorship of Tankiz. Whether he was himself a polomaster or only a freed Mamlūk of a *jūkandār* is uncertain... Later on Ṭurunṭāy was transferred to Ja‘bar, which he left for Damascus after the death of the Amīr Shihāb ad-Dīn Aḥmad b. Baraq. In his new position as the wālī of Damascus, Ṭurunṭāy was promoted to the rank of Amīr of Ten, which he kept apparently until his death...” (Here Mayer describes the circumstances and reasons for the publication of Şafadī’s text). “I give the text *in extenso*, together with a copy of Ṭurunṭāy’s diploma, which may be compared with the draft of a letter of appointment for a wālī of Gaza (Qalqashandī, *Subh*, 12:331) and also with the diploma of Sanjar al-Jāwli who was discharged from the governorship of Gaza a short time before the appointment of Ṭurunṭāy (Qalqashandī, *vol. cit.*, 212).” Mayer added an important note concerning the translation of the Arabic terms used for the documents of nomination: “I translated **تقليد** by ‘diploma’ and **توقيع** by ‘letter of appointment’ to distinguish between the two kinds of documents, though this translation is quite arbitrary.” (Mayer, *op. cit.*, 75 n.2)

What did Ṭurunṭāy build? The inscription speaks about *al-makān al-mubārak*—the blessed place. Had he built the mosque, the word “*masjid*” should have certainly appeared in the inscription. *Makān* is a general term and could well mean the whole sanctuary or the room in which the inscription was found.

### **Zāwiyat al-Badawī Tomb of Quṭlū Khātūn**

In the courtyard of the Zāwiyah: a tomb built on a marble pedestal with four square pillars forming its four corners. Each pillar was made of one block of marble topped with a sculpted onion-shape capital resting on a stylized spool-like base. In its present form, the tomb is built of an assortment of recycled building materials, including a

badly defaced fragment of an inscription on a limestone block, roughly shaped to fit as an ashlar in the south-western corner of the tomb. (Fig. 27) Max Van Berchem saw the tomb in its original form at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He described it as “a beautiful tomb of marble.” Examining the photographs that were taken some forty years later, in about 1923, it is clear that the tomb was rebuilt after being badly damaged at least once. The remaining, perfect architectural elements of the pedestal and the corner pillars, as well as the excellent inscription, are presently attached to a primitively built structure. Mayer was right when he asserted that the inscription was detached at least once from its original place between the two pillars and reattached by plaster when the tomb was reconstructed. On top of the tomb, just above the inscription, there is a beautiful turban sculpted from marble. “The sculpted turban”—wrote van Berchem—“consists of spiral bands with flowers and tendrils, a very old exemplar and, moreover, on a woman’s tomb!” (MvB Coll. “Gaza,” *Epitaph de la dame Quṭlū Khātūn*, dép. c. VII, 103)

36

GAZA 733

Epitaph of Quṭlū Khātūn

2 Rabīʿ II 733/21 December 1332).

A slab of marble, 0.64x0.48 m. forming the narrow, western face of the tomb. 6 lines, elegant Mamlūk *naskhī*, points, no vowels, a few decorative elements; in relief. The inscription was engraved in a sunken field with bands in relief dividing the lines. On both sides, the inscription is bordered by (a) wavy branch, or tendril, with single leaves. Just above the middle of the two marble pillars flanking the inscription, two identical heraldic shields of a polo-master were engraved in relief in a sunken, round field: “polo-sticks on combined middle and lower fields of two fielded shield.” (Mayer, *Heraldry*, 1933:193) Fig. 28. Publication: MvB Coll. “Gaza”=env. 24, carnet 7:103-105; Mayer, *JPOS* 1923, 3:76-78; Mayer, *Heraldry*, *loc.cit.*; *RCEA* 15:24, No. 5636.

١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم كل من عليها فان ٢) هذا ضريح الست الجليلة الكبرى المصونة  
٣) السعيدة الشهيدة قطلو خاتون ابنة المقرّأ (!) ٤) المرحوم بهادر الجوكندار رحمهما  
الله ٥) تعالى وكان وفاتها يوم الاثنين الثاني من شهر ٦) ربيع الآخر سنة ثلاث وثلاثين  
وسبعماية

Basmalah. Every one upon it passes away (Q. 55:26. Trans. Bell). This is the tomb of the honorable, great, pure, happy, martyred Lady Quṭlū Khātūn the daughter of His Excellency

the late Bahādūr the polo-master (*al-jūkandār*) may Allah the exalted have mercy on both of them. She passed away on Monday, 2 Rabīʿ II of the year 733 (=Monday/Tuesday 21 December 1332).

Bahādūr al-Jūkandār was an amīr forty or *amīr ṭablkhānah* in Damascus. He died in 723 (*Durar* 1: 498, No. 1363), ten years before the death of his daughter about whom there are no details in the sources. It is therefore impossible to know how she came to be buried in Gaza. As it happened from time to time to travellers, she could have died while passing through the city, and owing to her high status was buried in a beautifully built tomb in a prestigious place, complete with a rich inscription flanked by two blazons of a polo-master. There is no information about women receiving heraldic shields, or being able to hold such posts, which necessitated free movement in men's company. It is therefore impossible that the shield on Quṭlū Khātūn's tomb belonged to her, though Mayer described the heraldic shield under her name. (cf. *Heraldry*, loc. cit.). He pointed out, however, that "the inscription throws a new light on an old problem of Muhammedan heraldry. It is generally assumed that a blazon with office-emblems was used by the amīr to whom they had been granted, and there was no archeological evidence to the contrary. The only passage which could have raised doubts as to the identity of a blazon and its bearer was the statement of Ibn Taghrī Birdī, quoted by every scholar writing about Muhammedan heraldry since Quatremère, that the courtesans and other women found the blazon of Amīr Ānūk so attractive, that they tattooed it on their wrists." (Mayer, *JAOS*, 3, 1923:77.) Mayer quotes Ibn Taghrī Birdī's *al-Manhal aṣ-Ṣāfi* "s.v. Ānūk" (*ibid* n.2) as the source for this information. I checked the biographies of the two Ānūks in the printed *Manhal*, Cairo 1985, 3:107-111, Nos. 557, 558 although only one (No. 558) is relevant to our discussion. There is no trace of it. The only information which appears there (in a long quotation from aṣ-Ṣafadī's *al-Wāfi bi-al-Wafāyāt*, 9, 2000:245) is that Ānūk, the son of the Sultan an-Nāṣir Muḥammad, "used to carry the *rank* of his grandfather Qalāwūn." (Mayer, *Heraldry* 1933:65) It is rather strange since Quatremère (*SM*, 2a:15), and the scholars who followed him, used Ms. Paris ar. 2068-2072, written in 855-856, namely during the lifetime of the author, and copied from the author's autograph. It was used as a prime source, in addition to four more manuscripts, by Muḥammad Amīn and 'Abd al-Fattāḥ 'Āshūr, the editors of the *Manhal*. (*Manhal* 1, 1984:12-13).

As for the blazon on Quṭlū Khātūn's tomb, Mayer offered two possible explanations: either that she was the wife of Ṭurunṭāy who had established the Zāwiyah in honour of the saint (after 731/1330), and then buried his wife in it (733/1332), or that whoever buried Quṭlū Khātūn in Gaza, gave the order to engrave her father's heraldic shield on her grave. (Mayer, 1923:77-78). There is a problem with the first suggestion, since at the beginning of Rabīʿ I 733, Ṭurunṭāy was not in Gaza; he

had been replaced by Ṭaynāl who arrived there on 4 Rabī I or thereabouts, if we accept the dating of Maqrīzī. (Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, ed. Ziyādah, 2, 1971:358; ed. 'Aṭā, 1997, 3:164-5) However, if Ṭaynāl took over from Ṭuruntāy later than Rabī II 733 (very unlikely), then the latter could well have been responsible for Quṭlū Khātūn's burial. Whether she was his wife or not it is difficult to say. It seems more probable that she died in Gaza, and being such an important lady, whose father was probably well-known in Mamlūk circles, somebody (not Ṭuruntāy, Ṭaynāl?) took particular interest in her tomb, honouring her with the blazon of her father.

Whichever was the case there is no question that the engraving of the heraldic shields on the tomb of a woman, whether daughter or wife, is an interesting precedent.

37

GAZA 735

Epitaph of a Muslim

14 Ṣafar 735/14 Oct. 1334

A slab of marble(?) 0.52x0.28m. (squeeze measurements), broken on top, more on the left side, kept in the storeroom of the Great Mosque. 6+1 lines, provincial Mamlūk *naskhī*, points, a few vowels; 6 lines in bas relief, and 1 line added at the bottom of the slab, small letters, cursive *naskhī*, a few point, no vowels; incised. Fig. 29 (IAA squeeze photo No. 4183).

(١) كل نفس [ذائقة الموت هذا] (٢) قبر العبد الفقير الى الله (٣) شهاب الدين أحمد مشدّ  
الحاشية (٤) ايتام المماليك السلطانية توفي (٥) اربع عشر (!) صفر سنة خمس وثلاثين وسبعماية  
(٦) رحمه الله ورحم جميع المسلمين امين (٧) (incised) وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد وآله  
وصحبه وسلم

(Basmalah?). Every soul shall taste death. (Q. 3:185; 21:35; 29:57. Trans. Arberry) This is the tomb of the slave who is in need of Allah, Shihāb ad-Dīn Aḥmad Inspector of the Attendants (or: Retinue), the orphans of the Sultan's Mamlūks. He died on 14 Ṣafar 735 (=14 October 1334). May Allah forgive him and pardon all the Muslims. Amen! (Added line, inscribed in different script:) And may Allah bless our master Muḥammad and his family and companions and give them peace.

Ll. 3-4: *مشدّ الحاشية ايتام المماليك السلطانية*—I could not find an office called *shadd al-hāshiyah* in Qalqashandī's lists of offices. Literally, *mushidd al-hāshiyah* means the inspector of the Sultan's retinue, but this is not the case here because the Sultan's

retinue—*al-ḥadrah as-sultāniyyah*—was composed of the highest officials and officers in the state and its supervision was entrusted to a very high ranking officer, the *Ustādār*. He was in charge of everything that pertained to the Sultan’s house-affairs such as the kitchens, the place where the drinks were prepared, the retinue (*al-ḥāshiyah*) etc. (Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, 4:20). In this inscription the office of the supervisor of the *ḥāshiyah* has to do with attending to the affairs of the orphans of the most important Mamlūks, the private Mamlūks of the Sultan (*al-mamātīk as-sultāniyyah*), who were his nearest attendants. They received the Sultan’s special attention and gained wealth and honour through him. All of them were purchased by the Sultan himself; from them came the amīrs “one rank after the other”. The longer the Sultan ruled the larger became their number (*ibid.*, 4:15-16). It is only natural that there should be a special functionary to look after the Mamluks’ orphans, as we learn, as far as I know, only from this inscription.

38

GAZA 737

Epitaph of a Muslim

Ṣafar 737/Began 9 Sept. 1336

A slab of marble, 0.67x0.36m. (squeeze measurements), kept in the storeroom of the Great Mosque. 5 lines, provincial Mamlūk *naskhī*, full points, many vowels and signs; in relief. Fig. 30 (IAA squeeze photo No. 4198).

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم (٢) كل من عليها فان هذا قبر (٣) الفقير الى الله تعالى القاضي  
(٤) عماد الدين يحيى بن عبد المنعم توفي الى (٥) رحمة الله في شهر صفر سنة سبع وثلثين (!)  
(vertically). وسبعماية.

Basmalah. All that dwells upon it is perishing. (Q, 55:26. Trans. after Arberry) This is the tomb of him who is in need of Allah the Exalted, the judge (qāḍī) ‘Imād ad-Dīn Yaḥyā b. ‘Abd al-Mun‘im. He died in the month of Ṣafar the year 737 (began 9 September 1336).

L.4: ‘Imād ad-Dīn—I could not find details about this judge.

L.5: The word *سبعماية* was engraved vertically in a very small space at the end of the line.

39

GAZA 741  
Great Mosque

Before 741/1340

An undated inscription of an-Nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalāwun, mentioned by van Berchem in his survey of the Arabic inscriptions of Gaza for M.A. Meyer, *History of Gaza*, 1907:150 (= MvB Coll. "Gaza," c.VII, 75-76, 83): "In the Great Mosque the following inscriptions are preserved. Two of Sultan Lājīn dated Rabī I and Shaḥbān 697 A.H., four of Muḥammad an-Nāṣir of the years 706, 718, Muḥarram 730 and the fourth one undated."

40

GAZA 743  
Epitaph of a Muslim woman

Jumādā I 743(?)/2 Oct. 1342

A slab of marble, 0.455x0.455 (squeeze measurements), broken on top, top left and bottom, kept in the storeroom of the Great Mosque. 5 lines provincial Mamlūk *naskhī*, damaged in a few places, medium size letters, points, and many vowels; in relief. Fig. 31 (IAA squeeze photo No. 4192)

(١) بسم الله [الرحمن الرحيم] (٢) كل من عليها فان هذا قبر الفقيرة (؟) الى الله تعالى [الى]  
(٣)... (؟) شقيقة (؟) العبد الفقير الى الله تعالى شمس الدين (٤) [ابن] المرحوم ركن الدين حسن  
أجاولي توفيت الى رحمة الله تعالى (٥) في جمادى الأولى (!) [سنة] ثلاثة (!) واربعين (؟) [وسبع  
ماية] رحمة الله تُسعدُهُ

Basmalah. All that dwells upon it is perishing. (Q, 55:26. Trans. after Arberry) This is the tomb of her who is in need of Allah, the Exalted...(name), the full sister of the needy for Allah the Exalted, Shams ad-Dīn Mukhtār son of the late Rukn ad-Dīn Ḥasan al-Jāwī. She passed away unto Allah's mercy in Jumādā I, 743 (=2 October 1342). May Allah's compassion render him happy.

L.1: *al-faqīrah*. The *fathah* over the *rā* is clear. The *tā* *marbūṭah* was broken away. Part of the word *ta'ālā* was also lost.

L.2: If the name of the dead woman was at all mentioned, it is hiding in a few signs at the beginning of the line above the word which I read *shaqīqat* (the full sister of).

At the end of the line, the reading of the name of the brother who was responsible for the burial, and for this inscription, is doubtful. There is a defect in the squeeze, which creates reading problems here and in a few other places. I read Mukhtār although this was a very rare name in the Mamlūk period, at least as far as we can learn from the sources. I could not find the name Mukhtār in Ibn al-‘Imād’s *Shadharāt* even once (if we exclude the famous Shī‘ite rebel early in the Umayyad period). It was not to be found in Qalqashandī’s *Subh*, nor in Sakhāwī’s *Daw’* and Mujīr ad-Dīn’s *Uns*, and there were very few in Ibn Taghrī Birdī’s *Nujūm*. Moreover, it seems that in the Mamlūk period it was rare, although it seems that it was used for eunuchs. The two Mukhtārs in Ibn Ḥajar’s *Durar* were eunuchs. (*idem*, 4:344-345. Nos. 937, 938. Cf. also Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 2(3) 1958:638)

L.4: The name Ḥasan is sure, taking into consideration the condition of the squeeze and the tendency of the engraver to create a rounded *ḥā*. The *nisbah* al-Jāwli is clear. The most famous person with this *nisbah* was the Amīr Sanjar al-Jāwli (died Ramaḍān 745/January 1345). This *nisbah* refers to a certain Amīr Jāwl who bought Sanjar and most probably also the Rukn ad-Dīn Ḥasan in this inscription. (Ibn Ḥajar, *op.cit.* 2:170. No. 1877)

L5: The reading of the date is problematic, but is very possible. The month Jumādā (written with a long *alif*!) is clear, as are the words forty three. The seven hundred is a guess based on a few remnants of letters, the script, and the *nisbah*.

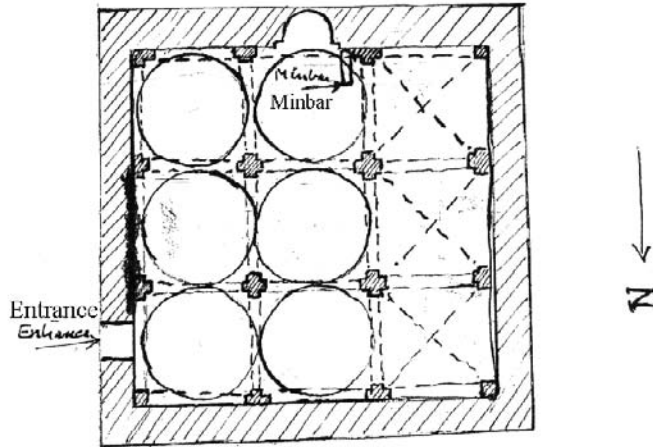
The ending, wishing the brother comfort in the saying *rahmat allah tus‘iduhu*, is not strange, particularly since the usage of the verb *s-‘-d* in the fourth form is used exactly for such occasions.

### **Jāmi‘ ash-Shaykh Zakariyyā**

This small mosque (mentioned above No. 03) which, until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, was at the extreme northwestern part of the city (Gatt Plan of Gaza E2), is built on the west side of an open court. The structure consists of three aisles with three bays in each one of them. The east and middle aisles are surmounted by domes resting on arches while the compartments of the west aisle are cross vaulted. (See sketch plan below.) The octagonal minaret of the mosque is massively built in stone, and stands in the court on its own, detached from the main building. (Fig. P22 Shaykh Zakariyyā)

Along the north side of the court and adjoining the mosque, are two domed *riwāqs* and a domed tomb chamber. In this chamber there is a grave built near the north wall. This grave was initially built with marble slabs, which were dismantled. Among the slabs, which were scattered near the grave, three that had been used as building material to build the tomb were found bearing inscriptions from various

dates. This information closely follows Husseini's description of the mosque from June 1945, to which he accompanied the initial reading of the inscriptions. IAA Archives "Gaza" "esh Sheikh Zakariya, 20 June 1945." IAA photos Nos. 33.761, 33.762, 33.763, 33.764, 33.765, 33.780, 33.781, 33.782, 33.778, 33.779).



Sketch plan of Jami' ash-Shaykh

Zakariya

- Gaza -

20.6.45

Husseini's sketch plan of Jami' ash-Shaykh Zakariyya

Pl. 9 Shaykh Zakariyyā

41

GAZA 749

Epitaph of a Muslim

749/1348-49

A slab of marble, 052x0.34x0.10 (Husseini's measurements). 3 lines, provincial Mamlūk *naskhī*, points, some vowels and *shaddah* signs; in relief. Bands divide the lines. Fig. 32 (IAA photo No. 33.764; IAA squeeze photo No. 32197) Publication: initial, partial reading, Husseini in a report from 20 June 1945 (IAA Archives *loc. cit.* above).

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم كل نفس ذائقة الموت هذا قبر العبد الفقير الى الله تعالى  
(٣) ركن الدين توفي سنة تسع واربعين وسبع—[ماية]

Basmalah. Every soul shall taste death. (Q, 3:185; 21:35; 29:57. Trans. Arberry). This is the tomb of the slave who is in need of Allah the Exalted, Rukn ad-Dīn. He died in the year 749 (=1348-49).

I think that the text above represents the whole inscription although one gets the impression that there is more to read in it because of the many scattered signs, and because of the fact that the deceased is mentioned only by the title Rukn ad-Dīn, without his personal name, which usually follows such titles. I am sure about the absence of the personal name; the text continues immediately with the word *tuwuffiya* followed by *sanah* and the date.

Husseini read line 1 correctly. In line 2 he could not read *al faqīr ilā allāh*, and in line 3 he missed the whole text and thought that the year was 704.

42

GAZA 757

Epitaph of a Muslim

15 Shawwāl 757/11 Oct. 1356

A slab of marble, 052x0.32m. (squeeze measurements), kept in the storeroom of the Great Mosque. 6 lines, provincial Mamlūk *naskhī*, thick crowded letters, points, *shaddah* signs; in bas-relief. Bands divide the lines. Fig. 33 Gaza 757 (IAA squeeze photo No. 4499).

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم (٢) كل نفس ذائقة الموت هذا قبر (٣) العبد الفقير الى الله تعالى  
(٤) محمد بن غنّام / غنّام توفي نصف (٥) شهر شوال سنة سبع (٦) وخمسين وسبع مائة

Basmalah. This is the tomb of the slave who is in need of Allah, the Exalted, Muḥammad b. Ghannām. He died in the middle of the month of Shawwāl 757 (=11 October 1356)

L.4: The name Ghannām is clear, since there is a large *shaddah* over the *nūn*. This is not a common name, and had the *shaddah* not been so prominent there, I would have read the name as Ghanā'im (see Sakhāwī, 6:161 No. 531), considering that there is a short line over the *mīm* which could easily be *kursī yā'*. If we attribute the *shaddah* to the *fā'* of *tuwuffiya* then the name is surely Ghanā'im. Since the engraver is quite free with the *shaddah* (in l.3 over the 'ayn of 'abd, in l.4 over the word *nisf*) its present place does not prevent such reading.

**Masjid Güzümrī—(Toquz Demürī)** (*az-Zafardamurī, Züfr-dümürī*)

This mosque is in the Sajā'iyah Quarter on the east side of the town, “outside the walls,” (*RCEA*, 17, 1982:2) that is to say outside the remnants of the ancient city wall, which was still visible at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. (Gatt Plan of Gaza D7, van Berchem’s addition) In Mayer’s report from 22 May 1922 (IAA files “Gaza”) he calls the mosque “Sheikh Muḥammad(!) al-Guzumrī”. Max van Berchem (MvB Coll. “Gaza”) refers to it as “Mosquée du Shêkh Aḥmad Züfr-dümürī (Güzümrī)”. ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif follows the reading of the inscription and says that the mosque was built in 762 by Shihāb ad-Dīn Aḥmad Azfīr (*sic!*) *az-Zufr-Dumrī* this being a “nisbah to Zufr-Dumr (or Zafar Damur) in the Maghrib”. He adds that the founder was known as al-Quz Dumrī, and that his tomb is in the mosque (*Ta’rīkh Ghazzah* 1943:350). I could not find a place called Zufr-Dumr (or Zafar Damur) in the Maghrib, and I can imagine that this story was also heard by ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif from some people in the neighbourhood. His explanation that the founder came to be known by the name al-Quz Dumrī is nothing more than an attempt on his part to make a connection somehow between Züfr-dümürī and Güzümrī. As for the pronunciation of the name of the mosque, van Berchem notes that he heard from one of the locals (*d’après un indigène du quartier*) that “the founder was called Aḥmad al-Züfr-dümürī, a name the people turned into al-Guzümürī.” (MvB Coll. “Gaza” c.VII, 114-115; *cf. RCEA* 17:2 n.1) There is no question that Aḥmad al-Züfr-dümürī was the name that van Berchem had heard, because it is also the name ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif heard about two generations later. However, it is difficult to understand how Züfr-dümürī could be corrupted to Güzümrī or Quzumrī. Mayer, carrying out the initial survey of Gaza for the newly established British Department of Antiquities, listed the mosque under the name Guzumrī that he, like van Berchem, had heard from the locals. His correct reading of the name in the inscription, Ṭuquzdamurī, as we shall soon see was the nearest to this popular (but incorrect) pronunciation.

43

GAZA 762

Construction text

762/1360-61

A slab of marble, 2.0x0.45m. (approx.) fixed in the tympanum above the entrance door of Masjid *az-Zafardamrī* (should be: Ṭuquz Damurī). 3 lines monumental Mamlūk *naskhī*, full points and many vowels; in high relief. The inscription is surrounded by decorative engravings. Directly on top of it there is a frieze constituted of a row of

inverted fleurs-de-lis and directly above the row of the fleur-de-lis in the tympanum there is a beautiful arabesque, similar to the one decorating the mausoleum (*turbah*) of Turkān Khātūn in Jerusalem dated 753/1352. (*CIA*, Jérusalem “*Ville*” 1, No. 84) A similar row of inverted fleurs-de-lis decorates the gate-posts on both sides of the inscription. Figs. 34, 34a (MvB photos). Publication: MvB files “Gaza” c.VII, 114-115; Ārif al-Ārif, *Ta’rīkh Ghazzah* 1943: 350 (copied with mistakes ‘Aṭallah 1986:240); Mayer in *RCEA* 17, 1982:2, No. 762 068.

١) بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ اِنَّمَا یَعْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللّٰهِ مِنْ اٰمِنٍ بِاللّٰهِ وَالیَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ وَاَقَامَ الصَّلٰوةَ  
 وَاٰتٰی الزَّكٰوةَ ٢) وَلَمْ یَحْشِ اِلَّا اللّٰهَ وَعَسٰی اَوْلٰئِكَ اَنْ یَّكُوْنُوْا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِیْنَ اَنْشَأَ هٰذَا الْمَكَانَ الْمُبَارَكِ  
 ٣) لِعَبْدِ الْفَقِیْرِ اِلَى اللّٰهِ تَعَالٰی شَهَابِ الدِّیْنِ اَحْمَدِ ابْنِ (!) فِیْرِزِ الطُّقْرَدُمُرِیِّ فِی سَنَةِ اِثْنِیْنِ وَسِتِّیْنِ  
 وَسَبْعِ مِائَةٍ

Basmalah. Q 9:18 (complete). Has founded this blessed place the slave who is in need of Allah the Exalted, Shihāb ad-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn Fīruz at-Ṭuquzdamurī in the year 762 (=1360-1361)

This reading, which represents a combination of van Berchem’s and Mayer’s suggestions is the correct one.

L.3: The *alif* of **العبد** is in the previous line. There is no trace of it at the beginning of this line. The most challenging problem in this line is the reading of the founder’s name.



Pl. 10 Gaza 762 detail: line 3

The name Aḥmad Azfīr in ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif’s report is incorrect, to say the least about this strange combination, which has no meaning whatsoever. The whole inscription was furnished with full points, and we need to account for each one of them, particularly since they were not engraved in the usual way. Thus, for instance, the four points belonging to the letters *shīn* and *bā’* in word *shihāb* were lined up, one next to the other, but fully corresponding to their letters and similarly, the two points of the *qāf* are one above the other. There is no possibility of attaching one of these two points to create the letter **ظ** since, in this case, the point is needed on the *right* side of the “leg” of the letter. The points, which belong to the word *ithnayn* are the only indication of the identity of the word since the three letters *thā’*, *nūn*, and *yā’* were all combined in a little elongation of the last long *nūn* at the end.

The inscription also contains vowels in many places, particularly where a mistake in the reading could occur. Note how the *ḍammah* was carefully engraved above the *mīm* to denote that this part of the *nisbah* should be read *damurī*.

The words Shihāb ad-Dīn Aḥmad *ibn*—with an *alif!*—(not *az!*) are clear. Then comes the founder's father's name, which can only be read Fīruz. The word Fīrūz, being the Arabic rendering of the Persian Pīrūz—Victory—appears here without the elongating *wāw*. The suggested reading with reservations is van Berchem's (adopted by the *RCEA*). There is, theoretically, the possibility to read Farīn but it seems far-fetched that somebody was called “an oven” (*farīn*). Therefore, I am quite sure that our man is Shihāb ad-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn Fīruz aṭ-Ṭuquzdamurī, actually: Ṭuquzdemūrī. Ṭuquzdemūr is a well known Turkish name. It is also written Ṭuquztamur or more correctly: Ṭuquztemūr (Abū al-Fidā', *Mukhtaṣar*, 4, AH1325:97 line10) that is to say: nine irons (hence the name: Timur=Temūr). The name in this inscription most probably refers to the Amīr Sayf ad-Dīn Ṭuquzdamur al-Ḥamawī an-Nāṣirī as-Sāqī, a first generation Mamlūk who was among the most intimate officers of an-Nāṣir Muḥammad. He held many high posts under this sultan who kept bestowing military degrees on him until he made him a Commander of Thousand in Egypt and a viceroy (*nā'ib saltānah*) in charge of a few provinces, the last of which was the province of Syria. Among the posts he held was the governorship of the province of Ḥamāt in 742/1341. He was the first Mamlūk officer to fill this post, which marked the end of the last Ayyūbid, semi-independent kingdom in Syria. Ṭuquzdamur died in Cairo in 746 after a stroke. His name was attached to buildings and gardens in Cairo. (Ibn Taghrī Birdī, *Manhal*, 6, 1990:420-422, No. 1261; idem, *Nujūm*, 8:194, 195 and the notes 1, 2; 16:20 line 11; Abū al-Fidā', *ibid.*). We should conclude, therefore, that the original name of the mosque was al-Masjid al-Ṭuquzdamurī. In time the *ṭā'* was dropped and the name somewhat shortened to Quzdamurī and this is what all the visitors heard. The name Zufrdamurī or any similar pronunciation has nothing to do with the original name.

44

GAZA 764

Jāmi' ash-Shaykh Zakariyyā

Epitaph of Muslims

Rabī I, II 764/December 1362, January 1363

A slab of marble, 0.44x0.24x0.05m. found in the funerary chamber in the Mosque of Shaykh Zakariyyā (see above Nos. 03, 41). 5 lines. Provincial, elegant Mamlūk

*naskhī*, a few points, no vowels; in relief. The inscription is framed, and bands divide the lines. This slab is the bottom-left, larger part of the inscription, which was engraved on at least two more slabs, one on its top, and one on its left side. These slabs were lost. The clean lines of the left and top borders of the existing slab prove that it was not broken. The inscription was built into the wall of a structure larger than an ordinary grave. Fig. 35 (IAA photo No. 33.763; squeeze photo No. 37168). Publication: initial, partial reading, Husseini in a report from 20 June 1945 (IAA Archives “Gaza” esh Sheikh Zakariya).

(١)....وهما محمد واحمد (٢)...وابو بكر اولاد (٣)[الفقير الى] الله تعالى خواجا وا (٤)...بن عبد[ الوهاب توفو (!) في شهر ربيع (٦) (الاول/الآخر) (٩) س—نة اربع وستين وسبعماية

...and the two of them are Muḥammad and Aḥmad...and Abū Bakr the children of (the needy of Allah the Exalted) Khwājā Wa... (b. ‘Abd) al-Wahhāb. They died in the month of Rabīʿ (I/II) 764 (began 19 December 1362 or 18 January 1363)

L.3: From this line Husseini read the words *allāh taʿālā* only.

*Khwājā* (pronounce: *Khōjā*). This Persian word meaning “lord” “master” is a title of honour used for the great and rich merchants both in Persia, in the Mamlūk Kingdom and elsewhere in the east. (cf. Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, 6:13).

L.4: From this line, Husseini read *al-wahhāb* only.

L.5: At first I thought that the month could be Rajab. However, at closer examination the “tail” of the *ʿayn* is clear.

It is clear that at least three people were buried in the tomb over which this epitaph was fixed. The inscription hints at a tragic event in which the three died at the same time and were buried together. Two of them, Muḥammad and Aḥmad, seem to have been twins, since they are referred to as a pair (“*wa-humā*”). What comes before Abū Bakr in l.2 we do not know. If it is another name then the number of dead was four young men or even children. It was the time of the Black Death (*ṭāʿūn*) which had reached Egypt in autumn 748/1347 and the Levant in 749/1348. It remained in the area for centuries, sometimes recurring every year. (Dols, 1977:57-63) People died every day by the hundreds, particularly in the towns. (More than a hundred years later the epidemic carried away the lives of some 400 people daily in Gaza alone. Mujīr, 1283:692) The following inscription (No. 45 Gaza 765) also deals with a little girl who died in the plague a few months after the death of these brothers. The two inscriptions from 764 and 765 (Nos. 44 and 45) give the historical accounts about the *ṭāʿūn* a more concrete force.

### Maqām ‘Alī al-Munṭār

The sanctuary is situated on the hill (or *tell*) overlooking Gaza from the south east, the most important strategic positions around the town (Gatt Plan of Gaza B7). The following information is supplied by ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif about the sanctuary (*mazār*) of Tell al-Munṭār. As usual it is a record of local traditions and legends. “In it was buried the saint Shaykh Aḥmad al-Baṭāḥī who lived in the fifth [AH] century. This saint is said to be the direct descendent of ‘Alī Zayn al-‘Ābidīn the son of Ḥusayn son of illustrious Fāṭimah. On it is the sanctuary (*mazār*) of Shaykh ‘Alī known by the *kunyah* of Abū Sulaymān. Some say that his name was Sulaymān and that his *kunyah* was Abū ‘Alī. He became famous as “al-Munṭār”. It used to be a mosque but today it is only a *mazār*.” (*Ta’rīkh Gazzah*, 1943:354).

The tell of Munṭār is less than 85m. above sea level, but in the flat environs of Gaza it was regarded to be a mountain, and is duly called Jabal (Mt.) Munṭār. There are many legends concerning the origin of the name, none of which has any historical value. One of these legends says that the Walī (*maqām*, *mazār*) ‘Alī al-Munṭār on the hilltop is actually the tomb of a former Bishop of Gaza. Meyer, following Clermont Ganneau, even raises the question whether it is possible that the *mazār* was originally the tomb of St. Porphyry the famous Bishop of Gaza (395-420) who destroyed numerous sanctuaries of Marnas that were worshipped in Gaza. One of his temples may have been situated on Jabal Munṭār. Clermont Ganneau offers two possibilities for the origin of the name. One is that it was originally Jabal al-Muṭrān the Mountain of the Bishop. Taking into consideration the Syriac origin of the word Muṭrān, and that this Syriac dialect was spoken in Gaza, the name of the hill as the Hill of the Muṭrān, *Miṭron*, or *Miṭran* may have existed there before the Muslim conquest and was adopted and corrupted by the Arabs later. The other possible origin of the name, which is far more convincing, is that it comes from the root NaṬaR in Arabic and Hebrew (نظر, نظر)—meaning watch over, look out. The hill overlooking its environs could easily be the “Hill of the Look-out.” Clermont Ganneau further thought that the hill could well have been the necropolis of ancient Gaza. (*AR* 2: 434-435; Meyer, 1907:109) The numerous tombs on the hill and the many legends surrounding it, which migrated from one culture to the other, explain how the local Muslim sanctuary of ‘Alī al-Munṭār came to be created on it. It is also understandable why it became a desirable place of burial.

The sanctuary of al-Munṭār developed into the site of a popular festival, and a special *mawsim* (annual festival) is connected with it. Canaan noted that the sanctuary and the festival connected with it represented the policy of the post-Crusader, Muslim rulers, particularly Baybars who, fearing the concentration of too many Christian pilgrims in the country especially during and around Easter, created sanctuaries in the north, the east, the west and south of the country (e.g. Nabī Mūsā east of

Jerusalem, Nabī Ṣāliḥ in Ramlah and other places, and ad-Dārūn (ad-Dārūm) and al-Munṭār in Gaza), and fixed special times as their *mawsims*. (Canaan, 1927:299).

It is doubtful whether these quasi-historical observations of Canaan can be substantiated, since these *mawsims* were originally pagan or Christian. Thus the *mawsim* of ad-Dārūn (Dārūm) is on Easter Sunday. The *mawsim* of al-Munṭār known also as *khamīs al-Munṭār*, Munṭār's Thursday, celebrated by Muslims and Christians alike, takes place on the last Thursday of Lent (according to the Eastern Church). In time, it became a popular, Gazan, one-day festival during which whole families flocked to the sanctuary of al-Munṭār and to the gardens and the open area around it dressed in their best clothes and carrying their finest food and drink with them. Many tried to reach the sanctuary in order to light candles in it. This was also an opportunity for the gathering of dervishes of various *ṭarīqahs* to perform the *dhikr* on the top of the tell and in the sanctuary. (ʿĀrif al-ʿĀrif 1943:326). It seems to me that all these *mawsims* are connected with the beginning of spring, celebrated since ancient times in all the cultures of the Middle East under different names (Persian Nawrūz, Jewish Pesah, Christian Easter).

As van Berchem observed, the following inscription has no historical value and can tell us nothing about the origin of the Islamic sanctuary. There is no mention of inscriptions on al-Munṭār in ʿĀrif al-ʿĀrif's report which could mean that the inscription disappeared during the fifty years since van Berchem saw it.

45

Gaza 765

Epitaph of a Muslim girl

23 Shaʿbān 765/26 May 1364

A tombstone, 0.30x0.80m. found in 1894 lying on the ground beside the tomb, inside the sanctuary (*maqām*) of ʿAlī al-Munṭār, now lost. 9 lines; Mamlūk *naskhā*, small characters. Publication: MvB Coll. "Gaza" env. 24, c.VII, 110. *RCEA*, 17:60-61 No. 765 016 (No photograph).

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم (٢) كل نفس ذائقة الموت هذا (٣) ضريح الطفلة الشهيدة  
(٤) حاجي ملكة بنت الفقير الى الله (٥) قطلوبغا الركني (٦) رحمها الله تعالى (٧) توفت (!)  
بالتاعون في (٨) ثالث وعشرين شهر (٩) شعبان سنة خمس وستين وسبعماية

Basmalah. Every soul is subject to death (Q, 3:185. Trans. after Bell Q, 3:182). This is the tomb of the martyred infant girl Ḥājī Malīkah the daughter of him who is needy of Allah, Quṭlūbughā ar-Ruknī may Allah forgive her. She died in the plague on 23 Shaʿbān 765 (=26 May 1364).

Epitaphs of children are very rare, the more so epitaphs of girls. One may speculate about the special attachment of Quṭlūbughā to his infant daughter who died in one of the frequent recurrences of the Black Death (*tā'ūn*) which reached the Islamic territories from Mongolia in 1347 and was devastating for the population of the Middle East as well as for Europe. Syria and Egypt were particularly affected by the bubonic plague which frequently visited these countries. Between 1348 and 1517 there are 50 recorded recurrences of the plague for Egypt and 25 for Syria. There were evidently more non-recorded instances. (D. Panzac, “*wabā*” *EI*<sup>2</sup>; Dols, *Black Death*, 1977, *passim*. See also No. 44 above)

L.5: The father of the deceased could only be a Mamlūk of al-Muẓaffar Rukn ad-Dīn Baybars II, al-Jāshankīr, a sultan for a few months in 708-709/1309, between an-Nāṣir Muḥammad's second and third reigns. If I am correct in this assumption, Quṭlūbughā must have been quite old when his infant daughter died in 765, if one takes into consideration that he was an adult when Baybars II came to power.

L.7: *توفت* instead of *توفيت* is a common mistake influenced by colloquial Arabic.

46

GAZA 782

The Great Mosque

Foundation text

15 Dhū al-Hijjah 782/1 April 1381

Six slabs of marble, on the northeastern gate of the Great Mosque, no measurements, (Figs. P13, P13a Great Mosque NE Gate), above the lintel bearing the inscription of Caliph al-Mustaʿīn from the year 815 (below No. 58 for the year 815). The inscription is divided into three parts, each part engraved on two slabs joined together: A on the right side of the bay of the entrance door, B above the door, and C on the left side of the bay of the entrance door. 2 lines continue from A through to B and C. Each line has a frame which ends on both sides with a circular clear field. Monumental Mamlūk *naskhī*, large letters, points, some vowels and signs, and a few decorative elements; in relief. Figs. 36, 36a, 36b, 36c. Gaza 782, 782a, 782b, 782c. Publication: MvB Coll. “Gaza” env. 24 and c.VII, 89-90. RCEA, 17:312-313, No. 782 002.

١A) بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ اِنَّمَا یَعْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللّٰهِ مِنْ اٰمِنٍ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْیَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ وَاَقَامَ  
الصَّلَاةَ وَاتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَلَمْ یَخْشَ اِلَّا اللّٰهَ وَعَسَى اُولَئِکَ اَنْ یَّکُوْنُوْا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِیْنَ فِیْ بَیْوَتِ اِذْنِ اللّٰهِ  
اَنْ تَرْفَعَهُ وَیَذْکُرَ فِیْهَا اسْمَهُ یَسْبِیْحُ لَهٗ فِیْهَا بِالْغَدُو ١C) وَالْاَصَالَ رَجَالَ وَقَالَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ صَلَّى  
اللّٰهُ عَلَیْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مِنْ بَنِیْ مَسْجِدًا لِلّٰهِ وَلَوْ كَمَا فَحَصَ قَطَاةٌ ٢A) بِنَا اللّٰهِ لَهٗ قَصْرٌ [١] فِی الْجَنَّةِ اَمْرٌ

بانشا<ء> هذا المسجد الشريف والتربة المباركة ابتغا<ء> لشواب الله (٢B) الجزيل واتقا<ء>  
لعقابه الوبيل الفقير الى رحمة ربه الجليل جبرائيل [=جبرائيل] بن المرحوم ركن الدين عمر بن  
قرا خليل التركماني الغزي انشا<ء> شرعيًا وذلك في النصف من ذي (٢C) الحجة الحرام  
سنة اثنين [و]ثمانين وسبعماية اثابه الله الجنة وغفر له ولوالديه ولجميع المسلمين

Basmalah. They shall only manage Allah's places of worship who have believed in Allah and the Last Day, have established the prayer and paid the Zakāt and have feared nothing but Allah; possibly such will be among those who are rightly guided. (Q.9:18) In houses which Allah hath permitted to be raised and His name to be remembered therein; in which give glory to him in the mornings and the evenings. Men. (Q. 24:36 and one word "men" from v.37. Trans. Bell) And the Messenger, may Allah bless him and give him peace, said: whoever builds a mosque for Allah even the size of a sand-grouse nest Allah will build for him a palace in Paradise. (Ibn Ḥanbal, Musnad, 1:241; Ibn Mājah, Masājid, 1; CIAP 1:43-44). Hath ordered to found this noble mosque, and the blessed mausoleum—a legal foundation—seeking the abundant reward of Allah and fearing his dreadful punishment, he who is in need of the mercy of his Glorious Lord, Jibrā'īl son of the late Rukn ad-Dīn 'Umar b. Qarā Khalīl at-Turkmānī (the Turcoman) al-Ghazzī, and this (was done) in middle of the holy Dhū a-Hijjah the year 782 (=1 April 1381). May Allah reward him with paradise and pardon him (as well as) his parents and all the Muslims.

Ll. A1, B1, C1: I quoted the translation of Qur'ānic verses as they appear in the inscription in full to show that the verse Q. 24:36 was supplemented with one word "men" from verse 37 in order to complete the idea of the sanctuaries being built for worshippers to glorify Allah in them. The *ḥadīth* encouraging the building of mosques, no matter how big they are, is used from time to time in similar inscriptions. The choice of the *qaṭāh*'s nest in the example, for the size of the mosque, is not accidental. The *qaṭāh*, sand-grouse (*Pteroclididae*), was very well known to the Arabs being a famous desert bird that digs its nest in the sand to lay its eggs. *Maḥḥaṣ* (pl. *mafāḥiṣ*) is the word used particularly for the hollow dug by the sand-grouse for this purpose. (For more detail, synonyms and the quoted *ḥadīth* see *Lisān*, 7:63a)

L.A2: The inscription is not *in situ*. The mosque mentioned in the inscription is not the Great Mosque but a small mosque in the Sajā'iyah Quarter called Maṣjid Rukn ad-Dīn at-Turkmānī. 'Ārif al-'Arif (1943:353 and n.4) who recorded this information also gives the correct date of its foundation—782 A.H., but he does not refer to the inscription which had been transferred, long before his time, to its present place on the gate of the Great Mosque in one of the many repairs that took place there.

L.B2: The reading of name of the builder, Jibrā'īl, is pretty sure. This form of the name is used for the Archangel alongside Jibrīl, and, although not frequent, it is also used as personal name among Muslims. The grandfather of the founder Qarā Khālīl is defined as a Turcoman for which the Turkish prefix *qarā* (dark, black) is

a good reminder. This prefix before non-Turkish names is not unusual, e.g. Qarā Yūsuf (also designated “at-Turkmānī.” Cf. *Nujūm* 13: 38; *Manhal*, 1:240, 255-256; 2:112, 297, 373), and Qarā Muḥammad. (*ibid.*, 254; 2:373; 3:195, 291)

أمر بانشاء<ء> هذا I think that this is the correct reading. The phrase is a continuation of the words which refer to the foundation of the edifice in line A2: شرعيًا. المسجد الشريف والتربة المباركة انشاء

I could find nothing about the builder.

### Mazār ash-Shaykh Muḥammad b. Ṭarīf

The *mazār*, is located in the ad-Daraj Quarter. It is a funerary chamber with the tomb of the deceased who became a saint. The inscription is on the tomb.

Ibn Ḥajar in his *ad-Durar al-Kāminah* (3:460, No. 1238) mentions Muḥammad b. Ṭarīf al-Ghazzī. Unfortunately some parts of the short biography including the dates of his birth (which could be 713/1313) and death are missing from the manuscripts of his book. The only remaining information about him is that he was a *ḥadīth* scholar and that he gave permission (*ijāzah*) to the Shaykh ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān b. ‘Umar al-Qabbānī al-Maqdisī to transmit *ḥadīth* on his authority.

47

GAZA 784

Epitaph of a Muslim

10 Dhū al-Ḥijjah 784/14 Feb.1383

Tombstone. No details available: ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, *Ta’rīkh Ghazzah*, 353.

هذا قبر العبد الفقير اليه تعالى الشيخ محمد بن طريف الراجي عفو ربه توفاه الله تعالى يوم  
الخميس عشر ذي الحجة سنة ٧٨٤ هـ

This is the tomb of the slave who is in need of Him the Exalted, the Shaykh Muḥammad b. Ṭarīf, who implores the pardon of his Lord. Allah the Exalted has gathered him unto Him on Thursday, 10 Dhū al-Ḥijjah the year 784 (= Saturday, 14 February 1383).

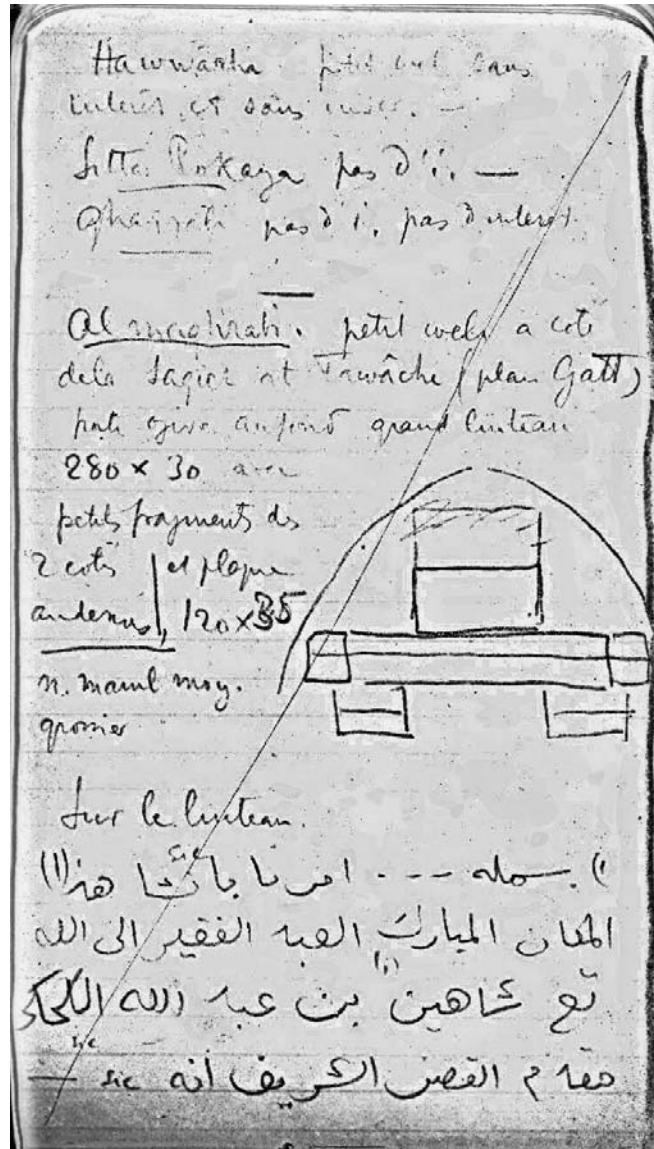
‘Ārif al-‘Ārif writes almost all the dates of the inscriptions which he quotes in digits, even when they are originally in words, as in this case. The date, therefore, should read: اربع وثمانين وسبعماية.

### **Masjid ash-Shaykh ‘Alī al-Maghribī (al-Mughrabī) in as-Sajā‘iyyah**

There is much confusion about this mosque in the local information which ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, (*Ta’rīkh Ghazzah*, 347, 350) collected. He speaks once about Masjid al-Maghribi/Mughrabī located in the al-Daraj Quarter and then again he tells the story concerning another mosque in the Sajā‘iyyah quarter called Masjid aṭ-Ṭawāshī (the Mosque of the Eunuch) and how it became the Mosque of al-Maghribi. On Masjid aṭ-Ṭawāshī he says: “It was built by one of the amīrs of the Egyptian Mamlūks and it was called by his name aṭ-Ṭawāshī (*sic!*). It was the custom of a Maghribi person called ash-Shaykh ‘Alī to pray in it, and he did so until he died therein, following which the mosque was renamed Masjid al-Maghribī”. ‘Aṭallah copied this story and all the other information recorded by ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif without investigating it (‘Aṭallah, 1986:239-240, 245) not realizing that he spoke about two different mosques with the same name; one in ad-Daraj Quarter in the north side of the city and one in the Sajā‘iyyah Quarter in the east. He divided the two inscriptions, which are in fact fixed on the gate of the *same* building, between the two buildings, copying the mistake of ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif (*Ta’rīkh Ghazzah*, 350; ‘Aṭallah 1986: 239). He attributes the inscription from the year 786/1384, discussed in this entry, to the al-Mughrabī mosque in the ad-Daraj Quarter, and the inscription dated 821/1418 (see below No. 62) published by Mayer (JPOS 11, 1931:150-151), which is fixed above the present inscription and commemorates more of Shāhīn’s religious endowments and buildings, he attached to the building in the Sajā‘iyyah Quarter. Since all these inscriptions were removed and relocated, it is difficult to know their original sites. However, it is clear that the two inscriptions, which both van Berchem and Mayer saw on the *same building*, were described by ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif and ‘Aṭallah on two different buildings in opposite sides of the city.

The truth is that both inscriptions belong to the same building in the Sajā‘iyyah Quarter. The inscription No. 62 from 821/1418, which will be discussed below, could well have come from the Madrasah which Shāhīn built in as-Sajā‘iyyah and is still named Madrasat al-Kujukī (or, according to van Berchem (*ibid.*) Madrasat Shāhīn) after him. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Max van Berchem saw the inscriptions on the original edifice in the Sajā‘iyyah Quarter, since he mentions the “Djāmi‘ Sayyid ‘Alī al-Maghribī (*sic!*)” in the “list of the of mosques and sanctuaries of the Quarter Ḥārat al-Sadjā‘iyyah”. He pinpointed the exact site of the edifice on Gatt Plan of Gaza (F8). His original notes in c.VII, 124 read:

Almagrabī, petit weli a coté dela Saqiet at-Tawâchi (plan Gatt [F8]) port ogive au fond grand linteau 280X30 avec petits fragments des 2 côtés et plaque 120X35 au-dessus, n[askhī] maml[ūk] moy[ens caractères] grossier.



Pl. 11 MvB Carnet VII Page 124:

Site details, and reading of the beginning of the inscription

This clear description is accompanied by a sketch reproduced here, which he made on the spot, that shows the position of all the inscriptions. They are in the same place as in the photograph published by Mayer, and in this entry, which means that until Mayer saw them, some 40 years after van Berchem, they were on the same building in the Sajā'iyah Quarter which MvB described as “a small sanctuary” and later as “Djāmi‘ of al-Maghrabī.” This settles the issue of the original position of the inscriptions commemorating Shāhīn’s works.

Unfortunately, I could not find any mention of this particular Shāhīn in the sources, but it is quite possible that he was a eunuch. There is no mention of his attachment to any sultan in the inscription, although we would have expected him to be a Mamlūk of Barqūq. Thirty five years later, in the inscription from 821 (No. 62) he is called “al-Maqarr as-Sayfī—“His Excellency Sayf ad-Dīn”. The title *maqarr* means that he was a very high Mamlūk officer. (Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, 5: 494-495: *wa-yakhtaṣṣ bi-kibār al-umarā’ wa a’yān al-wuzarā’*—it is bestowed on the greatest amīrs and the chief viziers). His position is described as “the Commander of the Fortress (or of the Castle)”. It means that he was a commander of the castle in Gaza next to its governor since in Gaza there was a Qaṣr next to the Sarāy as we learn from the inscription of Baybars al-Alā’ī (No. 25 above) who renovated the castle, and from the notes of van Berchem who, describing some of the edifices in the city says: “*Le château (qaṣr) près du Sarāi est une vieille construction arabe.*” (Fig. P1) There is a very remote possibility that he might have been the commander of another castle, which the inscription refers to as *qaṣr*, not *qal’ah*, who also built in Gaza and seems to have lived there for a considerable part of his life. As much as it seems remote to me, it could well explain the language of the inscription below, which begins with the word “Has given us the order to build...”. There is one Shāhīn who fits such a possibility—“Shāhīn the governor of Karak, who was famous for his bravery and horsemanship, died in the year 826/1423.” (Sakhāwī, 3:297 No. 1144). The governorship of Karak could make him the “Commander of the Castle”. Even so, I prefer the simple meaning of the text: Shāhīn was the commander of the castle of Gaza, which we certainly know was built anew some eighty years earlier.

A few mamlūk amīrs called Shāhīn were eunuchs (*Ibid*, 294, 295). This fact was already pointed out by van Berchem. Referring to “Saḡāyat aṭ-Ṭawāshī” in the Sajā’iyyah Quarter next to the Madrasah of Shāhīn (“*qui se trouve à côté de la madrasah*”), he says: “Shāhīn is indeed a name of a eunuch.” (“Gaza” MvB Coll. c.VII, 126)

Shāhīn was a first generation Muslim (Ibn ‘Abdallah), and the only *nisbah* attached to his name is “al-Kujukī.” This *nisbah* does not necessarily refer to his first owner. It could very well refer to a nickname of Persian/Turkish origin (*Küçük* “small”). There is another Shāhīn nicknamed *Katk* (in Arabic: *al-afṣam*—the toothless) *az-Zāhirī* who was a very important Mamlūk officer of Sultan *az-Zāhir* Barqūq. “He died in Nūrūz 817 (March 1414)” (Sakhāwī, 3:292 No. 1121). Another amīr was called Shāhīn *Qışqā* (“*wama’ nāhu al-qaṣīr*—it means the short one.” (Turkish: *kıska*; Kirgiz, Uzbek: *Qisqa*—short) Died 810/1408, *ibid.*, 296 No. 1141).

If indeed our Shāhīn was a eunuch, it is possible to understand the local account that states that the mosque built by him was called *Masjid aṭ-Ṭawāshī*. There can be no doubt concerning his building of a mosque. Although the inscriptions do not

mention a “mosque,” the term “blessed place” (*al-makān al-mubārak*) also refers to a mosque, as we find in other inscriptions. The inscriptions attached to the main inscription below speak about a *qubbah* for which part of the endowments were dedicated. The *qubbah* could well be the original sanctuary.

The story of ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif about the Shaykh ‘Alī, the Maghribī devotee who prayed in the place and caused the change of its name, does not explain how he came to have his name linked to two mosques, (if there is any merit to these stories). At any rate, all the inscriptions connected with the name of Shāhīn are not found on a mosque in the ad-Daraj Quarter. They were clearly grouped together in one place even if they refer to a few sites, and one of them specifically mentions the Sajā‘iyyah Quarter.

The *nisbah* of Shaykh ‘Alī could be read either al-Maghribī, as it should, since it refers to his origin in the Maghrib, or al-Mughrabī following the common pronunciation in colloquial usage.

48

GAZA 786

Foundation text

786/1384

A slab of marble, 2.80x0.30m. used as the lintel of the entrance door of Masjid ash-Shaykh ‘Alī al-Mughrabī, in as-Sajā‘iyyah Quarter. 2 lines; provincial Mamlūk *naskhī* many points, very few vowels; in bas relief. On both sides of the lintel there are two fragments of slabs of marble with 2 lines of text, and on both sides of the gate in the third row of ashlar there are another two fragments of slabs of marble, also with 2 lines of text. There are, all in all, 4 fragments in two pairs, and on each pair identical texts. Figs. 37, 37a, 37b. Publication: MvB coll. c.VII, 124; Mayer, *JPOS* 11, 1931:148-149, No. 12, pl.V; ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, *Ta’rīkh Ghazzah*, 347; *RCEA* 18, 1991:128, No. 786 004.



Pl. 12 Inscription No. 48. Gaza 786 on lintel flanked by two identical fragments

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم امرنا (!) بانشا <ء> هذا [١] المكان المبارك العبد الفقير الى الله تعالى شاهين بن عبد الله الكجكي مقدم القصر الشريف انه (٢) اوقف جميع البيت والقاعتين جوار المدرسة وجميع الحوض ظاهره وباطنه المعروف بالجوباني وجميع الحاكرة وما فيها المجاورة بالمدرسة وقفًا صحيحًا شرعيًا في سنة ستة (!) وثمانين وسبع مائة

Basmalah. Has ordered us to construct this blessed place the slave who is in need of Allah the Exalted, Shāhīn son of ‘Abdallah al-Kujukī the commander of the noble castle. He endowed as a waqf the whole house and the two halls in the vicinity of the madrasah, and the entire water cistern, known by the designation of al-Jawbānī, what is inside and outside it, and the whole vegetable plot, that is (also) in the vicinity of the madrasah with everything that is in it. (He endowed all this) as a valid and legal waqf in the year 786 (=1384)

Identical text on both sides of the main inscription:

(١) وقفًا على المدرسة (٢) وعلى القبّة

A waqf dedicated to the madrasah and the qubbah

Two identical texts on both sides of the gate, the third row of stones below the lintel:

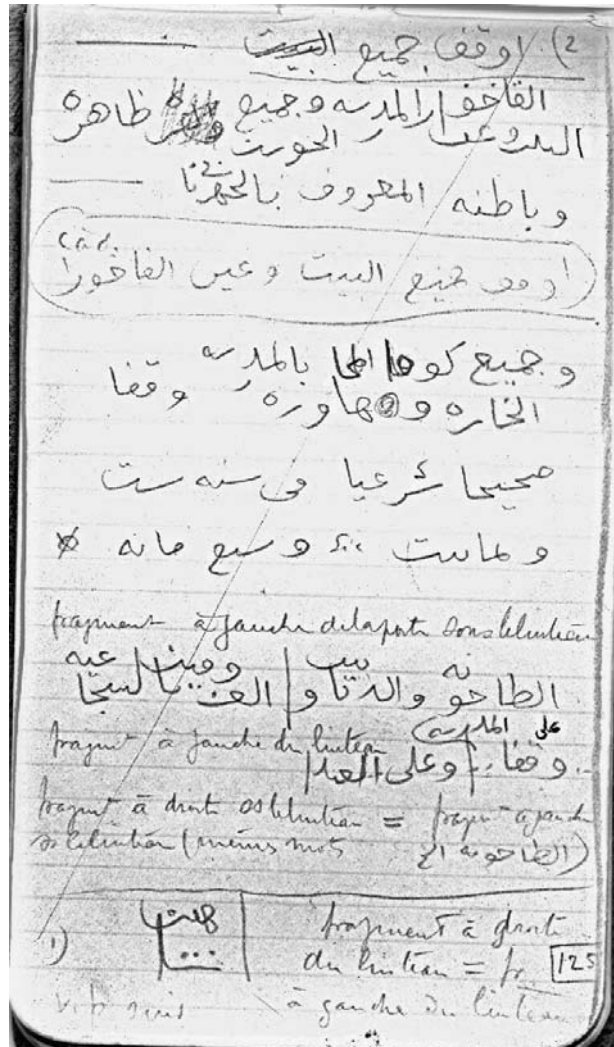


Pl. 13 Inscription No. 48. Two identical fragments.

(Picture blown up from a small old photograph)

(١) والطاحونة والدكاكين و(؟) (٢) المعروفين بالسجاعية

And the mill and the shops which are known in as-Sajā‘iyyah.



Pl.14 MvB Carnet VII Page 125: details about the site.

Reading of the second part of the inscription, and fragments.

#### Main inscription:

L.1: The word *amaranā* is very clear and its reading is sure. Mayer found difficulty with the strange beginning of this inscription and he thought that the letters نا, which appear after the verb امر, are “a combination, obviously impossible in this instance”. He further suggested that the two letters نا were “only a dittography of با in <بانشاء>”. However, since the writing is clear, the word should be read as it stands and the inscription means that the builders of the edifice, a sanctuary (*makān mubārak*) for a certain saint (of Maghribi origin?), did so following Shāhīn’s instructions, which they indicate in the inscription when they say: “he ordered us.” There was also

a *madrasah*, which the same Shāhīn built, and for which he dedicated extensive property as we learn from the inscriptions.

L.2: Mayer read الحوش with reservations, but it is obvious that the word is الحوض since there are no teeth of *shīn*, and the *ص* with the dot above it is clear. This *ḥawḍ* is identical with the *ḥawḍ* mentioned in the inscription above the lintel from the year 821/1418 (No. 62), commemorating the work of the same Shāhīn.

Inscription flanking the lintel:

This short inscription has a complete message. It says that the properties were endowed for the benefit of the *madrasah* and the *qubbah*, that is to say the sanctuary itself.

Inscription in the third row of stones under the lintel:

This is another detail concerning a mill and certain shops, which are part of the endowment, and should be added to the property mentioned in the main inscription.

The inscription specifically mentions that the property described is in the Sajā'iyah Quarter. This also settles the name of the quarter which is sometimes called "Shajā'iyah" (Ārif al-Ārif, 'Aṭallah) and sometimes Sajā'iyah. The latter is the correct name as van Berchem, Mayer and the surveyors of the British Department of Antiquities recorded it and as it is used today. The spelling "as-Sajjiyyih" and its explanation in the Arabic name-lists of the SWP (Index II, Sheet 19 p. 358) are incorrect.

49

GAZA 788

Decree

Jumādā I 788/ 31 May–29 June 1386

A slab of marble, 0.98x0.31m. once resting on the columns bearing the *dikkah* in the court of the Great Mosque; today it is kept in the store room of the Great Mosque (IAA No. 830. Squeeze No. 4191). When van Berchem saw the inscription *in situ*, its beginning and its end were covered by the columns. It was, therefore, impossible for him to read large parts of it. After the Great Mosque had been badly damaged during the British bombardment of Gaza in 1917, the inscription, which was cracked in the middle but fortunately undamaged, was brought with many other inscriptions to the storeroom of the restored mosque. It was possible then to photograph the complete inscription and prepare a good squeeze of it. The photographs of both

the inscription and squeeze are presented here in Figs. 38, 38a (IAA photo No. 830; squeeze photo No. 4191).

4 lines, provincial Mamlūk *naskhī*, small to medium letters, many points, no vowels, dividing bands between the lines; in relief. Publication: MvB Coll. env. 24 c.VII, 76-77.

This is a fresh reading.

١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم رُسم بالامر الشريف العالي المولوي السلطاني الملكي الظاهري  
 السيفي ٢) اعلاه الله تعالى وشرفه ان يرفع المصّيق(?) غير المباح بغزة واجرائهم على  
 عاداتهم القديمة (one word?) ثم(?) لتجد الجند الا مائة(?) ٣) على المهمات الشريفة والمساحة  
 بالعنب المحمول الى الابواب الشريفة وابطال ذلك لما يحصل منه ٤) الضرر لاصحاب الكروم  
 عند تعبيته بتاريخ شهر جمادى الاول (!) سنة ثمانية وثمانين وسبعماية غفر الله لمن كان(?) في  
 السبيل

Basmalah. The supreme, lordly, order of the Sultan al-Malik az-Zāhir Sayf ad-Dīn (Barqūq)—may Allah the Exalted, elevate and honour him—has been issued (to the effect) that all the illegal oppressive measures in Gaza should be eliminated, and that they (the people) should be treated according to their old custom and that the army, except for one hundred, should exert itself (dealing with) the noble affairs of the state. And permission is granted to abolish the transportation of grapes to the Sultanic court because of the damage which the owners of the vineyards suffer in the process of its packaging. (This order was issued on) the month of Jumādā I 788 (began 31 May 1386). May Allah forgive him who follows Allah's path. (Or: who acts for the sake of Allah).

Ll.1-2: Although this inscription is very clear it poses some curious reading problems. I was able to read the whole inscription apart from three or four words about which I am not entirely sure. Since the inscription was partly covered, Max van Berchem left a few parts unread including the date, of which he only saw 88 (ثمانية وثمانين), and he seems to have set the date a hundred years later in 888/1483. The date is very clear as one can see from the photographs of the inscription itself and of its squeeze No. 4191 in the IAA archives. Unable to read at least 6 words in line 1 and another 7 words in line 2, he missed the Sultan's titles, and reading the date wrongly he thought that the Sultan was Qāyit Bāy, when in fact he was, as we read clearly in the first line, **الظاهري السيفي** namely al-Malik az-Zāhir Sayf ad-Dīn Barqūq in his first reign (784/1382-791/1389). The inscription is unusual because it does not abolish taxes but ends unjust practices, which were imposed on the people of Gaza, mainly the farmers and in particular the vine growers. The sultanic decree states that “they should be treated according to the old custom.” The damaging practice in Gaza is defined in the inscription as *ghayr mubāḥ*—“not permissible, illegal.” It seems that the decree also applied to the army in the city. If I read the end of line 2

correctly, the military units in Gaza, save for one hundred soldiers, were called to apply themselves with zeal to what is termed here as *al-muḥimmāt as-sharīfah*, which I translated as the affairs of the state. This could mean that only one hundred soldiers were to be engaged in local affairs, and the rest of the army with the general affairs of the state. The problem is that I am not sure about the Arabic of this reading upon which I decided after very many attempts (including regarding the letters *ية* or *ثة* as *shaddah*). Something in the reading of *لُجُودُ الْجُنُودِ الْإِمَائِيَّةِ* seems not right, the previous word *القديمة* seems correct but there are two letters including a middle *hā'* which I cannot place anywhere. Some acrobatic reading is possible here but I am sure that the inscription's simplicity escapes my eye.

*المُضِيق* this is the only possible reading that I could find for this word. It fits the context of this inscription very well. It is the verbal adjective (*ism al-fā'il*) of the second form of *d-y-q* which means to oppress, to trouble, to disturb. Here I believe the word refers to oppressive treatment, and the disturbing, illegal, or unacceptable conduct (*ghayr al-mubāḥ*) of the local authorities in Gaza. An example of such conduct, which caused losses to the vine growers, was the damage that they had to suffer when packing the grapes which they were obliged to send to the Sultan's court in Cairo (ll.3-4).

L.4: *غفر الله لمن كان (?) في السبيل* This ending of the inscription is clear in the photograph of the inscription itself, but not in the squeeze. The only word about which I have doubts is *كان*. The word *as-sabīl* is clear and it goes well with the nature of the inscription that commemorates an act of benevolence and charity *في السبيل* for the sake of Allah.

50

GAZA 791

Great Mosque

Restoration text

20 Rabī' II 791/19 April 1389

On the wooden beam that holds the platform (*suddah*) inside the Great Mosque. Inscription measurements: 6.00x0.20m. One line, Mamlūk *naskhī*, sculpted on the wood and painted red; in relief. No photograph. Publication: MvB Coll. "Gaza," env. 24 c.VII, 72; *RCEA*, 18:116-117, No. 791 007.

جدد هذه السدة المباركة وبياض الجامع وشرفاتها في ايام مولانا المقر الاشرف العالي  
الحسامي حسام الدين حسن بن باكيش الظاهري نائب السلطنة الشريفة بغزة المحروسة اعز

الله انصاره بنظر مولانا العبد الفقير الى الله تعالى قاضي القضاة الشافعي الاخنائي الحاكم بغزة  
احسن الله اليه في الدنيا والآخرة والبسه ثياب الثواب الفاخرة وذلك في تاريخ العشر الآخر  
من ربيع الآخر سنة احد وتسعين وسبع مائة من الهجرة النبوية

This blessed platform and its balconies and the whitewashing of the Friday-Mosque were renovated in the days of our lord, His Most Noble and Elevated Excellency, al-Ḥusāmī Ḥusām ad-Dīn Ḥasan b. Bākīsh the Mamlūk of al-Malik az-Zāhir (Barqūq) the viceroy of the Noble Sultanate in Gaza, the (divinely) protected, may Allah strengthen his victories. (This was done) under the supervision of our lord, the slave who is in need of Allah the Exalted, the chief Shāfi‘ī Qāḍī al-Ikhnā‘ī who is the empowered judge in Gaza, may Allah bestow on him His grace in this world and in the world to come, and dress him in the glorious garments of recompense. This (took place) in the last ten days of Rabī‘ II, the year 791 of the Prophet’s Hijrah (=19 April, 1389).

المباركة In the *RCEA*: المبارك

شرفاتها the word with the feminine possessive ending must be connected to the *suddah* and not to the mosque. The meaning of *shurfah* (pl. *shurafāt*) is merlon in battlement, but this can not be the meaning here. It is impossible to connect the word with the mosque and therefore the translation of the *RCEA* (*loc. cit.*): “*le blanchiment de la mosquée et ses merlons*” is impossible. I translated “balconies”, relating to the *suddah* which had some wooden, railing-like balcony.

Ḥusām ad-Dīn Ḥasan b. Bākīsh was appointed governor of Gaza in Rabī‘ I 791 and remained in office until Dhū al-Qa‘dah of the same year. He was executed on 5 Sha‘bān 793/8 July 1391. (Ibn Taghrī Birdī, *Nujūm*, 5:399 ll.14-15, 405 ll.20-21, 409 l.2, 480 ll.3-4, 484 l.15, 537 l.13)

The Shāfi‘ite jurist, al-Ikhnā‘ī, belonged to a very famous family of jurists who held many judicial posts in Cairo, in Damascus, in ‘Ajlūn and other places. Since his full name is not given in the inscription, we do not know exactly which one he was. From this inscription and from one of ‘Ajlūn dated 732/1332 (MvB, *Opera Minora*, 1978:344-346) we learn that the Qāḍī was entrusted with the actual supervision of works that were carried out in religious edifices, and probably also with other public works in general. He is designated as *al-ḥākīm* both in this inscription and the inscription from ‘Ajlūn. Max van Berchem translated “Polizeimeister”—the commander, or chief of the police. I tentatively translated “the empowered judge”, which is a somewhat less specific description of the function involved, in order to avoid the modern connotation of “the police chief.” (See above No. 12.)

The inscription speaks of renovation works in the Great Mosque. In ‘Ajlūn, the Qāḍī Tāj ad-Dīn Muḥammad al-Ikhnā‘ī supervised the reconstruction of the mosque’s gate after it had been destroyed, probably by the great flood that engulfed the town on 22 Dhū al-Qa‘dah 728 (28 October 1328), and inflicted tremendous

damage to it. At that time, the Chief Qāḍī of Damascus was his father, ‘Alam ad-Dīn Abū ‘Abdallah Muḥammad son of the Qāḍī Shams ad-Dīn Abū Bakr b. ‘Īsā al-Ikhnānī (Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 2:315). Tāj ad-Dīn Muḥammad was nominated Chief Mālīkī(!) Qāḍī in Cairo in 749 and died in 763 (Ibn Ḥajar, *Durar*, 3: 407, Nos. 1078, 1080; 4:245 No. 658).

### Jāmi‘ Ibn ‘Uthmān

One of the major mosques in Gaza, located in the Sajā‘iyyah Quarter (Gatt Plan of Gaza E8. Fig. P20). It is regarded as second only to the Great Mosque as far as size and sturdiness of building is concerned. The mosque derives its name from that of its builder Aḥmad b. ‘Uthmān b. ‘Umar b. ‘Abdallah al-Ḥanbalī. He was born in Nābulus and came to live in Gaza where he became famous as a holy man. He died in Ṣafar 805/September 1402. (‘Atallah 1986:229) There is no inscription commemorating Ibn ‘Uthmān as the builder of the edifice called after him. However, the literary sources mention the mosque by this name. (جامع ابن عثمان See below.) All the inscriptions in the mosque referring to its building or reconstructions mention other names, and various dates. It seems that at least some of the inscriptions were brought from other edifices when the Sultan Mu‘ayyad Shaykh (815/1412-824/1421) reconstructed the mosque in its present size and form in 821/1418. Two inscriptions mention two founders—Amīr Uzdamur as early as 800/1397-98, and Amīr Āqbughā aṭ-Ṭūlūtumrī in 802/1399-1400—that is to say still during Ibn ‘Uthmān’s life, which seems rather strange. In the western portico of the mosque there is a tomb said to be the tomb of Sayf ad-Dīn Yalkhujā b. ‘Abdallah min (*sic!*) Māmish an-Nāṣirī. In 849/1445, Sultan Jaqmaq nominated him governor of Gaza, but soon after his arrival in the city he fell ill. A few months later, at the beginning of Jumādā II, 850 (25 July 1446) he died from his illness after long suffering, just before the arrival of a letter from Cairo releasing him from his duties and ordering him to go to Jerusalem. “He was buried in Jāmi‘ Ibn ‘Uthmān outside Gaza”. (دفن بجامع ابن عثمان ظاهر غزة). (Ibn Taghrī Birdī, *Nujūm*, 15, 1971:517-518; Sakhāwī, *Daw’*, 10:291 No. 1140)

The inscriptions, which will be discussed below, each one according to its date, are:

1. On the façade of the mosque, foundation text of a Madrasah dated 797.
2. Over the eastern gate, *waqf* text mentioning Ibn Marwān, dated Shawwāl 797.
3. On the northern wall of the court to the left of the entrance; construction text mentioning Amīr Uzdamur as the builder, dated 800.
4. In the tympanum of the right main (northern) gate, construction text mentioning Amīr Āqbughā aṭ-Ṭūlūtumrī or aṭ-Ṭūlūtumurī as the builder, dated 802.

5. Over the *mihṛāb* in the courtyard, construction text mentioning the Sultan Mu'ayyad Shaykh as the builder of the mosque after its destruction, dated 821.
6. Over the main *mihṛāb* of the mosque; text mentioning repairs in the mosque carried out by Sanjar, dated 834.
7. Between the entrance doors, decree abolishing the taxation on salt, by Sultan Jaqmaq, dated 853.

51

GAZA 797

Foundation text

Sha'bān 797/22May-22 June 1395

A slab of marble, no measurements available, embedded in the façade of Jāmi' Ibn 'Uthmān; most probably not *in situ*. 2 lines, elegant Mamlūk *naskhī*, points, some vowels; in relief. In each of the four corners there is the heraldic shield of an armour bearer: “two scimitars placed diagonally on the middle field of three-fielded shield.” (Mayer) Fig. 39 (IAA squeeze photo No. 3290). Publication: Mayer, *Heraldry*, 1933:194; mentioned in *idem*, *JPOS*, 9, 1929:219-22 (see below No. 52. Gaza 797a); *RCEA* 18:196 No. 797 003.

(١) بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ اَنْشَأَ هَذِهِ الْمَدْرَسَةَ الْمُبَارَكَةَ الْعَبْدُ الْفَقِیْرُ اِلَى (٢) اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰی الْمَقْرَّرُ  
السِّیْفِیُّ رَزْمَكُ الْمَلِكِ الظَّاهِرِیِّ عَزَّ نَصْرُهُ بِتَارِیْخِ شَهْرِ شَعْبَانَ سَنَةِ سَبْعٍ وَتَسْعِیْنِ وَسَبْعِمِائَةٍ

Basmalah. Has constructed this blessed madrasah the slave who is in need of Allah the Exalted, His Excellency Sayf ad-Dīn Razmak the Mamlūk of al-Malik az-Zāhir (Barqūq), may his victory be strengthened, during the month of Sha'bān the year 797 (began 22 May 1395)

L.2: *Razmak* — In the following inscription dated Shawwāl 797, the name is Arazmak as it appears in the literary sources. (Ibn Taghrī Birdī, *Nujūm*, 12:195) With regard to the spelling of this name in the present case, the variant “Razmak” is necessary as the *alif* is missing in this text. (Mayer, *JPOS* 1929:222, note 2. See next inscription (No. 52) for a full discussion of the name).

52

GAZA 797a

Ibn 'Uthmān Mosque  
Endowment (*waqf*) text

Shawwāl 797/20 July–17 Aug. 1395

A slab of marble, probably not *in situ*, 1.20x0.45m. above the eastern entrance door of Jāmi' Ibn 'Uthmān (Fig. 40). 4 lines, Mamlūk *naskh*, points, many vowels and signs, a few ornaments in the intervening spaces. Three lines in relief; the fourth, in different characters, incised, was added after the completion of the inscription. Figs. 40a, 40b. (These photographs are the best I could retrieve from the material I could find.) Publication: Mayer, *JPOS* 9, 1929:219-222, No. 5, pl. III.1; 'Ārif al-'Ārif, *Ta'rīkh Ghazzah*, 343, fig. 1; *RCEA* 18:196 No. 797 004; 'Aṭallah 1986:230.

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم هذا ما اوقف العبد الفقير الى الله تعالى السيفي ارزملك الملكي  
الظاهري (٢) اعزه الله تعالى جميع القيسرية والاربع حوانيت مجاورة الشيخ ابن مروان والدار  
سكن الواقف جميع (٣) ذلك وقفا على مصالح المدرسة والسبيل وكتاب الايتام وخبز الصدقة  
والمسجد المجاور سكنه وما فضل من ذلك يكون للجامع بتاريخ شهر شوال سنة سبع وتسعين  
وسبعمائة (٤) ومن الاملاك المذكورة قيراط ونصف للنبي عليه السلام ومثله للخليل عليه  
السلام نفذه (٥) عنه

Basmalah. This is what the slave who is in need of Allah the Exalted, Sayf ad-Dīn Arazmak [Arazmak?] the Mamlūk of al-Malik az-Zāhir (Barqūq) may Allah strengthen him, has endowed as waqf: the whole of the market place and the four shops bordering on (the shrine of) Shaykh Ibn Marwān and the residential house of the founder of this waqf. All this is a waqf dedicated for the requirements of the *madrakah*, the public fountain, the boys elementary school (*kuttāb*) for the orphans, the bread distributed as a charity, and the mosque adjacent to his (the founder's) home. The surplus of the revenue should be for the mosque. Dated: the month of Shawwāl the year 797 (began 20 July 1395).

Line 4, added later: and from the above properties one part and a half (should be dedicated to the Prophet, peace be on him, and the same amount (allocated to) to al-Khalīl (Abraham) peace be on him. Carry this out for him(?!

L.1: *a'azzahu allah* is not "an elliptic" expression for *a'azza allah anṣārahu* as Mayer suggested (*ibid.*, 221) but simply an independent form of blessing (*CIA*, *Jérusalem*, "Haram" 2: 24, No. 150; and also *a'azza awliyā' dawlatihi*—may He strengthen the supporters of his reign. (*ibid.*, 394, No. 277)

Arazmak was the founder of the *waqf* and the builder of the *madrakah* for which part of the *waqf* revenue was allocated. In the previous inscription, his name appears

without the *alif*. Here it is identical with the name we find in the literary sources, and it seems that both spellings were permissible. From a paleographical point of view, all the variants: Arazmak, Azarmak and Razmak are admissible, but Mayer preferred the form “Arazmak,” which is the name of the more famous amīr, Sayf ad-Dīn Arazmak ash-Sharīfī an-Nāshif. (Mayer *ibid.*, 222 n.2 and references there.)

The name Razmak, and hence Arazmak, could well be derived from the Persian (borrowed by Turkish) *razm* meaning war, combat, battle, and *razmak* (in the genitive) would then mean “belongs to war”, “of war”, “of battle”, or “warlike,” not an unlikely name for a Turkish Mamlūk. There is a possibility for another reading of the name, based solely on the possible pronunciation of the original name. My reading takes into consideration that we have here two spellings of the same name in two inscriptions engraved within the space of two months, in the same city, referring to the same person. I suggest that the *alif* of “Arazmak” is an auxiliary vowel, since the name probably began with a silent R followed by a silent Z, something like *Rzmk*. With the addition of an A the name could easily be pronounced and written by Arabic speakers as Arzmak (Wright, *Grammar*, 1:26 §26).

This Arzmak or Arazmak is not the same as the one whose name appear in the list of Mamlūks promoted to the rank of Amīr of Ten in the last days of Rabī II 802 (end of December 1399) by the, then, new Sultan al-Malik an-Nāṣir Faraj. (*Nujūm*, 12:195) The present Arzmak had the heraldic shield of an armour-bearer already at the time of Barqūq and he is referred to as *al-maqarr* which goes with a higher rank than that of “Amīr of Ten” (entitled only to “*janāb*”) to which, at any rate, the Arazmak in the *Nujūm* reference had not yet been promoted. (Cf. Mayer *ibid.*, 222) There is no reference in the sources to this amīr. The two inscriptions commemorating the benevolent activities of Arazmak in Gaza do not contain any reference to his master, the ruling sultan (Barqūq, second reign, 792/1390–801/1399). It is possible, therefore, that Arazmak could have been a banished amīr (“amīr *battāl*”), who spent his last days in Gaza and left all his property as a *waqf*.

L.2: *Qaysāriyyah* was translated by Mayer as “the market street” (*ibid.*, 221). Van Berchem translated *caravansérail*, (from the Persian *kārawānsarāy* which is almost identical in meaning) following all the sources which define it as: “a roofed building in the form of a cloister, that includes rooms, stores and shops for the merchants.” (*CIA, Jérusalem, “Ville”* 1:300 and n.4; cf. also p. 112) In fact this is a description of the classical *khān*. The spelling of *qaysāriyyah* is with *ṣīn* as well as with *ṣād* owing to the foreign (Greek) origin of the term. It is the Arabic rendering of *καισάρεια* “imperial” abbreviated from *ἡ καισάρεια ἀγορά* “the imperial market” (See in detail M. Streck, “*Ḳaysāriyya* (also, *ḳaysāriyya*)” *EI and EI<sup>2</sup>* where the definition is: “The name of a large system of public buildings laid out in the form of cloisters with shops, workshops, warehouses and frequently also living rooms”. I believe that

Mayer translated “market street” owing to the fact that the main market in Gaza was in one street (“the Bazaar Street”) adjacent to the Great Mosque.

Shaykh Ibn Marwān is a landmark defining the location of the properties endowed as a *waqf*. It is known as Masjid ‘Alī ibn Marwān and sometimes also Jāmi‘ ‘Alī ibn Marwān (‘Ārif al-‘Ārif 1943:341), ‘Alī Marwānā, Ibn Marwānā, and ‘Alī Marwān (IAA files *q.v.*). Max van Berchem described it at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as a *welī* called Maqbarat ‘Alī ibn Marwān (Gatt Plan of Gaza E6), situated in the north-east of the vast cemetery between the old city and the Sajā‘iyyah quarter. He says that the “*welī*” was “a small sanctuary inside an open courtyard with trees and other tombs with epitaphs”. Over the gate opening in the western façade (“*sans intérêt*”) he saw an inscription (1.90x0.30m.) on the marble lintel: “Three lines in Ottoman *naskhī*, Mamlūk style; small characters. The inscription calls the edifice “Masjid ‘Alī b. Marwān. dated 1218H (1803)”. (MvB coll. “Gaza” after c.VII, 68) Max van Berchem noted that he should copy the inscription, which he (correctly) believed referred to a more ancient construction. In his files, however, there is no copy of this inscription as well as no allusion to the 9 line inscription (No. 94) from 1217. From the photographs in MvB archive and the IAA files (Fig. P19. MvB Photo. Fig. P19a. IAA photos Nos. 19.355, 19.356) the mosque does not seem particularly impressive and, as Mayer noted at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were no buildings around it that could indicate the locations of the various properties mentioned in the inscription above, whether the endowed ones or the beneficiaries.

L. 3: The income from the *waqf* must have been substantial since it went to a few beneficiaries, including the mosque adjacent to Arazmak’s home. This mosque, defined as *masjid* not *jāmi‘* (Friday mosque), could well be the mosque of Ibn Marwān which, in those days, was called Shaykh ibn Marwān. The surplus of the income was dedicated to the Friday Mosque. This could be the Great Mosque of Gaza or the mosque which was destroyed before 802 (Sanjar’s?) or even Ibn Marwān. Reference to the considerable income of the *waqf* appears in the last (fourth) line of the inscription, probably added by the *waqf* administrators. They decided to dedicate three *qīrāts* from the profits yielded by the *waqf* property—each *qīrāt* being one of 24 parts of the whole, one and a half “to the Prophet” which could only mean the Prophet’s Mosque in Madīnah “and the same amount to al-Khalīl” namely to the Sanctuary of Abraham in Hebron.

L.4: the line finishes with two words which seem out of context. They read **نَفِّذْهُ عَنْهُ**, which can only be understood as an order: “carry it out for him!” Mayer translated “may it be carried out for him.” This, however, is not the exact translation, though it conveys the meaning if we are reading the text correctly. At any rate, this is a unique message which could only mean that the *waqf* administrators, or somebody nominated by Arazmak, acted on his orders, and added no less than the Prophets

Muḥammad and Ibrāhīm to the beneficiaries of the *waqf*, who could well be good intercessors for Arazmak when he stands for his last judgement.

53

GAZA 800

Ibn ‘Uthmān Mosque  
Foundation text

Rajab 800/20 March-18 April 1398

A slab of marble, 0.70x0.60m. built into the north wall of the court to the left of the entrance to the mosque. 6 lines, well produced provincial Mamlūk *naskh*, many points and some decorative elements; in relief. Lines framed and divided by bands. Fig. 41. Publication: Mayer, *JPOS*, 9, 1929:222-24, No. 6, pl. III.2; *RCEA* 18:260, No. 800 010; ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, *Ta’rīkh Ghazzah*, 343, fig. 2.

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم انما يعمر مساجد الله الآية وقال صلّا (!) الله (٢) عليه وسلم من بنا لله مسجداً بنى الله له مثله في الجنة امر بانشا<ء> هذا (٣) الجامع المبارك العبد الفقير الى الله تعالى المقر الاشرف العالي (٤) المولوي الاميري الكبير المالك المخدم العزي ازدمر امير (٥) دوا دار المقام الشريف الملكي الظاهري اعز الله انصاره وختم الله (٦) بالصالحات اعماله بمحمد وآله في تاريخ شهر رجب الفرد سنة ثمان مائة غفر الله له

Basmalah. They only shall visit Allah’s places of worship etc. (Q 9:18. Trans. Bell). And he (the Prophet), may Allah bless him and give him peace, said: whosoever builds a mosque for Allah, Allah builds for him the same in Paradise.” Has ordered the foundation of this blessed (Friday) mosque the slave who is in need of Allah the Exalted, His most Noble and High Excellency, the lord, the great amīr, the ruler, the well-served ‘Izz ad-Dīn Uzdamur, Amīr Dawādār of His Noble Majesty al-Malik az-Zāhir (Barqūq) May Allah strengthen his victories , and May Allah approve his deeds as good works through Muḥammad and his family. In the date of the month of Rajab—“the single”—of the year 800 (= 20 March-18 April 1398) may Allah forgive him.

L. 1: Following the Basmalah come four words from the Qur’ānic verse 9:18 followed by the word *al-āyah* which corresponds to “etc.”. The quoted words from the verse are not meant to convey an idea but only to remind the reader of the full Qur’ānic verse which he can then recite from memory. It is therefore not “completely out of place in our case” because it does not contain a few more words, as Mayer thought. The whole idea of such a quotation is to give enough words to indicate the relevant verse.

Quotations of this kind are very common in literature but they are rare in inscriptions. In fact, apart from this example, there is only one other one in an inscription from Jerusalem dated 595/1198-99. (*CIA, Jérusalem, "Ville"* 1:110, No. 39) Concerning it van Berchem noted that he did not know about any other example of such an abbreviation in epigraphy (*ibid.*, 111 n. 5).

The important quotation in this case is the *ḥadīth* (which most people do not know or recognize) that clarifies the Qur'ānic verse and gives it concrete meaning. This *ḥadīth* represents a group of traditions of which the common one is this: **من بنى لله** **مسجدا بنى الله له مثله في الجنة** (Ibn Mājah, *Sunan* No. 736 and variants in Nos. 735, 737 and 738), exactly the tradition that appears in our inscription, whose variants may be encountered in similar building inscriptions (*CIAP* 1:44 No. 9).

L. 4: Uzdamur. This is the vocalization that Mayer suggested for the name, correcting all the former readings (*idem*, *JPOS* 1929:223-224). Ibn Taghrī Birdī dedicated a detailed biography to Uzdamur based on his own personal information and first-hand sources. The amīr, 'Izz ad-Dīn Uzdamur b. 'Abdallah az-Zāhirī (Barqūq's Mamlūk) was a Circassian who arrived from "the Circassian lands (*min bilād al-Jārkas*)" with his son the amīr, Yashbak b. Uzdamur (d. 817/1314) at the invitation of al-malik az-Zāhir Barqūq. The latter immediately granted him the rank of Amīr of Ten and after a short while made him Amīr of Hundred and Commander of Thousand in the field (*amir mi'ah muqaddam alf*) in the Egyptian military establishment. According to this inscription, he also held the very important and highly respectable position of *dawādār* (lit. "he who holds the ink well"), the Sultan's private secretary and chief adviser in all administrative matters. (*Qalqashandī, Ṣubḥ*, 4:19) From the time of an-Nāṣir Ḥasan (748/1347- 752/1351), this function was only given to an officer with the rank of Commander of Thousand.

In about 800/1398, Uzdamur was suspected of disloyalty, and was banished to Damascus. Sometime after an-Nāṣir Faraj (801/1399, first reign) came to power, he was pardoned and returned to his former military rank of *muqaddam alf*, this time in Damascus. He remained in this position until Tīmūr Lang invaded the territory of Ḥalab (Aleppo) on 9 Rabī' I 803/30 September 1400. In the battle of Ḥalab between Tīmūr and the Mamlūk army of Syria which followed, both Uzdamur and his son Yashbak commanded one of the central (*qalb*) divisions and displayed unusual bravery in the battle in which the Syrian army was crushed. Uzdamur was killed but his body was never found, and his son Yashbak, badly injured, was brought to Tīmūr's camp and was treated there until he recovered his health. (Ibn Tagrī Birdī, *Nujūm*, 12:222-223; *Manhal* 2:349-351 No. 397, and n.1; Sakhāwī 2:274 No. 855)

54

GAZA 801

Maḥkamah Mosque (Mosque of Birdibak)

Construction text (?)

c.801/1398-99

A large fragment of a slab of marble, 0.50x0.32m. (squeeze measurements). 6 lines provincial Mamlūk *naskhī*, points, no vowels; in relief. Fig. 42. (IAA Squeeze photo No. 1817). The inscription was found in the Maḥkamah mosque (Jāmi‘ al-Maḥkamah—Mosque of Birdibak) located in the Sajā‘iyyah Quarter. (See No. 01 above) The top of the original inscription, which is badly damaged all through, was broken and lost. The damage in the last line is so bad that it is impossible to read any part of the date. I registered the inscription under 801 only for the sake of order.

١...الشيخ...٢...الإسلام ناصر ٣)الدين مجد الآنام... ٤)نصره الله...٥)عشرى شهر  
صفر(?) المبارك من شهور ٧) [سنة...]

...the shaykh...the Islam...the protector of the Faith the glory of mankind may Allah assist him...(On) 20 Šafar, the blessed, from the months of (the year) ...

The inscription does not seem to be an epitaph. From the few words I could make out, I presume that it could be a construction text of some kind.

I registered the inscription arbitrarily under the date of 801 although it could well be dated even fifty years earlier.

### Jāmi‘ Ibn ‘Uthmān

It has been pointed out above that this is one of the major Friday mosques in Gaza, second only to the Great Mosque. (See more No. 51 above) In the mosque is the tomb of somebody that is supposed to be, according to the local story, one of “the righteous people—*min aṣ-ṣāliḥīn*”. (‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, 1943:342)

Actually, this must be the tomb of Yilkhujā an-Nāširī one of the Mamlūks of az-Zāhir Barqūq and then of an-Nāšir Faraj (hence an-Nāširī), who died in Gaza at the beginning of Jumādā II 850/end of August 1446. “He was buried in the mosque of Ibn ‘Uthmān outside Gaza.” (*Nujūm*, 15:517-518; *Sakhāwī*, 10:291 No. 1140)

Rajab 802/27 February–27 March 1400

A slab of marble, 0.82x0.60m. fixed in the tympanum above the right, main entrance door into the mosque. 5 lines, elegant Mamlūk *naskhī*, points, some vowels and a few decorative elements, lines divided by bands; in relief. In the middle of the third line there is a heraldic shield divided into three fields; in the upper one two rhombs, in the middle a cup, and another cup in the bottom one. Figs. 43, 43a, 43b, 43c. Publication: Mayer, *JPOS*, 5, 1925:62-68; *Saracenic Heraldry*, 69-70.

١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم انما يعمر مساجد الله من آمن ٢) بالله واليوم الاخر امر  
بانشاء <ء> هذا الجامع ا(؟) ٣) المبارك المقر الاشرف (heraldic shield) العالي المولوي السيدي  
٤) المالكي المخدومي العالائي آقبغا الطولوتقري الملكي ا(!) ٥) الناصري اعز الله انصاره  
بتاريخ شهر رجب الفرد سنة اثنين وثمان مائة

Basmalah. Q. 9:18 (first part). Has ordered the foundation of this blessed (Friday) mosque the most Noble and High Excellency, the lord, the master, the ruler, the well served, ‘Alā’ ad-Dīn Āqbughā aṭ-Ṭūlūtāmūrī, the Mamlūk of al-Malik an-Nāṣir, may Allah strengthen his victories, in the date of the month of Rajab—“the single”—the year 802 (began 27 February 1400).

Mayer compiled a biography of this amīr mostly from Ibn Iyās and Ibn Taghrī Birdī (*Nujūm* 13:15, *Manhal* 2:482; Mayer, *JPOS* 1925:66-68). Āqbughā b. ‘Abdallah aṭ-Ṭūlūtāmūrī (following the vocalization in the *Nujūm* 13:15. Mayer’s is: Ṭūlūtāmūrī). All the sources emphasize that he was known by the nickname *al-Lakkāsh*, the meaning of which is not completely clear. (Mayer, *op.cit.*, 65, n.2) He was particularly favoured by the Sultan aṣ-Zāhir Barqūq, his master, who promoted him rapidly until he became an Amīr of Hundred and Commander of Thousand. As such he was nominated, at some uncertain date, to be the governor of Gaza, whose governor or the commander of the troops in it, during the Circassian period, was a Commander of Thousand (Qalqashandī, *Subh*, 4:198) In the middle of 800, around February 1398, the Sultan conferred the title of *amīr majlis* on him, which carried with it the influential office of taking care of all the arrangements connected with the Sultan’s chair of state (*majlis as-sultān*) when holding an audience. (Qalqashandī, *Subh*, 5:455). The following year he was nominated the governor of Karak. However, a short time after, he was suspected of being involved in a rebellion against the Sultan and was thrown into prison in the fortress of Şubaybah until the death of Barqūq and the accession to throne of

his son, an-Nāṣir Faraj, in 801/1399. He was then released from prison by Tanam al-Ḥasanī the governor of Syria who rebelled against the new Sultan. He joined the rebellion (Dhū al-Ḥijjah 801/August 1399) and took part in the entire campaign during which he left Damascus for Gaza (on 1 Rabīʿ I 802/1 November 1399) leading the major part of the Syrian army. At the beginning of Rajab 802, when the Sultan approached Gaza at the head of the Egyptian army, most of the Syrian amīrs changed their minds during battle, and crossed the lines to the Sultan's side leaving Āqbughā alone. He retreated to Ramlah and joined Tanam there for the decisive battle of Jītūn in which he fought side by side with Tanam and Ibn Taghrī Birdī's father, who led part of the rebel's army and had fought earlier in the battle of Gaza. Consequently, Ibn Taghrī Birdī was in a good position to leave us a first-hand description of the events, both in the *Manhal* and the *Nujūm*.

All three were captured, together with other rebellious officers, and imprisoned in the citadel of Damascus. Āqbughā was executed together with fourteen other amīrs (*Nujūm*, 12:211) on the Sultan's orders on 14 Sha'bān 802/10 April 1400, that is to say less than a month after this inscription was engraved. Now, since he arrived at Gaza on 1 Rabīʿ I, 802, and fled from Gaza on the 18 of Rajab the same year (*Nujūm*, 12:204), this leaves very little time for the building of the mosque and its commemoration by this inscription. It is possible, however, that the work on the building, or reconstruction of some parts in the already existing mosque had already been executed when Āqbughā was the governor of Gaza before 800, and was finished during the stormy two months of 802.

56

GAZA 812

Maḥkamah Mosque—Mosque of Birdibak  
Epitaph of a Muslim

15 Rajab 812(?)/24 Nov. 1409

A slab of marble, 0.79x0.36m. (squeeze measurements) in Jāmi' al-Maḥkamah (See above No. 01). 7 lines, monumental Mamlūk *naskhā*, a few points, some vowels; in relief. Bands divide the lines. The top of the slab was shaped like a pointed arch in which a decorative element was engraved. The squeeze does not cover the whole inscription; the lower part of the last line (l.7) was left out. There is no other photograph of the inscription. Fig. 44. (IAA squeeze photo No. 1818).

١) يسم الله الرحمن الرحيم ٢) كل من عليها فان ويبقا (!) ٣) وجه ربك ذو الجلال والإكرام  
 ٤) هذا قبر الشاب الشهيد ٥) المنغضر/المنغضر بشبابه الراجي عفو ربه ٦) محمد بن احمد بن  
 المرحوم الحاج ادريس ٦) توفي في نصف رجب [سنة] اثنا عشر (!) و[ثمان مائة]

Basmalah. Q. 55:26-27 (complete). This is the tomb of the martyred youngster who died in his youth, beseeching the mercy of his Lord, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad, son of the late Ḥājj Idrīs. He died in the middle of Rajab 812 (=24 November 1409).

L.1: ويبقا not ويبقى as in the Qurʾān and grammatical rules.

L.4: There is no word after *shahīd*. The space above is filled with a decorative element created by the engraving of the letters underneath.

L.5: I am almost sure about the reading of *al-munghaḍir* (or *al-mutaghaddir*). It is not the common verb for dying young. (See *Lisān*, s.v., 5:24a) The exact verb is *ughṭuḍira*, which means “to die young,” and this is exactly the meaning behind the verb in this line. It is possible that the engraver made a small mistake and instead of writing *المغضّر* he wrote *المنغضر* or even *المنغضر* creating just another passive verb from the root *غضر*.

L.6: The line containing the date is incomplete. The month of Rajab and the word *nisf*—half—are clear as well as the number *ithnā ‘ashar* (*sic!*). The hundreds are missing, but I am pretty sure that the remnants of *thamān*—eight—are visible, and that the year is 812.

### Jāmi‘ ash-Shaykh Khālid

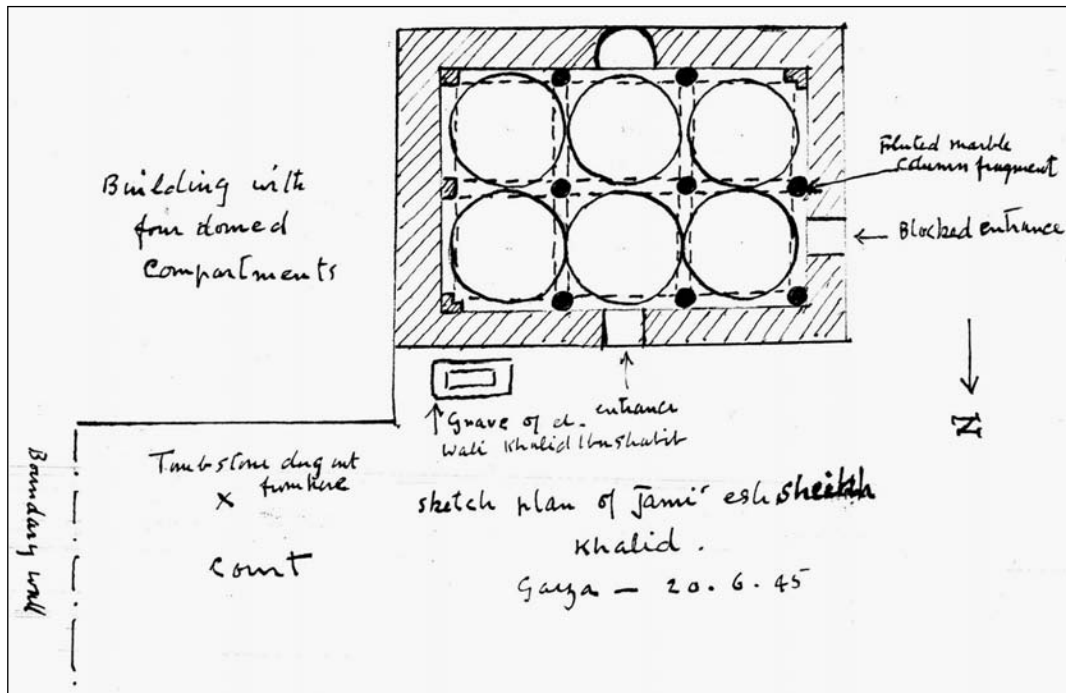
The mosque is located in the Daraj Quarter near Bāb al-Balāshiyah in the northern wall of medieval Gaza (Gatt Plan of Gaza E2, without the name, which van Berchem added on his copy). In his notes about the mosque, which he saw in 1894, van Berchem mentions that “this little mosque has no minaret.” On top of the entrance door, he saw a slab of limestone, 1.00x0.20m. with a modern inscription with provincial thick worn-out letters, dated 1123/1711. In the eastern wall of the sanctuary enclosure there was a beautiful stele of marble on a plank, with a funerary inscription.

In June 1945 Husseini, inspecting the antiquities in Gaza for Department of Antiquities of the British Mandatory government, wrote the following report about this mosque:

The building consists of three aisles, with three bays in each, all surmounted with domes, but those of the W[est] aisle are missing. The domes are supported on arches carried on marble columns surmounted by small marble capitals (sketch plan [attached]). E[ast] of the mosque and adjacent to it is a building with four compartments surmounted also with four domes carried on central pier. Along the N[orth] side of the mosque is an open court, which contains the

grave of esh-Sheikh Khālid ibn Shabīb built in marble slabs. Moh[amma]d Adas an employee of the Waqf Dept. told me that lately the grave was dismembered and was rebuilt near the corner of the building E[ast] of the entrance of the Jāmi' ([see] sketch) on the top of the grave is an inscribed marble panel in three lines. Measurements 105x50 cm. (See this inscription, the epitaph of Shaykh Khālid, after whom the Mosque was named below under No. 81 for the year 955.)

The "beautiful stele of marble on a plank with a funerary inscription" which van Berchem saw in the eastern wall of the sanctuary has fallen since the time he saw it and was buried under debris. Husseini was told that sometime, prior to his inspection, this marble tombstone "had been dug out from the E[ast] end of the open court approximately in the area marked X in the attached sketch plan." The tombstone was photographed, and Husseini offered its primary reading to which I shall refer below.



Pl. 15 Original sketch plan of the Mosque of Shaykh Khālid (Husseini, 20 June 1945. Courtesy IAA)

Notes on sketch (left to right): Building with four domed compartments. Fluted marble column, fragment. Blocked entrance. Tombstone dug out from here **X**. Court. Grave of el-Walī Khālid ibn Shabīb. Entrance. Vertical on the left: Boundary wall.

## Epitaph of a Muslim

Friday 6 Jumādā II, 814/Friday, 25 September 1411

A marble stele, 1.25x0.25m. dug out from the east end of the open court adjacent to the Mosque of Shaykh Khālīd (plan “X”). 10 lines, Mamlūk *naskhī*, crowded, thick letters, some points, no vowels, some decorations between the letters; in relief. The stele was elaborately and richly decorated: the top was formed in a heart shape, with a pointed pinnacle. Engraved bands like ropes curling around each other complete and emphasize the heart shape of the head of the stele, and then run down, straight along the sides of the stone twisting twice around each other to form a flat knot in the middle. The inscription is thus encased inside the frame created by these twisting rope-like bands which leave a width of no more than 15-16 cm. for the inscription. Under the heart decoration and inside what looks like a tympanum of a gate with a horse-shoe arch, there is a seven petalled rosette wrapped in a ribbon, reminiscent of a medal. Fig. 45 (IAA photo No. 1852). Publication: MvB Coll. “Gaza,” env. 24, c.VII, 95-96; Husseini, IAA files: “Gaza,” Sh. Khalid (22 June 1945).

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم (٢) كل من عليها فان ويبقى (٣) وجه ربك ذو الجلال (٤) والاکرام  
 هذا قبر الشيخ (٥) شمس الدين العالم العامل (٦) محمد بن المرحوم الحاج (٧) خليل العرضي تو [في  
 ا] لى (٨) رحمة الله تعالى في ليلة الجمعة (٩) سادس جمادى الآخر سنة اربع عشرة (١٠) وثمان  
 مائة وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد

Basmalah. All that dwells upon it is perishing, yet still abides the Face of thy Lord, majestic, splendid (Q, 55:26-27. Trans. after Arberry). This is the tomb of the Shaykh Shams ad-Dīn the scholar, the doer of good deeds, Muḥammad the son of the deceased the Ḥājj Khalīl al-‘Urḍī. He died on Thursday night (Friday), 6 Jumādā II, 814 (=Friday, 25 September 1411), and may Allah bless our master Muḥammad.

Max van Berchem was the first to read this inscription, and except for two small corrections his reading is correct. Another reading from 20 June 1945 by Husseini, exists in the IAA files; it is less accurate.

L.5: Correct van Berchem who read **بهمس** instead of **شمس**, and (also Husseini) **محمد** instead of **بن محمد**. The name of the deceased is Shams ad-Dīn Muḥammad b. Khalīl b. Muḥammad al-‘Urḍī al-Ghazzī ash-Shāfi‘ī. According to Ibn al-‘Imād he was borne before 760 (began 3 Decenber 1358) and died in Rabī‘ I 814 (began 23 May 1411). He was a physician as well as a noted expert in Islamic law. (Ibn al-‘Imād, 1994, 7:107) al-‘Urḍī is a *nisbah* to ‘Urḍ. “A small village in the Syrian steppe

(*bulayd fī barrīyat ash-Shām*) between Tadmur and Ruṣāfah; it belongs today (Yāqūt's time, d. 626/1228) to the district of Ḥalab (Aleppo)". Many Muslim scholars came from this village. (Yāqūt, *Muʿjam al-Buldān*, Dār Ṣādir, 4:103) Samʿānī's information that ʿUrḍ was a neighbourhood in Damascus is incorrect (*Ansāb*, 4:179; followed by Suyūṭī, *Lubb al-Lubāb* 1840:178), unless there were two places called ʿUrḍ, since Samʿānī is very sure about his information saying: "Numerous famous scholars and merchants came from it (ʿUrḍ), a group of them, for instance, learnt *ḥadīth* with us at the gatherings that took place in the presence of our friend and colleague Abū al-Qāsim ʿAlī b. al-Ḥasan b. Hibatallah al-Dimashqī the *ḥadīth* scholar". In a note on Samʿānī (*ibid*, note 1) quoting *al-Lubāb*, there is a categorical statement (similar to Yāqūt's): "ʿUrḍ is not a neighbourhood in Damascus but it is a small town (*madīnah ṣaghīrah*) in the steppe between the Euphrates and Damascus. It belongs to the district of Ḥalab". (cf. *Marāṣid*, 2:930; Sakhāwī, 11:215). From the *nisbah* al-Ghazzī in the short biography of Muḥammad b. Khalīl it is evident that he came to Gaza from al-ʿUrḍ and stayed there until he died, long enough to be linked to it. The efforts invested in preparing his tombstone are testimony to the high esteem in which he was held and to which Ibn al-ʿImād testifies in his biography.

L.7: Husseini خليل بن العراسي. Read as above: خليل العُرْضي .

Ll.7-8: Husseini: توفي رحمه الله . Read: توفي إلى رحمة الله

Li. 9-10: Husseini: سنة اربع وثمان مائة. Read: سنة اربع عشرة وثمان مائة

L.9: The discrepancy between the literary report and the inscription concerning the month (Jumādā I or Jumādā II) is understandable. The inscription no doubt gives the correct date.

58

GAZA 815

Great Mosque

Decree of Caliph al-Mustaʿīn bi'llāh

18 Rabī I 815/ 28 June 1412

Marble lintel of the eastern gate of the Great Mosque, 2.235x0.22m. 2 lines, monumental Mamlūk *naskhī*, very crowded letters, a few points, no vowels; medallion in the middle; in relief. Figs. P13, P13a; Figs. 46 (IAA squeeze photo of No. 8268), 46a, 46b (medallion). Publication: Mayer, *QDAP*, 11, 1945:27-29; mentioned by van Berchem, *CIA, Jérusalem*, "Haram" 2:147, n. 2.

(١) بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ رُؤْسَمٌ بِالْاَمْرِ الشَّرِیْفِ الْعَالِیِّ الْمَوْلَوِیِّ الْاِمَامِیِّ الْاَعْظَمِیِّ النَّبَوِیِّ الْمُسْتَعِیْنِیِّ اَعْلَاهُ اللّٰهُ medallion: العباس امیر المؤمنین عز نصره تعالیٰ وشرفه ان یبطل ما احدث علی اهل غزّة من المظالم بسبب کرومهم ووزروعهم فی ایام السلطان فرج وان لا یحدث علیهم حادث(?) ولا تجدد علیهم (٢) مظلمة لیحصل لهم بذلك (!) الطمأنینة والاقامة باوطانهم من بدله بعد ما سمعه فانما اثمه علی الذین یدلّونه ان اللّٰه سمیع علیم وذلک فی ثامن عشر شهر ربیع الاول سنة خمس عشرة وثمان مائة والحمد لله وحده وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه وسلّم

Basmalah. It has been decreed by the noble, august, lordly, caliphal, the most great, prophetic order of al-Mustaʿīn, may Allah the Exalted elevate and ennoble him, to abolish the unjust charges, which have recently been imposed on the people of Gaza relating to their vineyards and their sown fields in the days of the Sultan Faraj. And that no (bad) occurrence (of this kind) should befall them and that they should not be subjected to renewed illegal taxes so that in this way they will experience confidence, and will remain in their homelands. “Then if any alter it after having heard it, the guilt of it rests upon those who alter it; verily Allah is one who hears and knows.” (Q, 2:177. Trans. Bell) And this (was issued) on 18 Rabīʿ I, 815 (=28 June 1412) Medallion: al-ʿAbbās, Commander of the Faithful, May his victory be strengthened

This decree was issued in the third month of the short reign (seven months), of the Caliph al-Mustaʿīn, who was convinced by the Mamlūk amīrs of Egypt, much to his bad luck, and against his will, to depose the Sultan an-Nāṣir Faraj, son of Barqūq, and replace him as the Sultan-Caliph (25 Muḥarram, 815/8 May 1412). By the end of the year he was deposed from both his sultanate and caliphate and banished to Alexandria. In 824/1421, when Ṭaṭar came to power, he was allowed to return to Cairo but he refused, preferring to stay in Alexandria where he developed a very successful, commercial business and accumulated a huge fortune. He died in the plague of 833/1430 when he was under forty years old. (*Nujūm*, 13:46ff, 207-208; Ibn al-ʿImād, *Shadharāt*, 7:203. The plague 7: 200). For more details about the Caliph and his initiative to abolish unjust taxes see Mayer, 1945:29).

L.1: لا یحدث علیهم حادث This expression (“no new occurrence shall befall them”) is used to assure the people that no new iniquitous edicts to extract money from them would be issued.

L.2: J. Sauvaget (*Bullétin d'Etudes Orientales* 12, 1947-48:56) proposed to read the beginning of line 2 مظلمة یحـ[ص]ـل لهم بذلك والاقامة باوطانهم but the inscription here is clear. The second word is لیحصل. The third word is الیهم, but لهم. (See Mayer, *ibid.*)

### Gaza bathhouses

A few bathhouses were built in Gaza in the Mamlūk period. We have no information concerning similar institutions which were, no doubt, in the city. About two of the Mamlūk baths there is documentation. One is known from the literary sources, the other from three inscriptions. The older of the two baths was built by Sanjar al-Jāwli, the famous governor of Gaza, at the time of the Sultan al-Malik an-Nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalāwun. Mujīr ad-Dīn (*Būlāq*, 1283:607) says that “he built a mosque (*jāmi‘*) in Gaza”, but Maqrīzī supplies more details about his buildings saying that in addition to the “exceedingly beautiful mosque (*fi ghāyat al-ḥusn*)” he also built an “attractive *ḥammām* and a religious college (*madrāsah*) for the Shāfi‘ite jurists, as well as a public khān, a hospital (*[bi]māristān*), a castle for the governors and a public square (*maydān*)”. During his time of governorship, from 711 until 720, he turned Gaza into a metropolis (*maddanahā*). He backed his buildings with rich endowments. (Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2: 398; *Durar*, 2:170).

‘Ārif al-‘Ārif registered three baths in Gaza in 1943:

1. Ḥammām as-Samrah, the subject of this entry, in the Zaytūn Quarter (Gatt Plan of Gaza C5), without mentioning the three inscriptions that commemorate it. At present, this ḥammām is a family *waqf* (*waqf dhurri*) of the Riḍwān family (*Āl Riḍwān*) in Gaza.
2. Ḥammām as-Sūq (the Market Baths) in the ad-Daraj Quarter to the north-west of the Great Mosque (Gatt Plan of Gaza D4) the income from it is a *waqf* dedicated to the Great Mosque next to it. It is very possible that this is the *ḥammām* built by Sanjar.
3. Ḥammām as-Sajā‘iyyah in this Quarter (Gatt Plan of Gaza E7), across the road, and some 50m. away to the south of Jāmi‘ al-Maḥkamah. At present a property of the Municipality of Gaza.

There used to be a fourth *ḥammām* called Ḥammām al-Mubāshir that was abandoned and converted to shops. (‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, 1943:278)

### Ḥammām as-Samrah

This bathhouse in the Zaytūn quarter is located across the road from Khān az-Zayt, and some 120m. to the south-west of the Great Mosque. The *ḥammām* was commemorated by three inscriptions, all from the same date and all engraved in the same style, and at least two by the same hand. Squeezes of these inscriptions were taken by the inspectors of the British Mandate Department of Antiquities and the following study is based on photographs of these squeezes (Figs. 47, 47a, 47b, 47c. IAA Squeeze photos Nos. 2301, 2302 and 2305+2306). There is no photographic record of the inscriptions themselves, and since ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif did not mention them, in spite of their large size and prominence, I assume that by his time they had

already disappeared. At the time of writing these lines, it is impossible to verify this assumption in Gaza itself. Since all the three inscriptions come from the same place and are from the same date (although one of them is undated), they will be dealt with as one entry. The inscriptions are over the entrance door (Figs. 47, 47a. IAA squeeze No. 2305+2306), inside the ḥammām (Fig. 47b. IAA squeeze No. 2301) and over the water reservoir (Fig. 47c. IAA squeeze No. 2302). The discussion below will follow this order. Note that all the measurements of the inscriptions below are the measurements of the squeezes.

59

GAZA 816 (826?)

3 construction and endowment texts

816/ 1413-1414

1. A slab of marble, 1.54x0.18m. fixed above the entrance door to the baths. 2 lines, provincial Mamlūk *naskhī*, thick letters, a few points, no vowels, some simple decorative elements, a band divides the lines; in bas relief. Towards the end, particularly in the date area the engraving becomes very careless. Because of the length of the inscription it was copied in two squeezes and each was photographed separately: Figs. 47, 47a. (IAA squeeze photos Nos. 2305, 2306).

١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم هذا ما جدد وانشأ هذا الحمام المبارك الفقير الى الله تعالى  
الراجي عفو ربه الكريم المقر العالي المولوي الملكي ٢) الشمسي سنقر ابن (!) عبد الله المؤيدي  
حاجب الحجاب بغزة المحروسة أعز الله انصاره وذلك في شهور سنة ست (٩) عشرة (٩) وثمان  
ماية (٩)

Basmalah. This is what has built anew and established—this blessed bath—he who is in need of Allah the Exalted, who seeks the pardon of his generous Lord, His high, Lordly Excellency, Shams ad-Dīn the Mamlūk of al-Malik al-Mu’ayyad (Shaykh), Sunqur Ibn ‘Abdallah the Grand Chamberlain in the (divinely) protected Gaza, may Allah strengthen his victories, during the months of the year 816 (began 3 April 1413).

I am pretty sure about the date of this and the following inscriptions, in spite of the careless engraving of this part in the two dated ones. All the three are connected with works that were executed soon after al-Malik al-Mu’ayyad Shaykh came to power by the Grand Chamberlain Sunqur, a first generation Mamlūk (Ibn ‘Abdallah) identified as the Mamlūk of this Sultan (*al-Mu’ayyadī*). In the second half of his reign, al-Mu’ayyad Shaykh ordered extensive renovations in Jāmi‘ Ibn ‘Uthmān in Gaza

(see No. 61 for the year 821), which were carried out by Abū Bakr al-Yaghmūrī whom the inscription on that mosque identifies as Grand Chamberlain (*ḥājib al-ḥujjāb*, Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, 4:185), the title of Sunqur five years earlier. (See Mu'ayyad's biography, Sakhāwī, 3:308-311, No 1190). This eliminates the possibility of reading the words *sit wa'ishrīn* in the date of our inscription, that is to say 826/1423, also because any relation to al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh would be difficult since he had already died in 824/1421. It is very unlikely that Sunqur was returned to the same position by a different sultan, al-Ashraf Barsbāy (825/1422-841/1437), to whom he bore no allegiance, since there is no other title other than al-Mu'ayyadī attached to his name. For had he been in the service of al-Ashraf Barsbāy he should have had the title al-Ashrafī, next to al-Mu'ayyadī or without it. What is clear from the inscription in Ibn 'Uthmān's mosque is that he was replaced as the Grand Chamberlain of Gaza before 821/1418. I added the date 826 with a question mark at the head of this entry, in order to indicate that such a reading is possible though unexplainable.

L.1: The verbs *jaddada* and *ansha'a* mean that the *ḥammām* was a new project initiated by the founder and commemorated by this (and the following) inscription.

L.2: I could not find a biography of Sunqur b. 'Abdallah al-Mu'ayyadī (Shaykh). One might be tempted to suggest that he is the same person that is called Sunqur an-Nāṣirī (Faraj) al-Ghazzī in the sources, namely originally the Mamlūk attached to an-Nāṣir Faraj (801/1399-808/1405, first reign; 808/1405-815/1412 second reign), probably in his second reign. His *nisbah* al-Ghazzī means that he was a native of Gaza long enough to earn it. However, in his short biography there is no mention of him moving to the service of Mu'ayyad Shaykh, and Sakhāwī (3:273, No. 1041) emphasizes that he became a *khāṣikī* after al-Mu'ayyad and that his main activity was under Barsbāy (825-841) and in the first years of Jaqmaq (842-857). He died in 845/1441. After joining the *Khāṣikiyyah* (the Sultan's courtiers) he became an amīr of five then of ten under Barsbāy and, in 836, the governor of Ḥums. He joined the rebellion against Jaqmaq, was captured and was imprisoned for while. When released, he was given the governorship of some fortresses in Syria, where he died. This means that if he was only elevated to the position of *khāṣikī* after al-Mu'ayyad he could not be the Sunqur of our inscription who is referred to as *al-maqarr*, an honorific appellation of Mamlūk amīrs of high rank.

2. A slab of marble, 1.23x0.23m. inside the bathhouse, 2 lines, provincial Mamlūk *naskhī*, thick letters, a few points, almost no vowels, a band dividing the lines; in bas relief. Towards the end, particularly in the date area, the letters are very crowded and less clear. Fig. 47b. (IAA squeeze photo No. 2301).

١) هذا ما جدد وانشأ هذا الحمام المبارك الفقير الى الله تعالى الراجي عفو ربه الكريم (٢) سنقر  
ابن (!) عبد الله المؤيدي حاجب الحجاب بغزة المحروسة أعز الله انصاره في شهر سنة ست  
(٩) عشرة (٩) وثمان مائة (٩)

This is what has built anew and established—this blessed bath—he who is in need of Allah, Sunqur Ibn ‘Abdallah the Mamlūk of al-Malik al-Mu’ayyad (Shaykh), the Grand Chamberlain in the (divinely) protected Gaza, may Allah strengthen his victories, during the months of the year 816 (began 3 April 1413)

This inscription seems to be a short version of the previous inscription over the door of the bathhouse (Figs. 47+47a), which is the main inscription. It lacks the *basmalah* and all Sunqur’s honorific titles. Otherwise the contents and the language are identical to parallel parts in the main inscription.

3. Water reservoir. A slab of marble, 0.877x0.304m. fixed on the water reservoir (in the IAA entry: “Sabil”) of the bathhouse. 3 lines, provincial Mamlūk *naskhī*, some points, no vowels, a few simple decorative elements; in bas relief. The inscription, slightly defaced at the very end, was enclosed by a decorative frame. Fig. 47c. (IAA squeeze photo No. 2302).

١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم هذا ما سبل ابتغاء <ع> وجه الله الكريم (٩) (٢) المقر الشمسي  
سنقر ابن (!) عبد الله المؤيدي امير (٩) حاجب الحجاب بغزة (٣) المحروسة اعز الله تعالى انصاره  
هذا الحوض المبارك وما شا <ع> الله تعالى (٩)

Basmalah. This is what has endowed, seeking to please Allah the Generous, His Excellency, Shams ad-Dīn Sunqur Ibn ‘Abdallah the Mamlūk of al-Malik al-Mu’ayyad (Shaykh), amīr, (?) the Grand Chamberlain in the (divinely) protected Gaza may Allah strengthen his victories. (He has endowed) this blessed water reservoir; and Allah the Exalted, willing (literally: “and whatever Allah the Exalted, willed”).

In the register of the British Mandate Department of Antiquities, this third inscription of Sunqur is described as “Sabil.” The word *sabil* is usually used for a public fountain dedicated as an act of piety, “for the sake of Allah (*fi sabil Allāh*)”, for the use of wayfarers, designated as *abnā’ as-sabil* (lit. “the sons of the path”). Hence, *sabil* could be a reference to the idea of a pious endowment to please Allah (See Jawharī, 1979:1724a) as well as to its function to serve the people for whom it was intended in the first place.

L.1: The inscription speaks not about a *sabil* but about a *hawḍ*, referring to the structure itself as the object of Sunqur’s pious endowment, which is described by the exact verb *sabbala* (in the second form). *Hawḍ* can be a few structures. It can

be a water tank or a water reservoir, it can refer to a pool for the collection and storage of water, or it can be an open area encircled by earth walls or dykes used also for the storage of usually, seasonal water. (*Lisān*, 7:141) In this case, the *hawḍ* is a closed water reservoir for the storage of a certain amount of water for the use of the *ḥammām*. Such a water reservoir usually has a water source to refill it continuously. A *hawḍ* like this, if it is accessible from the street, could also serve as a public fountain. If the registration in the IAA archives is correct and not influenced by the verb *sabbala* (identical to *awqafa*) in line 1, then this particular *hawḍ* was also a *sabīl*.

L.2: Before the title *ḥājib al-ḥujjāb* there is a word which I could only read as *amīr*. I am aware of the difficulty; *al-amīrī* would be better.

L.3: **وما شاء الله تعالى** this is the best that I could do. The expression is quite usual in inscriptions throughout all the Islamic periods. (e.g. *CIA, Jérusalem, "Ḥaram,"* 2:18, 353, 357. Nos. 148, 254)

60

GAZA 817

Jāmi‘ ‘Alī (b.)Marwān

Construction of a minbar

c.817/1414

A slab of marble, 0.85x0.18m. (squeeze measurements), fixed on the *minbar* of Jāmi‘ ‘Alī Marwān (“‘Alī Marwānā”) in the Tuffāḥ Quarter (Gatt Plan of Gaza F6). 2 lines professional Mamlūk *naskhī*, medium size letters, points, many vowels, some decorative elements; in relief. The inscription is framed, and bands divide the lines. Fig. 48. (IAA squeeze photo No. 1855).

١) رَ منبرَ اميرِ المحاسنِ ابرَّ بنى في مقامِ معظمِ لله ولله عليه حمدٌ وذكرٌ وصلاةٌ وللساهي(?)  
 يقظة ٢) وهو إنشا>ء> حاجبٌ وكبيرٌ ذاخرِ الجودِ والوفاء>ء> واجاه فهو شمسي سنقر دام  
 عز ابدأ عدا ذم(?) الأفواه

Watch the minbar of the prince of excellent qualities, (watch) the most godly edifice (built) in a place where Allah is revered, and on it Allah is praised, His Name is mentioned, and prayer (to Him is offered) and for the negligent (a word of) vigilance. Surely, it is the construction of a chamberlain and of a great man who stores away generosity, loyalty, and nobility. He is Shams ad-Dīn Sunqur may (his) glory last for ever transcending the criticism of (bad) mouths(?).

At first sight this inscription seems very simple, but I had difficulty reading some parts of it. I have the feeling that it represents one part of one slab out of possible three. As it stands it presents problems from the very beginning, particularly since it

is so different from similar dedication and consecration texts. If the inscription is a complete one, and taking into consideration that it commemorates the construction of a *minbar*, its beginning without the *basmalah* and without an appropriate Qur'ānic verse is strange. It is possible that the composer of the text decided to dedicate it solely to praising the donor and enumerating the merits of the *minbar* in a particularly original text. The above reading and translation are tentative. Another reader may be able to see what I have missed.

L.1: The inscription begins with the one letter verb in the imperative: *ra* look!, watch! I rejected the possibility of reading *burra*—dedicated as a charity.

أمير المحاسن—This is the best I could do with these words, and it seems to be a correct reading describing the charitable amīr as “the prince of good deeds.”

أبر بنى—If my reading is correct, it seems that the writer tried to get the maximum out of the *bā'* and *rā'* in the word *minbar*. He used a construction which is mistaken grammatically since *bunā* is the plural of *bunyah*, and the correct composition could be either *abarra bunyah* or *abarra al-bunā*. However, if the reading is correct we have to accept this construction for it is a common one among Arabic speakers who regard *bunā* as a general term for building.

وللساهي (؟) يقظة—Here again I am pretty sure that the reading might be wrong; it is strange and only with great effort can it be fitted into the context, although the text seems clear.

L.2: حاجب—Chamberlain, the official title of Sunqur, the builder of the *minbar*.

ذاخر—I would have been happier to read أحبّ, he who loves, however the *dāl* or *dhāl* is clear and *dhākhir*, meaning he who stores, collects and accumulates, is the only word that comes to my mind.

Shams ad-Dīn Sunqur held the office of *ḥājib al-ḥujjāb*, Grand Chamberlain of Gaza, as we learn from his inscriptions in Ḥammām as-Samrah dated 816/1413 (see No. 59 above for details about him). Since this inscription is not dated, it could have been produced sometime after 816 and before 821/1418. For the sake of order, I registered it under the year 817/1414.

دام عز—The words are clear, and the reading is sure. The expression seems defective, and *dāmā izzuhu* would have been better.

عدا ذمّ (؟) الأفواه—these three words are also extremely strange, and I could be very far from their correct reading. The general meaning fits into the context of wishing Sunqur eternal glory, unaffected by evil mouths that seek to belittle him.

61

Gaza 821

Jāmi‘ Ibn ‘Uthmān

Restoration text

Sha‘bān 821/ 3 September–1 October 1418

A slab of marble, 0.97x0.65m. fixed above the praying niche of the court of Jāmi‘ Ibn ‘Uthmān. 4 lines, provincial Mamlūk *naskhī*, points, some vowels, encircled by frame, dividing bands between the lines; in relief. Figs. 49, 49a (photo MvB). Publication: Mayer, *JPOS* 9, 1929:224-225, No. 7, pl. III, 3; ‘Arif al-‘Arif, *Ta’rīkh Ghazzah*, 344, fig. 1.

(١) فانظر الى اثر رحمة الله كيف يُحيي الارض بعد موتها ان ذلك (!) لُمحيي الموتى وهو  
 على (٢) كل شي <ء> قدير أمر بعمارة هذا الجامع المبارك بعد الهدم والخراب مولانا السلطان  
 (٣) الملك المؤيد ابو النصر شيخ اعز الله انصاره بمباشرة المقر الكريم العالي (٤) السيفي ابو (!)  
 بكر اليعموري حاجب الحجاب بمدينة غزة المحروسة بتاريخ شهر شعبان سنة احد (!) وعشرين  
 وثمان مائة

Basmalah. So behold the marks of Allah’s mercy, how He quickens the earth after it was dead; surely He is the quickener of the dead, and He is powerful over everything. (Q, 30:50. Trans. Arberrry). Has ordered the building of this blessed Friday mosque after it was demolished and destroyed, our lord the Sultan al-Malik al-Mu‘ayyad Abū an-Naṣr Shaykh, may Allah strengthen his victories, under the supervision of His Noble and High Excellency Sayf ad-Dīn Abū bakr al-Yaghmūrī the Chief Chamberlain (*hājib al-hujjāb*) in the city of Gaza, the (divinely) protected, in the month of Sha‘bān 821 (began 3 September 1418).

L. 1: the word <sup>ا</sup>اثر (Mayer: آثار) is written here in the Qur’ānic style, that is to say without the elongating *alif*. Mayer attributed the lack of the long *alif* (which he nevertheless inserted in his transcript) to “the usual abbreviating spelling of the Gaza-epigraphy,” (*ibid.*, 225) but in fact the word beginning a Qur’ānic verse is the exact copy of the Qur’ānic text. Therefore, I added here the hanging little *alif* or, more correctly, the *fathah* “written perpendicularly”. (*Grammer*, 1: Rem. a)

There are, however, diversions from the Qur’ānic orthography in the word رحمة which is written رحمت with a long *tā* in the Qur’ān, and in the word ذلك that was clearly written with a long *alif* in the inscription, which Mayer missed in his edition. (*ibid.*, 224)

L. 2: The Friday mosque was rebuilt “after the demolition and the destruction,” (بعد الهدم والخراب) these are the exact words of the inscription. If the inscription is *in situ*, and was not brought from another place, we learn from it about a major work

of reconstruction which took place towards the end of al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh's reign (815/1412–824/1421) and was executed by the Grand Chamberlain of Gaza at his orders.

L. 4: Ibn Taghrī Birdī mentions Abū Bakr al-Yaghmūrī once (calling him Ibn al-Yaghmūrī) as the governor of Ba'albak, a post ratified by the Sultan an-Nāṣir Faraj (during his second reign) on 3 Rabī' II 813/8 August 1410. (*Manhal*, 13:105).

Mayer identified this amīr as Aḥmad al-Yaghmūrī (or Ibn al-Yaghmūrī) who was nominated the *nā'ib* of Jerusalem, and the “Supervisor of the Two Sanctuaries” of Jerusalem and Hebron (Mujīr, 1973, 2: 94, 273), in Rajab 796/April 1394, during the second reign of Barqūq. However, Aḥmad al-Yaghmūrī is not Abū Bakr al-Yaghmūrī for the simple reason that Abū Bakr's title in the inscription is Sayf ad-Dīn whereas Aḥmad's title was Shihāb ad-Dīn (Mujīr, *ibid*, and 1:61, 70).

Abū Bakr al-Yaghmūrī, who supervised the work in the mosque was *ḥājib al-ḥujjāb* in the city, that is to say belonged to the class of the military officials in the city (*arbāb as-suyūf*). Qalqashandī speaking about the holders of the various posts in Gaza says: “The governor of Gaza who sometimes was referred to as *nā'ib as-saltānah* was on the whole a Commander of Thousand. In the city were also Amīrs of *Ṭablkhānah* (Amīrs of Forty), Amīrs of Ten, Amīrs of Five and similar ones. The military posts in it were the office of the chamberlain (*ḥujūbiyyah*), and its chamberlain (*ḥājib*) is Amīr *ṭablkhānah*, the officer in charge of the city, the officer in charge of the surrounding land, etc....” (Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, 4:198). In this case, it appears from the inscription that there was a Grand Chamberlain in Gaza, who was a very high ranking officer. He was a commander of thousand (*min muqaddamī al-ulūf*) and as such had the same rank as the governor of Gaza himself (Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, 4:19). However, it seems that the inscription is describing a special situation, because the post was usually that of Amīr Forty Commander of a Hundred.

### **Madrasah of Shāhīn—Madrasat al-Kujukī**

The following inscription can be regarded as a sister inscription of No. 48 above, dated 786/1384, on the lintel of the gate of the mosque. All the details there concerning the site and the founder are valid also for this inscription. In fact, the two inscriptions complete each other and should be read as one text, in spite of the wide time-gap between them (as van Berchem noted: “*les dates 786 et 821 sont très distantes*”). This inscription, fixed above the inscription from 786 over the gate of Shaykh ‘Alī al-Mughrabī's mosque in the Sajā'īyyah Quarter, belonged to the *madrasah* built by Shāhīn in the same neighborhood. The two inscriptions and the smaller fragments must have also come from either the mosque or the *madrasah* or from another building of Shāhīn in the Sajā'īyyah Quarter where all the property endowed for the various edifices built by this Mamlūk amīr were located. The *madrasah* was in close proximity

to the mosque which 'Ārif al-'Ārif called *Masjid at-Ṭawāshī* and van Berchem calls (in all probability correctly) *Jāmi' Sayyid 'Alī al-Maghrabī* (*Sic!* MvB Coll. c.VII, 67). The point of reference for all these edifices was *Sāqiyat at-Ṭawāshī* on Gatt Plan of Gaza F8. (*Cf.* p. 125 above)

62

GAZA 821a

Construction and Endowment text

1 Muḥarram 821/6 February 1418

A slab of marble, 1.20x0.35m. above the lintel of the entrance door of *Masjid ash-Shaykh 'Alī al-Mughrabī* (*Maghrībī*) bearing inscription No. 48 from the year 786. 3 lines, provincial Mamlūk *naskhī*, points, no vowels, scattered decorative elements; in relief. The inscription is framed, and bands in relief divide the lines. Pl.16, Fig. 50. Publication: MvB Coll. c.VII, 126; Mayer, *JPOS*, 11, 1931:150-151, No. 14 pl.V, copied by 'Aṭallah 1986:245-246.



Pl. 16 Gaza 821a

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم امر بانشاء <ء> هذا (!) المدرسة المباركة والبئر المعمر المقر  
السيفي شاهين (٢) الكجكي مقدم القصر الشريف كان وجعل البئر وقفاً على المدرسة  
المذكورة وعلى السقاية الشتا (٣) والحوض داخل المدرسة وذلك في مستهل شهر الله المحرم  
سنة احد (!) وعشرين وثمان مائة اثناب الله واقفه الجنة

Basmalah. Has ordered the construction of this blessed *madrasah* and the bountiful well, His Excellency Sayf ad-Dīn Shāhīn al-Kujukī, formerly the commander of the noble castle, and he endowed the well as a waqf for the benefit of the aforementioned *madrasah* and for the reservoir for the winter rains and for the cistern inside the *madrasah* and this on 1 Allah's Muḥarram the year 821 (=6 February 1418). May Allah reward the endower with paradise. (After Mayer).

It is clear that the inscription was originally fixed on the building of the *madrasah* and was transferred to its site in the tympanum of the gate of the al-Mughrabī Mosque at some later date. Or was the building of the mosque which van Berchem described as “*petit weli*” the *madrasah*? Unfortunately, at the time these lines are being written, the situation in Gaza does not allow me to verify the information in my files.

L.1: Similar to inscription No. 48 from 786 above, this inscription also begins immediately after the *basmalah*, without the usual introduction of a Qur’ānic verse. The error of هذا instead of هذه is clear.

The words البئر المعمّر are clear. *Bi’r* usually means a well supplied by a subterranean water source as in this inscription. The digging of such a well was a costly enterprise and a natural source of water of this kind was highly important. The water was sold and the income, as in this case, could be endowed for the benefit of the *madrasah* and for the upkeep of a few other installations. The word *al-mu’ammār* is a form of blessing: “May it always be full, copious.”

L.2: مقدم القصر الشريف كان. In the inscription from 786, 35 years earlier, Shāhīn was designated as *muqaddam al-qaṣr ash-sharīf*—the commander of the noble castle. I reaffirm here that, in spite of the temptation to identify this Shāhīn with the governor of Karak, who lived at the same time and had the same name, it appears that this Shāhīn was actually the commander of the castle of Gaza. In this inscription he is already designated as the *former* commander of the castle, but still, so it seems, a native of Gaza. The castle of Gaza is probably the one built by the Crusaders. The Muslim account indicates that the Franks built this castle (*gal’ah*) with strong fortifications in 544/1149-50 in order to cut the land route from Egypt to the besieged Ascalon. (Zetterstéen 1919:245)

السقاية الشتا is a strange construction. It could well be a small mistake, and the original text of the inscription was *siqāyat ash-shitā*<sup>2</sup>—the rainwater reservoir. The reading of the word سقاية is absolutely certain. The letter *sīn* is marked with the sign, which indicates that it comes with no points on it, and all the other letters are clear. On Gatt Plan of Gaza (F8), Sāqiyet aṭ-Ṭawāshī is marked as bordering on Sūq as-Sajā’iyah from the south, next to which van Berchem wrote the words “Sheikh al-Maghribī,” as well as “Sheikh Musāfir” on the map. (See above No. 07 for the year 647). Sāqiyet aṭ-Ṭawāshī is probably the same water installation mentioned in this inscription, and its appellation after a eunuch strengthens van Berchem’s suggestion that Shāhīn was a eunuch. Both the *siqāyah* of the winter rains and the reservoir inside the *madrasah*, which supplied its water needs, had to be carefully maintained and the income from the well and its water were used for their maintenance and supply.

63

GAZA 830

Epitaph of Muslim

Shawwāl 830/began 26 July 1427

A slab of marble, 0.65x0.39x0.05m. found in the Mosque of Shaykh Zakariyyā. 4 lines, provincial Mamlūk *naskhī* partly defaced, points, some vowels; in relief. Fig. 51 (IAA photo No. 33.762. IAA squeeze photo 37199) IAA Archives “Gaza esh Sheikh Zakariya”. Publication: partial reading, Husseini in a report from 20 June 1945.

١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم كل نفس ذائقة الموت [ت] ٢) هذا قبر الامير (؟) الشهيد (؟) الشرفي (؟)  
فرج (؟) ٣) ..... ٤) الدين مرمر (؟) توفاه (!) في شهر شوال سنة ثلاثين وثمان مائة

Basmalah. Every soul shall taste death. (Q, 3:185; 21:35; 29:57. Trans. Arberry). This is the tomb of the martyred Amīr Sharaf ad-Dīn Faraj ...? He died in the month of Shawwāl 830 (=26 July 1427).

The lines 2 and 3 are badly damaged. Husseini was able to read line 1, three words in line 2 and the date in line 4.

L.2: My reading after the words **هذا قبر** are a complete guess.

L.3: is completely defaced.

L.4: The first two words or combination of letters make very little sense. The letters **مرمر** or **مرقر** or **مرقد** mean nothing in the context of the line, unless there is such a private name or something in the previous line which has to do with marble (*marmar*). If the word *ad-dīn* is correctly read, it could be the suffix of one of the titles such as Sayf ad-Dīn, Nūr ad-Dīn etc. at the end of the previous line.

64

GAZA 834

Construction text

21-30 Rajab 834/4-13 April, 1431.

A slab of marble, 2.02x0.23m. above the main prayer-niche of Jāmi‘ Ibn ‘Uthmān. 2 lines; provincial, highly professional, Mamlūk *naskhī*, many points, some vowels; in relief. Figs. 52, 52a, 52b, 52c (IAA photos Nos. 1829, 1830, 1831). Publication:

Mayer, *JPOS*, 10, 1930:59-62, No. 8, pl. IV, figs. 1-3; 'Ārif al-'Ārif, *Ta'rīkh Ghazzah*, 345.

١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد وسلم انما يعمر مساجد الله من آمن بالله واليوم الآخر واقام الصلاة (!) واتى الزكاة (!) ولم يخش الا الله فعسى اولئك ان يكونوا من المهتدين والخراب اشرف مكان من المسجد عمّر هذا الخراب والقبة اعلاه ٢) وكذلك الفسقية والقبة اعلاها بصحن الجامع ابتغاء <ء> لوجه الله تعالى العبد الفقير الى الله تعالى الصدر الاجل الكبير الحاج علم الدين سنجر المعامل بغزة اعزّه الله بعزّه وجعله في كنفه وحرزه وذلك في مدة آخرها العشر الآخر من شهر رجب في سنة اربعة (!) وثلاثين وثمان مائة

Basmalah. And may Allah bless our master Muḥammad and give him peace. Q 9:18 (complete). And the miḥrāb is the most noble place of the mosque. Has built this miḥrāb and the dome above it as well as the fountain and the dome above it in the courtyard of the Friday mosque, for the sake of Allah the Exalted, the slave who is in need of Allah the Exalted, the most honourable and great master, the Ḥājj 'Alam ad-Dīn Sanjar the entrepreneur in Gaza. May Allah in his glory give him strength, shelter him under His wing, and watch over him. And this (was accomplished) during the period that ended in the last ten days of the month of Rajab in the year 834 (=4-13 April, 1431).

L.1: الصلاة، الزكاة and not as Mayer read: الزكوة، الصلوة influenced by the Qur'ānic spelling.

L.2: *aṣ-Ṣadr*. This was a title used in documents, which were issued in the sultan's offices to architects (*muhandīs*), to the head of the Jewish Community (*ra'īs*) and to other low ranking officials in the court, and outside the court. When using this title the following honorific adjectives are employed: *al-ajall* and *al-kabīr*, *al-muḥtaram* and *al-mu'taman*—the exalted, the great, the honourable, the confidant. (Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, 6:18, 170; 12:284). There is no question that the builder did not hold any of the military posts in Gaza. When defining the five groups of officials and dignitaries, which were entitled to be addressed by special honorific titles, Qalqashandī enumerates them as follows: The holders of military offices (*arbāb as-suyūf*), the civil administrators (*arbāb al-aqlām*), holders of artisan positions (*arbāb al-wazā'if aṣ-ṣinā'iyyah*), the leaders of the *dhimmīs* (*zu'amā' ahl adh-dhimmah*), and those who do not belong to any category because they are too small. (*Idem*, 9:264) In this classification, the title *ṣadr* was used for the artisans, and this is the group to which the ḥājj Sanjar of this inscription belonged. The word *al-mu'āmil*, defining his activity in Gaza, is not an official title, nor the description of any official post. Mayer translated "district officer." (Mayer, *JPOS*, 10, 1930:60-61 and notes) Qalqashandī had no such position nor a title such as *mu'āmil* describing it. I think that word is used to describe the fact

that Sanjar conducted his business in Gaza. According to the title used for him he could have been the head of a professional group or artisan guild in the city.

This Sanjar, about whom there is no information in the sources, should not be confused with the great Sanjar al-Jāwli who had been the governor of Gaza a century earlier (711/1311-720/1320. Maqrīzī, *Khīṭat*, 2: 398; *Manhal*, 6:74f.; Mujīr, 1283: 390, 607; 1973, 2:38, 271-272). The governor of Gaza at the time of this inscription was Aynāl al-‘Alāī who held the post from 831/1428 until 836/1432-3. (Mayer, *ibid.*, 60, and n.1) It is interesting that neither he nor the ruling Sultan al-Ashraf Barsbāy (825/1422-841/1437) are mentioned in the inscription.

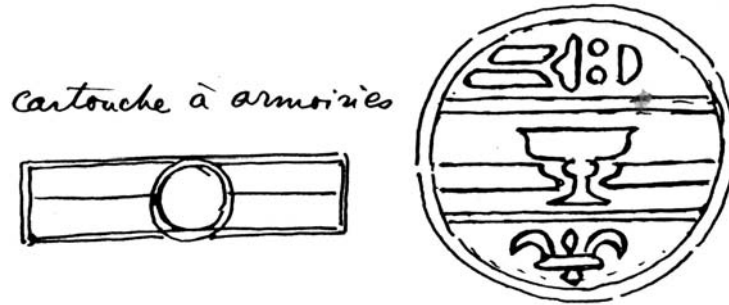
It was not unusual in the Mamlūk period for merchants, retired or banished officers (*battālūn*), and other rich people to contribute to the building of public institutions such as the enterprise described in this inscription, as well as *khāns*, and public fountains (*cf. CIAP*, 2:228f). The contribution of Sanjar to the mosque of Ibn ‘Uthmān is modest: the prayer-niche with a dome above it, and a public fountain (the term used is *fusqiyyah*, not *sabīl* which is usually reserved for fountains serving travellers, and built, therefore, along the roads).

### **Jāmi‘ Kātib al-Wilāyah**

The following is the information supplied by ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif in his *Ta’rīkh Ghazzah* (1943:359). The mosque is situated in the Zaytūn Quarter in the city, in close proximity to the Greek Orthodox Church. (Gatt Plan of Gaza C4) The minaret of the mosque is only a few metres away from the bell tower of the church. The name Masjid (or Jāmi‘) Kātib al-Wilāyah commemorates the title of its builder, Aḥmad Bek, who was chief secretary (*kātib*) in the local administration of Gaza, and who is known only from this inscription. Centuries later, the title *kātib al-wilāyah* must have seemed strange and was slightly altered to *kātib al-awliyā’* (the Secretary of the Saints), which has no meaning, and could not replace the original name. According to a popular story that has no historical base, the original mosque was built by ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ after the conquest of Gaza. It was Caliph ‘Umar—so the story goes—who urged ‘Amr to build a mosque next to every church, whenever possible. Alongside this legend there is another story according to which the building was a monastery, called Dayr Salm al-Faḍā’il, before its conversion to a mosque. Since ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif often mixed folklore and history, the above information should be regarded as being no more than a folktale. (See Nos. 72, 83 below)

1 Dhū al-Ḥijjah 835/30 July 1432

Slab of limestone, 1.40x0.30m. set in a deep frame in the ground floor of the minaret. 2 lines, Mamlūk *naskhī*, medium size, thick letters; in bas relief. There is a blazon of a heraldic shield (pl. 17) in the middle of the inscription. Fig. 53. Publication: MvB Coll. "Gaza" c.VII, 70; Mayer, *Heraldry*, 88, pl. LXVII, 2.



Pl. 17 MvB's drawing of the blazon in the inscription from 835

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم امر بعمارة هذه المأذنة ○ مولانا [نا] المقر الاشرف السيفي اينال  
العلائي (٢) نائب السلطنة الشريفة بغزة اخروسة ابتغا > لوجه الله ○ تعالى في مستهل ذي  
الحجة الحرام سنة خمسة (!) وثلاثين وثمان مائة

Basmalah. Has ordered the building (restoration) of this blessed minaret our lord his Excellency Sayf ad-Dīn Īnāl al-‘Alā’ī the viceregent of the noble sultanate in Gaza the (divinely) protected, seeking to please Allah the Exalted, on the first of the holy Dhū al-Ḥijjah 835 (=30 July 1432).

Īnāl (or Aynāl. Mayer, *Heraldry*, 1933:80 n. 2) was Circassian by birth. He was bought by the trader Alā’ ad-Dīn, hence his *nisbah* al-‘Alā’ī. After he became sultan in 857/1453 he was known by all his names and titles, which represent various stages in his biography. al-Malik al-Ashraf Sayf ad-Dīn (hence “as-Sayfi” in the inscription) Abū an-Naṣr al-‘Ālā’ī az-Zāhirī an-Nāṣirī. He was the Mamlūk of az-Zāhir Barqūq and acquired the *nisbah* az-Zāhirī. When he was selected to join the *khāssakiyyah* of an-Nāṣir Faraj who appointed him Jamdār (Master of the Robes), he gained the *nisbah* an-Nāṣirī. He was known by the nickname al-Ajrūd because of his scanty beard. Īnāl distinguished himself as a military commander, and in all the other posts to which he was appointed. He was made Amīr of Ten by the short-lived Sultan Aḥmad b. Shaykh in 824/1421, and rose steadily up the military ranks, serving under at least four sultans. In 830, he became Amīr of Forty and in 831 was

appointed the governor of Gaza with the title of *nāʾib as-saltānah* (in this inscription). In 836, he joined the campaigns of Barsbāy against the chief of the Aq Qoyunlu around Āmid. The Sultan rewarded him by giving him the rank of Amīr of Hundred Commander of a Thousand in Egypt, and the governorship of Edessa, which he refused in the morning but accepted at the end of the day (literally). In 840/1437, he was appointed the Governor of Şafād, and in 843/1439, he was summoned to serve the Sultan Jaqmaq in Cairo. In 846, he was appointed to the the high office of Grand Dawādār (*dawādār kabīr*). In his earlier career under al-Muʾayyad Shaykh (815/1412-824/1421) he had joined the Dawādāriyyah, hence the emblem of the Dawādār in his blazon. In 849/1453, he became the Commander in Chief of the Armies (*atābik al-ʿasākīr*) in Egypt, and from that position the path was short to the Sultanate. When Jaqmaq died in 857/1453, he easily overcame his son and heir, ʿUthmān, and became Sultan. He was 73 years old at the time. His 8 years of rule were eventful and successful. He died on 15 Jumādā I 865/ 26 February 1461 at the age of 80 or 81. (Ibn Taghrī Birdī, *Manhal*, 3:209-212 No. 624; Sakhāwī, *Dawʿ*, 2:328-329 No. 1080; cf. Mayer, *op.cit.*, 87-88; M.C. Şehabeddin Tekindağ “Īnāl” *EI*<sup>2</sup>)

Blazon: the field divided into three parts. The upper one—a pen box, the middle—a cup, the lower—a fleur-de-lis (Mayer *ibid.*)

L.2: MvB: خمس instead of خمسة .

66

GAZA 847

Shaykh (Nabī) Ilyās

Waqf inscription

1 Rabī I 847/12 July 1443

A slab of marble, 0.58x0.45m. embedded on a tomb in the interior of the Mosque of Shaykh (Nabī) Ilyās (see above No. 11). The left side of the inscription is broken. 6 lines, elegant Mamlūk *nashkī*, crowded letters, points, a few vowels; in bas relief. Fig. 54 (IAA Squeeze photo No. 1819). Publication: MvB Coll. “Gaza,” env. 24 and c.VII, 132-133.

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم هذا ما اوقف العبد الفقير الى الله تعالى شرف الدين موسى ولد  
الجناب ا... [one or two words] جمال الدين يوسف ناظر العسكر المنصور بغزة المحروسة  
واوقف على التربة جميع الدا [a few words] واوقف على التربة حانوتين ونصف بسوق

الزيت؟ [6-8 words] هذا الوقت (؟) [a few words] و (؟) ما وين [من؟] قاري (؟) ويدفن  
 بهذه التربة وملعون ابن ملعون من يغير شيئاً [من] الشرط واشترط [some words] (؟)  
 مكتب الفقهاء <ء> واصلاح (؟) ... التربة يُشترى به (؟) حبز ويتصدق به ليلة كل جمعة فمن  
 [بدله بعد ما سمعه فانما اثمه] ٦ على الذين يبدلونه وذلك بتاريخ يوم الثلاثاء <ء> رابع شهر  
 ربيع الاول سنة سبع واربعين وثمانماية (؟)

Basmalah. This is what has endowed as a waqf the slave who is in need of Allah the Exalted, Musā the son of His Excellency...Jamāl ad-Dīn Yūsuf the supervisor/commander of the victorious army in the (divinely) protected Gaza. He has endowed as a waqf for the mausoleum, the whole house ...and he endowed as a waqf for the mausoleum two and a half shops in the Zayt (oil) market .....This time(?)...and there is no ...reader(?) but he should be interred in this mausoleum. Accursed the son of the accursed is he who changes anything in the (waqf) conditions... and he made a condition...the jurists' school...and the repair of the mausoleum. (The income will also be used) to buy from it bread to be distributed as charity every Thursday night, "Then if any alter it after having heard it, the guilt of it rests upon those who alter it". (Q, 2:177. Trans. Bell) And this (happened) on Tuesday 14 Rabi' I, 847 (=12 July, 1443).

The inscription is badly damaged, particularly on the left side and in the centre. Fortunately, it was read *in situ* by van Berchem, otherwise the squeeze of it that exists permits the reading of even lesser text. The date seems to be correct and some traces of it can be discerned even from the squeeze photograph.

L.4: the text is unclear. As it stands it does not make sense. I translated as if it were written *wa-mā min qāri' illā wayudfan bihādhihi at-turbah*. This is only a suggestion, particularly since it seems that there is no space for the word *illā*.

L.5: The end of this line is missing but it is clear that in it, the founder specified the income that was to go to support the school of the *fuqahā'*, to repair the funerary chamber, and to buy bread to feed the poor.

67

GAZA 853

Jāmi' Ibn 'Uthmān

Decree of Jaqmaq

29 Dhū al-Ḥijjah 853/13 February 1450

A slab of marble, 0.72x0.255m. in the façade of Jāmi' Ibn 'Uthmān, between the two entrance doors. 3 lines, cursive Mamlūk *naskhī*; thin letters, points throughout, many vowels and signs; in relief. Fig. 55 (Photo: Mayer). Publication: Mayer, *JPOS*,

10, 1930:62-63, No. 9, pl. IV, 4; 'Ārif al-'Ārif, *Ta'arīkh Ghazzah*, 345, fig. 1; 'Aṭallah 1986:102.

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم رسم بالامر الشريف العالي المولوي السلطاني الملكي الظاهري  
السيفي اعلاه الله تعالى (٢) وشرفه وانفذه وصرّفه ان يبطل ما على الملح المجلوب الى مدينة غزة  
المخرّوسة من المكس الذي كان يؤخذ عند بيع الملح المذكور (٣) استجلابا للأدعية الصالحة لهذه  
الدولة العادلة خلد الله ملك سلطانها بتاريخ خاتمة عام ثلاثة وخمسين وثمان مائة

Basmalah. The noble and august decree of our lord, the Sultan al-Malik az-Zāhir, Sayf (ad-Dunyā wa-)ad-Dīn (Jaqmaq) has been issued—may Allah exalt it (the decree) and honour it and cause it to be carried out and implemented—to abolish the duty on salt imported into Gaza, the (divinely) protected, which had been taken at the sale of the aforementioned salt, in order to draw pious prayers upon this just government. May Allah perpetuate the reign of its sultan. At the closing of the year 853 (=13 February 1450).

The above translation follows Mayer's translation. (*Op. cit.*, 62).

Although this inscription represents a provincial type of writing there is one decorative element which draws attention in the third line. The letters *alif* and *lām* are particularly elongated and when they are near each other, they join at the top to form a decorative element which looks like a tall "M."

Qalqashandī (*Ṣubḥ*, 13:198) supplies the format on which this sultanic decree is based. It runs as follows:

خرج الأمر الشريف العلي، المولوي، السلطاني، الملكي، الفلاني، الفلاني، (بلقب السلطان  
واللقب الخاص) أعلاه الله تعالى وشرفه، وانفذه في الآفاق وصرّفه أن...

In this case *laqb as-sultān*, the title of the sultan is "*az-zāhirī*" that is to say: al-Malik az-Zāhir, and the particular title *al-laqb al-khāṣ* is "*as-sayfī*" namely, Sayf ad-Dunyā wa-ad-Dīn. In documents which were issued by the sultan involving the abolition of taxes or other charges, the terms used were either *kharāja al-amr* as we have just seen, or *rusima bi-al-amr* "the order was issued" followed by the words: *an yubṭal*: "to abolish" or *an yusāmah* "to absolve, to forgo (certain payments)," as attested by Qalqashandī's examples (*ibid.*, 13:29, 33, 37-39) and in this inscription. (*Cf. Mayer, ibid.*, 62-63)

Salt was usually mined, and was, therefore, an expensive commodity. It used to be imported from far away mines (see for instance *Ṣubḥ*, 4:347 about the salt mines in Darabjird, and other similar sources of salt in Africa and Yemen. *ibid.*, 5:164, 291; 13:102, 105) Taxation on salt was an important source of income for the government, and the abolition of the tax on it was regarded to be a particular benevolent deed, which deserved the supplications and the pious prayers (*ad'iyah ṣāliḥah*) of the subjects in favor of the just sultan.

### Jāmi‘ al-Maḥkamah—Jāmi‘ Birdibak

Situated in the Sajā‘iyyah Quarter (Fig. P21). It used to house a school, and subsequently it functioned as a court for the Qāḍīs, hence the name *maḥkamah*. The inscription is clear evidence concerning the identity of its builder Birdibak al-Ashrafi. Sakhāwī, who knew Birdibak well, dedicated a long biography to him in which he mentions his Friday mosque in Gaza. Birdibak was purchased in 829/1426 by al-Ashraf Īnāl, who watched over him as he grew up and took care to give him good education. After manumitting him (hence his *nisbah* al-Ashrafi), he made him his treasurer (*khazindār*) and married him to his eldest daughter. Soon afterwards, he nominated him as his personal secretary (*dawādār*).

When Īnāl became sultan (857/1453) he made Birdibak third *dawādār* (*dawādār thālith*) in the court, and later moved him to the chancellery (*dawādāriyyah*) with a permanent position. He bestowed on him an estate (*iqṭā‘*) and the military rank of Amīr of Ten. Soon Birdibak became extremely rich and an influential political figure. He was also very famous for his piety. In the three holy months every year, he convened a conference on Bukhārī which scholars vied with each other to attend. Sakhāwī emphasizes that he was also invited to it (*wa-kuntu mimman khuṭiba liḥudūr fihī*). “He built in Qanātir as-Sibā‘ in Cairo a most magnificent Friday mosque and so also in Gaza and in Damascus. (ودمشق بنى بقناطر السباع جامعاً هائلاً وكذا بغزة).” He fell from his high position and lost all his fortune when the Sultan, his master and father in law, died in 865/1461 and the latter’s son al-Mu‘ayyad Aḥmad was deposed soon after. All that he possessed was confiscated by the Khusqadam (865/1461–872/1467), and he was banished to Mecca at the end of 866, where he built himself a beautiful house on Jabal Abū Qubays. At the end of 868/1464 he was allowed to return to Cairo. He joined the returning *hajj* caravan, but on 15 Dhū al-Ḥijjah 868/20 August 1464 when he was en route and was riding alone in the desert, he was attacked by Bedouins and killed. A year later his remains were transferred to Mecca for final burial. A dome was erected over his grave. He left a good name of a pious, charitable and righteous person. (Sakhāwī, 3:4-7)

68

GAZA 859

Construction or restoration text

Dhū al-Ḥijjah 859/Nov.-Dec. 1455

Above the northern entrance door of Jāmi‘ Birdibak or al-Maḥkamah (al-Birdi-bakiyyah or Birdbakiyyah). No photograph available, and no other information,

such as the number of lines, type of script, and other technical details. Publication: 'Ārif al-Ārif, *Ta'rīkh Ghazzah*, 346.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم انما يعمر مساجد الله من آمن بالله واليوم الآخر واقام الصلاة وآتى  
الزكاة ولم يخش الا الله بنى هذه المدرسة المباركة ابتغاء <ء> لوجه الله تعالى المقر الاشرف  
العالي السيدي المالكي المخدومي السيفي بردبك [not برديك] الدوادار الملكي الاشرفي اعز  
الله انصاره بتاريخ ذي الحجة الحرام سنة تسع وخمسين وثمان مائة وصلى الله على سيدنا  
محمد وآله وصحبه [وسلم] تسليماً ابداً

Basmalah. Q. 9:18 (until “*illā allāh*”) Has built this religious college (*madrasah*), seeking to please Allah the Exalted, His most noble Excellency, the elevated, the lord, the ruler, he who is served, Sayf ad-Dīn Birdibak, the *dawādār* Mamlūk of al-Malik al-Ashraf (Īnāl) may Allah strengthen his victories in the holy Dhū al-Ḥijjah 859 (began 11 November 1455). And may Allah bless our master Muḥammad and his family and companions and grant them peace for ever.

See introduction to this entry above for details.

### Jāmi‘ al-Wazīrī

The following is based on Husseinī’s report from 29 August 1942 (IAA, files “Gaza,” ATQ 235). A small mosque in the Daraj Quarter in Sūq al-Khuḍar (the Vegetable Market. Gatt Plan of Gaza D3-4. *ZDPV*, 11:153) The entrance to the mosque is from the west through a well-built gate. Over its lintel there is a 2 line inscription (which Husseinī mistook for 4 lines). The mosque consists of two, cross-vaulted chambers. The *mīhrāb* is in the southern chamber. The east side of the north vault opens out under an arch built in sandstone and white marble voussoirs. (Cf. ‘Ārif al-Ārif, 1943:351)

69

GAZA 880

Construction text

c.880/1475

A slab of marble, 1.00x0.40m. (approx.) above the relieving arch over the lintel of the gate leading into the mosque. 2 lines, monumental, elegant, late Mamlūk *naskhī*, some points, vowels and *shaddah* signs; in relief. Figs. 56, 56a (IAA photo No. 28396).

The existing inscription is one slab out of three at least. It is not *in situ*. Apparently, it was brought from the ruins of another building and fixed over the gate of the mosque, when it was probably built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. (Hussein, *loc cit.*)

١) الشريعة إبتغا > لوجه الله الكريم وطلبًا لشوابه العميم مولانا سلطان الإسلام والمسلمين  
 محيي العدل في [العالمين] ٢) [الملك] لأشرف [أ] بو النصر قايتباي خلد الله ملكه وسلطانه  
 ونصره وجدد له في كل وقت... وكبت عدوه وقهره...

(Has orderd the building of this academy for the teaching of ) the Muslim law for the sake of Allah the Generous, and seeking His all-comprising reward, our lord the Sultan of Islam and the Muslims, who gives life to justice in the world, the most noble King (*al-malik al-ashraf*) Abū an-Naṣr Qāyitbāy, may Allah eternalize his rule and sultanate and support him and renew for him always... and humiliate and subdue his enemy ...

Except for a very few words in 1.2, I think that the above reading is correct. The only photograph of the inscription which exists is the one that shows it in its site over the relieving arch of the gate. (Fig. 56) In order to facilitate its reading, I enlarged it with the help of computer and tried to render it as clear as possible (Fig. 56a). Unfortunately, this part of the inscription consists of not much more than honorific titles, words of blessing and felicitations, and expressions of flattery required by the strict Mamlūk protocol. (See for instance, the opening of the section dealing with the rule of Qāyitbāy, a contemporary of Mujīr ad-Dīn, in the latter's history (Mujīr, 1283:616).

Qāyitbāy was a great builder. Amongst his many projects, he reconstructed the Umayyad Mosque of Damascus, and built mosques, a mausoleum and some sanctuaries in Egypt. Probably his best-known building was the Ashrafiyyah religious college (*madrasah*) which he built in 887/1482 opposite the Dome of the Rock in the western esplanade of the Holy Sanctuary in Jerusalem. (*CIA, Jérusalem, "Ville,"* 1:358ff, No. 106) It was described by his biographer as a "great *madrasah*" (*madrasah 'azīmah*). (Ghazzī, *Kawākib*, 1:229) He also built a *madrasah* in Gaza, and I believe that this beautiful inscription is part of the long one which commemorated its building. The word *ash-sharī'ah*, which begins the inscription, belonged to the beginning of the historical text on the previous lost slab, where the inscription began with the religious part and continued with the words which I suggested in the translation above: "has ordered the construction etc."... I registered the inscription in 880/1475 because in that year Qāyitbāy visited Gaza on his way to Jerusalem and Hebron, combining the pilgrimage with some administrative business, and abolishing certain unjust practices of the local officials particularly the Jerusalemite supervisor of the markets (*muhtasib*). The chronicler, by the way, remarks that the sultan's orders were upheld

for a short time, but subsequently everything returned to its former state. (Mujīr, 1283:647ff.)

According to Sakhāwī (*Daw'*, 4:91) the work on the building of the *madrasah* following the orders of the Sultan was begun by 'Abd ar-Raḥmān al-Luddī, the Supervisor of the Army (*nāzīr al-jaysh*) in Gaza. He died in the middle of the work in 882 and the rebuilding was finished by his son. (See below No. 70) I am, therefore, not far from target if I date this inscription in the year 880.

(For the biography of Qāyitbāy see Mujīr, 1283:616ff.; Ghazzī 1945:297-300; "Kā'itbey," *EI* and "Kā'it Bāy," *EI*<sup>2</sup>)

## 70

## GAZA 882

Madrasat al-Ashraf Abū an-Naṣr Qāyitbāy

Construction text

(Mentioned in literary reports)

882/1477

In the Sajā'iyah Quarter, there once stood a mosque and a *madrasah* built for al-Ashraf Qāyit Bāy, whose name is connected with extensive building activity of *madrasahs* and mosques in Jerusalem (*CIA, Jérusalem, "Ville"* 1:352ff; "*Haram*" 2:158ff). I have just mentioned that Za'im ad-Dīn 'Abd ar-Raḥmān al-Luddī began building the *madrasah* at the order of the Sultan, but he died in the middle of the work and his son completed it. In his biography of 'Abd ar-Raḥmān al-Luddī, Sakhāwī wrote that he was originally a native of Lydda (*al-luddī al-aṣl*) and later was identified as al-Ghazzī after he had settled in Gaza, where he held the position of the Supervisor of the Army in the city (*nāzīr jayshihā*); furthermore, he was admired as its leader (*zā'im*). "He died suddenly on Thursday night at the end of Sha'bān 882/6 December 1477, before finishing the (building of) the *madrasah* which the Sultan had ordered him to build for him. His son Ibrāhīm took upon himself to finish it." (Sakhāwī, *Daw'*, 4:91, No. 267) The date 882/1477 has therefore been taken as the date of the building and most probably it was the date of the now-lost inscription. I believe however that the fragment of the inscription fixed above the relieving arch over the lintel of the gate of Jāmi' al-Wazīrī (above, No. 69) is part of this lost inscription. The *madrasah* and the adjacent mosque were built next to Sāqiyat aṭ-Ṭawābīn (Gatt Plan of Gaza C7), and we find it as an active college towards the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century (Sakhāwī, *vol. cit.*, 268 l.2). It was destroyed in 1230/1815 and never rebuilt. (Ārif al-Ārif, 1943:353, n.2). No inscription.

21 Jumādā II 894/22 May 1489

A slab of marble, 1.33x0.25m. kept in the storeroom of the Great Mosque. 2 lines, monumental Mamlūk *nashih*, points, a few vowels; in relief. The inscription is framed, and a band divides the lines. Figs. 57 (IAA squeeze photos Nos. 4193 +4194), 57a: left side.

١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم أنشأ هذا <١> لسبيل المبارك تقبَّله الله تعالى المقرّ الأشرف السيفي  
آقباي كافل المملكة الشريفة الغزاوية الملكي الأشرفي أعزّ الله تعا ٢) لى انصاره ابتغا <ء>  
لوجه الله تعالى وطلباً لثوابه الجزيل في يوم الجمعة المبارك حادي عشرين (!) جمادى الآخرة  
سنة اربعة وتسعين وثمان مائة فمن ساعده على اقامة [one line missing?]

Basmalah. Has founded this blessed public fountain (*sabīl*) may Allah the Exalted, accept it (as a charitable deed), His Most Noble Excellency Sayf ad-Dīn Āqbāy the Governor of the noble province of Gaza, the officer in service of al-Malik al-Ashraf (Qāyit Bāy), may Allah the Exalted, strengthen his victories. (He did so) for the sake of Allah the Exalted, and hoping for His abundant reward, on the blessed Friday, 21 Jumādā II 894 (=22 May 1489); and whoever assisted him to erect...

This inscription, like many of the inscriptions in the storeroom of the Great Mosque, was retrieved from the ruins of the mosque and probably its immediate environment during its reconstruction. This particular inscription, commemorating the building of a public fountain apparently next to the Great Mosque or even in its courtyard, contains the upper two of at least three lines. The right side of the inscription was left out of the photograph (Fig. 57a: left side. IAA No. 844) but it was preserved in a squeeze (Fig. 57, IAA No. 4193-4). The end of line 2 suggests that there was more information in line 3 about somebody who had assisted in the building of the *sabīl*. This information could have been written on another slab of marble which was lost, since the slab of the existing information does not seem to have been damaged. This addition after the date is not common, since the builder shares the honour of his benevolence with others.

L.1: Āqbāy al-Ashrafī. Sakhāwī (*Daw'*, 2:313, No. 994) dedicated a short biography to the builder of the *sabīl*, which runs as follows:

Āqbāy al-Ashrafī; the reference is to al-Ashraf Qāyit Bāy—though he was not one of the Mamlūks bought by him—(nicknamed) aṭ-Ṭawīl (“the tall one”). He was the district governor

of Sharqīyyah, and afterwards the sultan nominated him governor of the province of Gaza after Sībāy az-Zāhirī had been transferred to be the Chamberlain of Damascus (ash-Shām). Thereafter Ramlah was added to his Gazan domains. The safety on the roads increased in his time because of the firmness of his bold policy. Whiteness appeared in his body (*wa-‘arada lahu fi badanihi bayād*). (Apparently, *Leucoderma*, literally “white skin;” a rare skin disease when certain parts of the skin gradually lose color leaving behind white patches.)

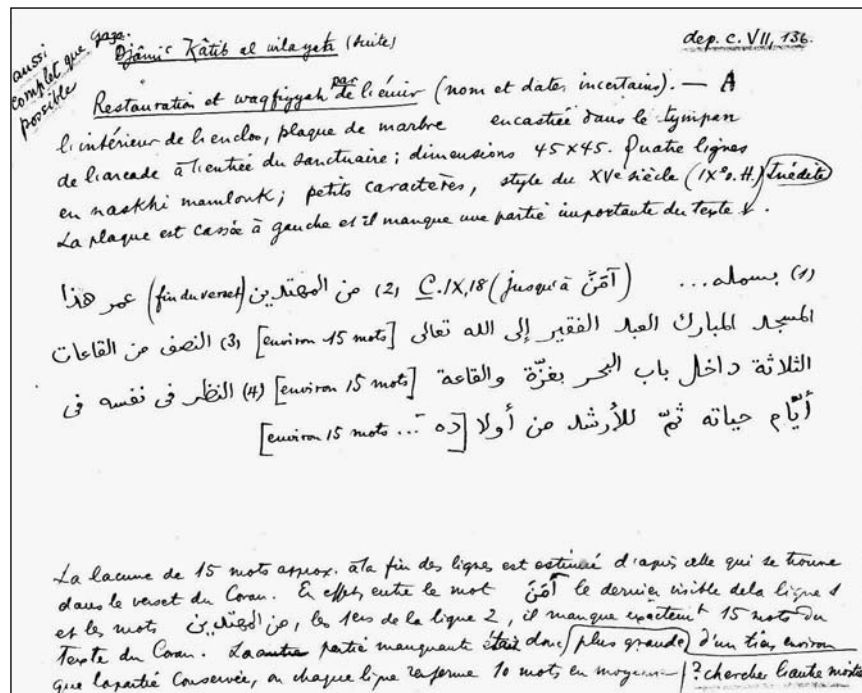
In this entry, Sakhāwī supplies no dates. In the 2 lines dedicated to the biography of Sībāy (*ibid.*, 3:288, No. 1096) he mentions that Sībāy (whom he defines as *al-Ashrafī Īnāl*, not *az-Zāhirī*) was the *nā’ib* of Gaza, Chamberlain of Damascus, and the governor of Ḥamāt. From other sources it is known that Sībāy died in 893/1488 (‘Aṭallah, 1986:309 and n.181 for the sources), and that Āqbāy al-Ashrafī was nominated to the governorship of Gaza in 887/1482. In two reports about events in which he was involved, Mujīr ad-Dīn mentions all his honorific titles similar to the ones which appear in this inscription. In 892/1487 he joined the Amīr Jān Bulāt, who had been sent from Cairo to investigate the religious endowments (*awqāf*) in Jerusalem and Hebron. In this report he is mentioned as “*malik al-umarā’ Āqbāy nā’ib Ghazzah al-mahrūsah*.” (Mujīr, 1283: 669; 1973, 2:338) In Rabī‘ II 896/February 1491, Ramlah was taken away by a sultanic order from Qānṣuh al-Yaḥyāwī, the governor of Damascus, and was added to the territory under the governorship of “*malik al-umarā’ Āqbāy the governor of Gaza*”. (*idem*, 1283:688; 1973, 2:358-359) Āqbāy’s full list of titles (*al maqarr al-ashraf as-sayfi kāfil al-mamlakah al-ghazzīyah*) appears in a report from the year 897/1492 dealing with the settling of a personal feud between him and Khaḍīr Bak, the supervisor of the two Holy Sanctuaries, in Jerusalem and Hebron (al-Khalīl), and the governor of Jerusalem (*nāzīr al-ḥaramayn ash-sharīfayn wa-nā’ib as-saltānah bi-al-quds*. *Idem*, 1283:689; 1973, 2:360)

### **Jāmi‘ Kātīb al-Wilāyah**

The mosque of Kātīb al-Wilāyah is located in the west side of the town, in the Zaytūn Quarter, adjacent to the Greek Orthodox Church (Gatt Plan of Gaza C4). The mosque possesses a beautiful minaret built at the side of the street, and the sanctuary itself is in an enclosure. Ancient building material was used in the building. The *minbar* is small, beautifully produced and decorated. (See above No. 65)

9th/15th c.

A slab of marble, 0.45x0.45m. embedded in the tympanum of the entrance arcade of Jāmi' Kātib al-Wilāyah, inside the enclosure; the slab is broken on the left side causing a considerable lacuna in the text. 4 lines, late Mamlūk *naskhī*, small characters, points; in relief. Fig. 58 (IAA squeeze photo No. 1825). Publication: MvB Coll. "Gaza" env. 24 and c.VII, 136. (Pl. 18).



Pl. 18 MvB copy of No. 72.

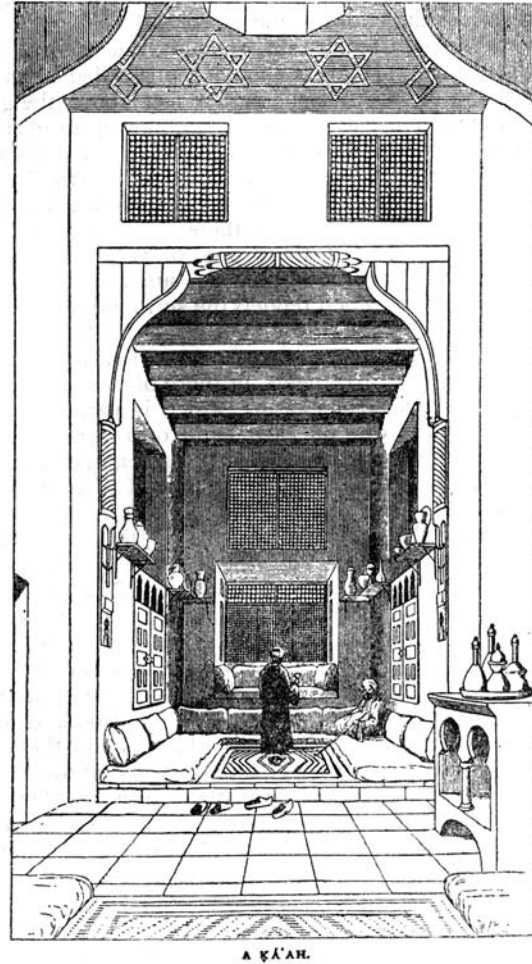
(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم انما يعمر مساجد الله من آمن [بالله واليوم الآخر واقام الصلاة  
واتى الزكاة ولم يخش الا الله فعسى اولائك ان يكونوا] (٢) من المهتدين عمر هذا المسجد  
المبارك العبد الفقير الى الله تعالى [... about 63 letters] (٣) النصف من القاعات  
الثلاثة داخل باب البحر بغزة والقاعة [... about 63 letters] (٤) النظر في نفسه في ايام  
حياته ثم للارشاد من اولاً [ده ... about 63 letters ...]

Basmalah. Q, 9:18 (complete in the original inscription). Has built this blessed mosque the slave who is in need of the mercy of Allah the Exalted, (our lord etc. the amīr... and he founded for it a *waqf* the income of) half of the three rooms inside the Gate of the Sea in Gaza and the room... (and he made a provision that he himself will occupy) the supervision (of the *waqf* property) in his lifetime, and then (after his death the supervision will be entrusted) to the most intelligent of his sons...

The size of the missing part of the inscription can be estimated from the lost part of the Qur'ānic verse (inserted in square brackets), as van Berchem did, at 15 words (63 to 65 letters). I added a few words at the end of lines 2 and 3 which could possibly represent some of the missing text that, unfortunately, contains the most important parts of the inscription: the name of the person who established the *waqf*, the full details of the property endowed, the provisions of the endowment, and its date. In the translation, I guessed a few more details. It is clear that the founder of the *waqf* (most probably a Mamlūk amīr, wanted to keep the control over the *waqf* in his family. It is also clear that the *waqf* was not a family (*dhurrī*) *waqf*; the income from the property did not go to the founder's family. It went for the upkeep of the mosque but the founder wished to ensure that the *nazar*, supervision, of the endowment remained in his family. The property dedicated as a *waqf* was inside the western gate of the city, known as Bāb al-Baḥr, the Gate of the Sea. (Gatt Plan of Gaza B3) The area retained this name until modern times even after the wall of the city had ceased to function. Since we do not have the date of this inscription it is hard to know whether the city's wall was still standing. In 1481 (886 AH) when Meshullam of Volterra visited the city he wrote: "The circuit of the city is four miles but it has no wall." (Quoted above and by Meyer 1907:93). Fifty years earlier, in 1432 (836 A.H.), the report of Bertrandon de la Brocquière also confirmed that the city was not protected by a wall, saying: "Gaza, situated in a fine country near the sea, and at the entrance of the desert, is a strong town, although uninclosed (*sic!*)." (Wright, *Early Travels*, 1848:289)

L. 3: القاعات, القاعة. The word *qā'ah* could mean a few structures: a paved courtyard, a hall, a large room, and also a corridor. I translated: "rooms" imagining that the three *qā'āt* and another *qā'ah* were four (or more) large rooms which were probably used by merchants, being situated near the gate, which was on the side of the city port.

Edward William Lane, who spent 24 years in Egypt, between 1825 and 1849, provided a detailed description of the *qā'ah* (*The Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (1860). Everyman's Edition, 1908: 17-18) summarizing it with the words: "the largest and the most lofty room, and in a large house it is a noble saloon." (Pl.19, Lane's engraving).

Pl. 19 Qā'ah (Lane, *Manners*, 1908:18)

### **Jāmi' ash-Shaykh Sha'bān (Abū al-Qurūn)**

ʿĀrif al-ʿĀrif mentioned this mosque among the deserted and ruined mosques of Gaza. It is located in ad-Daraj Quarter, (Gatt Plan of Gaza, D2) and at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century it was still an active sanctuary of a saint called Shaykh Sha'bān. In Gatt's list of place names, attached to his Plan of Gaza, it is not listed among the mosques but as one of the walīs (“*auliyā*”). (*ZDPV*, 11, 1888:152) The photographs in the Archives of the IAA show a well-built sanctuary which seems deserted. It is composed of two domed buildings. The main one is solidly built, with façade and a horseshoe arched gate displaying clear Mamlūk elements of the *ablaq* technique of alternating stones of white and brown colour. It has a secondary door on the left and two windows on the right. One of these windows belongs to the basement; the

other, somewhat larger, belongs to the top floor that is considerably raised above the street level. The building as it stands underwent extensive reconstruction, during which the builders fixed on the façade pieces of decorative elements, which they found in the ruins around, including fragments of inscriptions. There are three such fragments, two of which, on the right side of the gate (as seen by the observer), belonged to one Mamlūk inscription, and one fragment in Ottoman *naskhī* on the top left. This fragment cannot be read from the existing photograph. The wall of a courtyard, extending behind the building, and the room on its left represent later, much simpler, additions. Figs. P24, P25 (IAA photos Nos. 8262, 8263).

73

GAZA 901

Qur'ān fragments

ca. 901 (early 10<sup>th</sup>/late 15<sup>th</sup> c.)

Two slabs of marble, A. 0.65x0.30m. (approx.); B. 0.50x0.30m. (approx.) fixed on the front wall of the sanctuary: A—in the fifth row of ashlar, to the top and left of the upper window on the right; B—to the left of the same window. 1 line monumental, elegant late Mamlūk *naskhī*, engraved against a beautifully ornamented field with flowers, bunches of grapes, and leaf decorations, points, some vowels; in relief. Figs. 59, 59a, 59b (IAA photo No. 8264).

A. [او] يَأْتِي رَبُّكَ أَوْ يَأْتِي بَعْضُ آيَاتِ [رَبِّكَ]

...or that thy Lord should come or that one of thy Lord's signs should come?... (Q, 6:158. Trans. Arberry)

B. [...فَحَاقَ بِالذِّبْرِ] ن [سَخِرَ] رُوا مِنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا [بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ]

(Messengers indeed were mocked before thee; but) those that scoffed them were (encompassed) by that they (mocked at). (Q, 6:10. Trans. Arberry)

It is interesting that the Qur'ānic texts were both quoted from the same *sūrah*. For what reason were these polemic verses engraved in such an elegant style? Did they introduce some historical text? The fragments are too small to supply any answer, particularly since these are not common verses used on any type of inscription that I know.

I fixed the date at 901 only for the sake of registration order. It seems to me that the writing represents the height of Mamlūk *naskhī*, of the early 10<sup>th</sup>/late 15<sup>th</sup>

century. The fragments belonged to a long panel, which had decorated one of the mosques, and when the ruins of this mosque were used as a source for building material, during the repairs in Shaykh Sha'bān, the broken pieces were found and used as decorative elements to the best of the builders ability.

74

GAZA 903

The Great Mosque  
Foundation text

Ramaḍān 903/Apr.-May 1498

A slab of marble, 2.00x0.40m. embedded in the wall near the *qiblah* (prayer niche) in the court of the Great Mosque. 4 lines, provincial Mamlūk *naskhī*, points, a few vowels; in relief. No photograph. Publication: MvB Coll. env. 24 and c.VII, 79-80; mentioned by van Berchem, in Meyer, 1907: 150.

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم تبارك الذي ان شاء <ء> جعل لك خيراً من ذلك جنات تجري من تحتها الأنهار ويجعل لك قصوراً أنشي هذا المنبر المبارك وبيت الخطابة وخزانة الرُبعة الشريفة ودكة المؤذنين واعادت (!) القبوين بعد هدمها (!) (٢) [وخرابها؟] وفتح الباب القديم في أيام مولانا السلطان الملك الناصر ابي السعادات محمد ابن المرحوم مولانا السلطان الملك الاشرف ابي النصر قايتباي خلد الله ملكه وفي ولاية (٣) مولانا العبد الفقير الى الله تعالى قاضي القضاة الشافعي بدر الدين ابي الفضل محمد ابن المرحوم سعد الدين ابراهيم الغزي وصاحب ديواني الانشاء <ء> الشريف والجوالي (٤) وما مع ذلك ادام الله ايامه بمباشرة متكلمـ[ه] الجمالي يوسف ابن المرحوم الناصري محمد الاسكندري الغزّي [ي؟] الشافعي لطف الله به بتاريخ شهر رمضان سنة ثلاث وتسع مائة الحمد لله

Basmalah. Blessed be He Who, if He willeth, will appoint for thee something better than that— Gardens through which the rivers flow; and will appoint for thee castles. (Q. 25:10. Trans. Bell, Q. 25:11). This blessed minbar, and the preaching chamber, and the vault (or the coffer) for the noble Qur'ān (*ar-rab'ah ash-sharīfah*), and the Muezzin's platform (*dikkah*) were founded, and the two vaults were restored after they had been demolished and ruined, and the ancient gate was reopened, (all this) in the days of our lord, the Sultan al-Malik an-Nāṣir Abū as-Sa'ādāt Muḥammad the son of the late Sultan, our lord al-Malik al-Ashraf Abū an-Naṣr Qāyitbāy; May Allah perpetuate his Kingship. Under the governorship of our lord the slave who is in need of Allah the Exalted, the chief Shāfi'ite Qāḍī Badr ad-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad the son of the late Sa'd ad-Dīn Ibrāhīm al-Ghazzī, and the chief of the two ministries that of the *inshā'* and that of the poll tax of the dhimmīs, and whatever is appended to that, may Allah perpetuate his life.

Under the supervision of his representative Jamāl ad-Dīn Yūsuf the son of the late Nāṣir ad-dīn Muḥammad al Iskandarī, al-Ghazzī the Shāfi‘ite; May Allah be kind to him. In the month of Ramaḍān 903 (began 23 April 1498) and praise be to Allah.

L.1: The *dikkah* of the muezzins in the mosque is the rostrum or podium next to the *mīhrāb*. (See *CIA, Jérusalem, “Ville,”* 1: 159, 160 (fig. 20d); “*Haram,*” 2: 312-313, 315.) On the restoration or the podium in the Dome of the Rock (“*dikkat al-mu’adhinīn allatī bi-aṣ-ṣakhrah ash-sharīfah*”) during the Sultanate of Barqūq in 789/1387, see Muḥjir, 1283: 440. See also *ibid.*, 372, 608.

*Rab’ah*, is the box in which the large copy of the Qur’ān (*muṣḥaf*) in the mosque is stored and carried. It is also a term used for the Qur’ān itself. (See Bustānī, *Muḥit al-Muḥit*, (الرابعة هي الصندوق الذي يحمل فيه المصحف), and Dozy, *Supplement, s.v.*, p. 503 b). Here, in this inscription, the word refers to the Qur’ān, and the *khazānah* to either the box or the vault in which the Qur’ān was stored when not in use. In the colloquial dialects used in Syria, the word *rab’ah* means an enclosure or a cloister wall. (Barthélemy, *Dictionnaire*, 1950, *s.v.*), and this is the nearest to the usage here.

L.2: The Sultan an-Nāṣir Muḥammad, the son of Qāyit Bāy, ruled from 901/1496 to 903/1498.

صاحب ديواني الانشاء الشريف والجوالي I translated the term *ṣāhib* above as “the chief of the two ministries.” However, following van Berchem (*CIA, Jérusalem, “Ville,”* 1: 281, n.2), the translation in more modern terms would be “the secretary of the two offices: the noble chancellery and the receiver of the *dhimmī* taxes (*jizyah*)”

الجوالي Qalqashandī, *Subh*, 3:491, 10:462; 13:57-59. Qalqashandī speaks about three major sources of state income: *ḍiyā’, sadaqāt, jawālī*, (*ibid.*, 10:27, 32, 41,102; 13:69) and *aḥbās wa-jawālī* (*ibid.*, 13:452-453). In all these cases *jawālī* are the payments that the Jews and Christians (*ahl adh-dhimmāh*) had to pay as poll taxes (*alā al-jamājim*). The term is very old and we find it already as technical term concerning the taxation of non-Muslims under the early ‘Abbāsids. (Ibn Khurradādhbih, 1889: 125; cf. Strauss (Ashtor)1970, 2:266ff; Cahen “Djawālī” *EI*<sup>2</sup>. For the definition of the term see, Khwārizmī, *Mafātih al-‘Ulūm*, 1342:40.)

75

GAZA 908

Zāwiyat Abū al-‘Azm

Reconstruction text?

Ṣafar 908/7 August – 5 Sept.1502

Lintel of white marble, 1.30x0.30m. over a small door of Zāwiyat Abū al-‘Azm (Gatt Plan of Gaza D5) or Mazār ash-Shaykh Abū al-‘Azm (See No. 14 above. ‘Ārif

al-ʿĀrif 1943:354) opening to the street. 2 lines, provincial Mamlūk *naskhī*, medium size characters, points, some vowels; in bas-relief. Decorated frames with rounded ends create the field for the script. The inscription was removed, probably after WW1, to the storeroom in the Great Mosque. Fig. 60 (IAA photograph No. 855). Publication: MvB Coll. “Gaza,” env. 24, c.VII, 61. Cf. *AR*, 2:380.

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم امر بانشا <ء> هذا المسجد المبارك مولانا ملك الامرا <ء>  
المقر الاشرف (٢) السيفي قانصوه الاشرفي كافل المملكة الغزية اعز الله انصاره بتاريخ صفر  
سنة ثمان وتسع مائة

Basmalah. Has ordered to establish this blessed mosque, our master the king of the amīrs His Excellency Sayf ad-Dīn Qānṣūh al-Ashrafi, the governor of the province of Gaza may Allah strengthen his victories, in Ṣafar the year 908 (began 7 August 1502).

The small door of the sanctuary gives access into a small, open enclosure surrounding a tomb chamber flanked by two *iwāns* with arcades. This inscription commemorates the restoration of an adjunct to the edifice, which is more ancient than the other parts of the building, accomplished in 908 by the amīr Qānṣūh, at that time the governor of Gaza. (MvB note).

L.2: Qānṣūh al-Ashrafi is Qānṣūh Qarā, also known by the nickname “al-Jamal”. He was nominated to his office in 908/1502, the date of this inscription. (Ibn Iyās, 4:34) His *nisbah* indicates that he was most probably attached as a Mamlūk to the Sultan al-Ashraf Qānṣuh al-Ghawrī (906/1501—922/1517). Theoretically, he could also have been attached to al-Ashraf Jānbalāṭ (905/1500–906/1501) which is very unlikely, taking into consideration that the latter only ruled for a very short time.

The adjective *al-Ghazziyyah* in this inscription (Cf. Lubb, 1840:186) is more correct than the rather frequent *al-Ghazzāwī* / *Gazzāwiyyah* which is influenced by colloquial usage.

76

Gaza 910

Abolition of taxes

15 Shaʿbān 910/21 Jan. 1505

A slab of marble, 0.675x0.492m. 6 lines, monumental late-Mamlūk *naskhī*, points, some vowels, very few decorative elements in open spaces; in relief. Bands divide the lines. The inscription was acquired by the British Mandate Department of Antiquities in 1935 from a private owner, Kāmil Effendi Mubāshir, in Gaza.

(Curious correspondence, see IAA archives, file ATQ/2/75 of 14-6-[19]34 and 22-6-34. The owner asked for £25.- and was offered £2.-). Stored in the Rockefeller Museum, Jerusalem. Fig. 61 (IAA photos Nos. 5269, 7731. IAA inventory No. 35.2906) Publication: Initial English translation with errors in IAA Archives, “Gaza,” ATQ/2/75.

١) رَسَمَ بالأمر الشريف السلطان الملك الأشرف قانصوه ٢) الغوري عز نصره أن يُعفى سكان القيساريه بغزة ٣) الجارية في وقف اليمارستان الناصري من جارية الزيت ٤) والقماش وغيره ومن المظالم من الحكام بغزة وغيرها ٥) وأن لا يحدث عليهم حادث ولا يجدد عليهم مظلمة ٦) بتاريخ خامس عشر شعبان المكرم سنة عشر وتسعمائة

Al-Malik al-Ashraf Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī, may his victory be strengthened, has ordained by the noble edict (which he had issued) that the inhabitants of the covered market (*qaysāriyyah*) in Gaza, that is included in the *waqf* of the Nāṣirī Hospital (*bīmāristān*), should be exempted from the current levies paid on oil, cloth, etc., and (should be freed) from the tyranny of the governors in Gaza and elsewhere, and that no new obligations should be imposed on them and no injustice should be renewed against them. The date (of this order) is 15 of the honored (month of) Sha‘bān, 910 (=21 January 1505).

This edict does not specify any particular taxes from which the inhabitants of the *qaysāriyyah* of Gaza were to be exempted. But it speaks about unjust payments and the tyrannical attitude of the governors who imposed such payments on the sellers of oil and cloth, as well as of other unspecified commodities, in addition to the usual income from the *qaysāriyyah* dedicated as an endowment for the benefit of the hospital (*al-jāriyah fī waqf al-bīmārustān*).

The mention of the governors of Gaza in connection with an-Nāṣir Muḥammad’s *bīmāristān* (hence an-Nāṣirī) is not accidental, since Sanjar, after building it, put it permanently under the supervision of the governors of Gaza (see above Nos. 26, 27). We learn from this inscription that they abused their position as the supervisors of the hospital’s *waqfs*, which Sanjar had founded. One of these “abundant *waqfs*” was the income from the block of buildings, which included residential and commercial areas that fell under the definition of *qaysāriyyah*.

The hospital, well supplied and supposedly supervised by the highest authority, continued to be active until 1799, the time of the Napoleonic invasion, when it was finally demolished. (‘Ārif al ‘Ārif, 1943:353 n.3; ‘Aṭallah 1986:353 and n. 3 for the sources.)

In the file of Gaza in the IAA archives, there is a translation of this inscription, but no reading. The translator could not read the word *bīmāristān* (lit. place for the sick, in Persian) and read by mistake: “*Sinān el-Taimān*,” which led him far away from the true text and content of the inscription. He also thought that the year AH 910

corresponded to CE 1490. He rendered the word *qaysāriyyah* “caravanserai situated in (the above mentioned) *waqf* of Sinān el-Taimān en-Nāširī,” which is non-existent. There are a few more mistakes, which include the “controllers of oil and cloth etc.” (in ll. 3-4).

L.2: The *qaysāriyyah* in this inscription refers, most probably, to the main market of the city next to the Great Mosque, and could well have included Khān az-Zayt, or the *khān* built by Sanjar al-Jāwli, for public usage (*fī as-sabīl*) between 711 and 720. This *khān*, whether part of the *qaysāriyyah* or not, could well have been one of the sources of income to support his *bīmāristān*.

Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī’s early biography is connected with Gaza. In the middle of 902/beginning of 1497, he became Sultan for eleven days, but when he faced a rebellion of the Mamlūk amīrs in Egypt he fled to Gaza, from which he made his comeback to Cairo and to his Sultanate in 906/1501 (Ibn al-‘Imād, *Shadharāt*, 8:23, 28). He held this office until his death in the battle of Marj Dābiq, near Ḥalab, on 25 Rajab 922/24 August 1517, the battle which sealed the fate of the Mamlūk Sultanate.

Al-Malik al-Ashraf Abū an-Naṣr Qānṣūh b. ‘Abdallah was nicknamed al-Ghawrī following his education in the Mamlūk military school (*ṭabaqah*) called al-Ghawr. (*Ibid.*, 8:113-114) He was born around the year 850/1446, bought, educated and freed by Qāyit Bāy, who favoured him. He was nominated to important positions such as the governor of Upper Egypt, Grand Chamberlain (*ḥājib al-ḥujjāb*) of Aleppo, the governor of Ṭarsūs, the governor of Malāṭiyyah, Commander of the Guard (*ra’s nawbat an-nuwwāb*), and Secretary of the State (*dawādār kabīr*) under al-‘Ādil Ṭūmān Bāy, who had first proclaimed himself sultan in Damascus. Following a revolt of the Egyptian amīrs against Ṭūmān Bāy, Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī was proclaimed Sultan, much against his will. In spite of the expected disloyalty of the amīrs he succeeded in consolidating his rule and governed the empire for 15 years, 9 months and 25 days. His Sultanate, representing the twilight of the Mamlūk rule, was characterized by major economic and political problems, as well as by natural calamities such as the plagues of 910/1505 and 919/1513, and above all the growth of Ottoman power in the north, and that of Ismā‘īl Shāh Ṣafavī on the northeastern borders.

The tension with Selīm I finally developed into open war. Qānṣūh’s Mamlūks met the Ottoman army of Selīm I at Marj Dābiq. For the first time, the Ottomans used canons which had a significant influence on the outcome of the battle. The fate of the battle was sealed, when Khāyir Bey, one of the Mamlūk amīrs (who had a previous understanding with the Ottomans), ran away exposing the left flank of Qānṣūh’s army. In the confusion of the battle and the retreat, Qānṣūh fell from his horse, and died, but his body was never found. Although Qānṣūh was followed by his nephew, al-Malik al-Ashraf Ṭūmān Bāy who only ruled for a few months over

Egypt, Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī is in fact the last Sultan of the entire Mamlūk kingdom. (P.M. Holt, “Qānṣawh (Qānṣūh) al-Ghawrī,” *EI*<sup>2</sup>; al-Ghazzī, 1945, 1:294-297; Ibn Iyās 4:2ff; Ibn al-ʿImād, 8:113-115)

The benevolence that this Sultan displayed to the people of Gaza contradicts his bad name in the sources, which describe him as an avaricious, tyrannical, and oppressive ruler, who robbed his subjects and allowed his Mamlūks to emulate, and even surpass him in acts of injustice, open theft and the robbery of innocent people. Here the Sultan shows a completely different face: he abolishes unjust practices, forbids the tyranny of officials, and prohibits the abuse of the *waqf* by office holders, who had taken advantage of the people who used the *waqf* property either for residence or for commercial purposes.

It is possible that the Sultan issued the order commemorated by this inscription when he visited Gaza in 910/1504. A long inscription from Jerusalem, dated 919/1513, exempting Christian pilgrims arriving at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher from certain taxes and protecting them from the malpractice of the Muslim officials is yet another example of the Sultan’s benevolent practice. (*CIA, Jérusalem, “Ville”,* 1:378ff. No. 108) Some of the expressions in the particularly long and detailed edict from Jerusalem are identical to the expressions used in the present inscription from Gaza, dated 9 years earlier. The Jerusalem inscription speaks about the permanent nature of the Sultan’s decree, emphasizing that no modification can be introduced into it and prohibiting the renewal of any act of injustice (*min ghayr iḥdāth ḥādīth wa-lā tajdīd mazlīmah*). In the present inscription from Gaza (l.5), the Sultan ordered that, after forbidding the illegal and unjust practices which had been applied to the inhabitants of the *qaysāriyyah*, no new practice and no renewal of injustice should be applied to them (*wa-an lā yuḥdath ‘alayhim ḥādīth wa-lā yujaddad [tujaddad] ‘alayhim mazlīmah*). Max van Berchem translated the expressions *iḥdāth ḥādīth* and *tajdīd mazlīmah* as “bringing modifications and introducing arbitrary change” (in the decree. *Ibid.*, 380-381 and notes.)

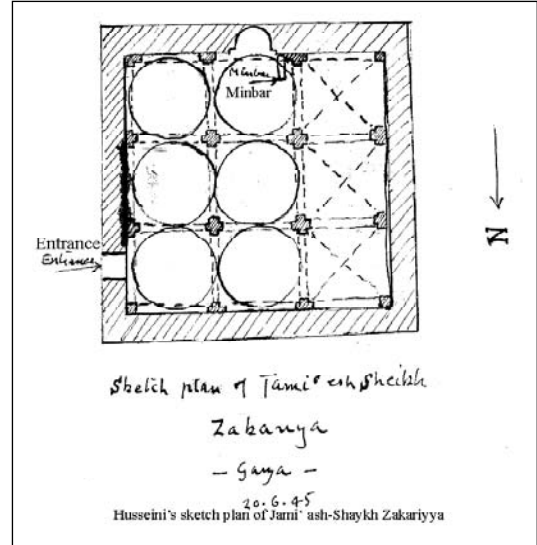
Ll.2-3: **القيساريه... الجارية في وقف البيمارستان**—The *qaysāriyyah* that is an integral component of the *waqf* dedicated to the hospital. This phrase describes the legal status of the *qaysāriyyah*. Being part of the endowment for the benefit of the *bīmāristān*, its inhabitants and users were obliged to pay the original dues defined when the property was made a *waqf*, not arbitrarily imposed extra payments.

Ll.3-4: **جارية الزيت والقماش** The *jīm* in the word *jāriyah* was written in a strange way, nearer to a *mīm*. As much as I looked I could not find a word starting with a *mīm* which could fit into this combination of letters, and *jāriyah* seems, therefore, the only option. The translation is not easy either. I suggest “current duties, or current payments on (the selling) of oil, cloth, etc.” The exact meaning of the word *qumāsh*

is a web of cloth, which developed to mean the cloth itself, and this is the usage in the colloquial language.

### Jāmi‘ ash-Shaykh Zakariyyā

This small mosque that until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was at the extreme northwestern part of the city (Gatt Plan of Gaza E2) was built on the west side of an open court. (For more information see above Nos. 03, 41, and Fig. P22) Along the north side of the court and adjoining the mosque are two domed *riwāqs* and a domed tomb chamber. The grave in this chamber was initially built with marble slabs. Among the slabs, which had been dismantled and scattered near the grave, three were found bearing inscriptions. I repeat here Husseini’s sketch of the mosque (on the right, identical with pl. 9 above) from June 1945, to which he accompanied the initial reading of the



inscriptions dated 749 (which he read 704), 764, and 830 (Nos. 41, 44, 63).

77

GAZA 920

Jāmi‘ ash-Shaykh Zakariyyā  
Reconstruction text

920(?)/1514

A slab of limestone, 0.70x0.35m. above the lintel of a window opened in the south wall of the tomb chamber in Jāmi‘ ash-Shaykh Zakariyyā. 4 lines, provincial Mamlūk *naskhī*, small thick characters, some points and few vowels; in relief. Fig. 62 (IAA photo No. 33765) Fig. 62a (IAA squeeze photo No. 37187). Publication: MvB Coll. “Gaza,” env. 24, c.VII, 94; Husseini, IAA files “Gaza,” Sh. Zakariyyā.

١١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد وآله (?) (٢) وسلم عمر هذا  
الايوان المبارك ان شاء الله تعالى (٣) بامر مولانا ملك لامرا <ء> السيفي دولات

باي الأشرفي (٤) كافل المملكة الغزّاويّة اعزّ الله انصاره/نصره (٥) بتاريخ سنة (٦) عشرين وتسعمائة

Basmalah. And may Allah bless our master Muḥammad and his family and give them peace. This blessed hall was reconstructed, Allah the Exalted willing, by the order of our lord the king of amīrs, Sayf ad-Dīn Dawlāt Bāy, the Mamlūk of al-Malik al-Ashraf, the governor of the province of Gaza, may Allah strengthen his victories in the date of 920 (=1514)

L.3: Dawlāt Bāy is the last Mamlūk governor of Gaza. His name is written in two words as is clear in the inscription. His *nisbah*, *al-Ashrafī* indicates that he must have been the Mamlūk of al-Ashraf Qānṣuh al-Ghawrī (906/1501-922/1517). In 922/1516, on the eve of the Ottoman conquest of Syria and Egypt, the districts of Jerusalem and Karak were added to the province of Gaza under his governorship. (Aṭallah, 1986:123, 312 and n. 202 for the sources)

L.4: انصاره/نصره It is very difficult to read this part of the inscription from the photographs of the inscription and of squeeze. Hussein and Van Berchem both saw the inscription in situ and they both saw انصاره.

Van Berchem thought that the date was 906, but close examination clearly reveals the word *‘ishrīn*. Hussein’s reading is correct.

78

GAZA 922

Foundation text/decreed

922?/1516?

A slab of marble, 1.80x0.50m. embedded in the wall below the *qiblah* in the court of the Great Mosque (to the left of No. 74). 6 lines; provincial Mamlūk *naskh*. No photograph. Publication: MvB Coll. env. 24 and c.VII, 81-82; mentioned in van Berchem, *CIA, Jérusalem*, “*Haram*,” 2:321, note 1.

١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم رسم بالأمر الشريف العالي المولوي السلطاني الملكي الأشرفي  
السيدي قانصوه الغوري خلد الله ملكه وسلطانه عند حلول ركابه (٥) الشريف (٦) با[لمملكة  
الغزوية .. [words 4-5] ٢) الكرم وان لا يعارض السماسر (٥) ولا يؤخذ منهم شي من الخضر  
الا بثمانه ولا يُرمى عليهم شي (٥) ولا يؤخذ شي من التجار الا بثمانه ولا يُرمى عليهم ولا  
على السماسر ولا يمكن جمال الناس واغنامه وابقاره [1-2 words] ٣) يعارضوا (!) بغير طريق  
بلا (٥) تمكين (٥) العروض ... المرور (٥) بالكرم ولا من الراعي... من الدواب شيئاً يرعى ...]

[... unclear] واصحاب النحه ياخذ ولا... ولا [2-3 words] (٤) النائب منها سوى مما يشهد به ... ولا يمكن الختسب والسقّان والمشاعلية والعلما <ء> من الجباية من دلو الخضر وان يمكن المستحقين بها [2-3 words] طبقات لا يؤخذ من سوق الغزل ولا من الدبـ[ساغين/دباغة... [ca. 4 words] ... وسوق] (٥) اللحامين (?) وغير [هم] من ... والبيع والشرا <ء> وان لا يحجر على البياعة (?) ويستبـ[ب]وا على جاري عادتـ[هم] القديمة والارض المجاورة لدار... (?) مشيخة [ca. 10 words] (٦) التجار بها لا جباية ولا شحانه؟ وابطال ما جدد شيخ التجار (?) عليهم وان لا يؤخذ من سوق الحمير الا .... [some 25 illegible or badly damaged words.]

Basmalah. It has been decreed by the noble, supreme, lordly, sultanic, order of al-Malik al-Ashraf Sayf ad-Dīn Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī, may Allah perpetuate his kingship and sultanate, when his noble stirrup arrived in the province of Gaza...the vineyard, and that the brokers should not be opposed, and that no vegetable should be taken from them but for its price, and that they should not be molested in any way, and that nothing should be taken from the merchants but in its price, and that neither they nor the brokers should be charged (with anything unjustly), and that the camels of the people and their sheep and cattle should not be confiscated(?) ... (And that they should not) be opposed in any other way without authority...presentation... in the vineyard and not from the shepherd...from the animals something grazing... .. takes and no...the governor from it/them, except for what ...testified about it. No *muhtasib* (market inspector), or water carriers (*saqqāyīn*), or torch lighters (*mashā'iliyyah*), or the religious functionaries (scholars—*ulamā'*) are authorized to charge from the vegetable buckets (?), and possession should be given to those who have the right to it. There should not be taken from the spinning market or from the tanners ...and the butchers market and others... and the buying and selling; and that the sellers should not be deprived of their rights, and that they should be allowed to make a living according to their routine, previous practice. And the land which is in the vicinity to the house of...the headship ... .. the merchants in it/them; there are no duties and no... and the abolition of what had been imposed without precedent by the chief of the merchants(?) on them, and that from the donkeys market only ...should be taken...

This important inscription was already seriously damaged, and 20-25 words at the end of it, in addition to a similar number throughout the text, were virtually destroyed or illegible, when van Berchem saw it. I do not have a copy or photograph of it to attempt any additional suggestions to his reading presented here. In his reference to this inscription (*CIA, loc. cit.* above) van Berchem sums up the main message of the inscription in one sentence: “this unedited decree of Sultan Ghawrī in the grand Mosque of Gaza prohibits the market inspector (*muhtasib*), the *mashā'iliyyah* and the other employees from pre-imposing certain duties on vegetables, if I understood correctly this very corrupted text.”

Since economic life in Gaza continued in the same manner and was even boosted after the Ottoman conquest, a few of the terms that appear in the inscription can be elucidated from information supplied by the documents of the Ottoman

Qānūnnāmeḥ of Gaza from the sixteen century. Gaza recovered quickly from the shock of the conquest and developed into a very prosperous trade and agricultural centre. (Cohen-Lewis, 1978:54) The detailed tax registers of the city from the sixteenth century provide vivid information about its economic life and the bureaucracy connected with it. Gaza produced vegetables which were sold in a special vegetable market—*sūq al-khuḍar*—where both local and imported vegetables were sold. The first were marketed by the *dallāl* (broker), the second by the official agency of *dār al-wakālah*. The *dallāl* is the synonym of *simsār*, pl. *samāsir*, as in this inscription; both terms mean broker, middleman. They are exempted in this inscription from all taxes and duties which they had to pay.

Gaza also produced and exported fruit, particularly dates, which were sold in special baskets called *qawṣarah* (pl. *qawāṣir*), and it had vineyards and orchards. In addition to the vegetable and fruit market, Gaza also had an animal market—*sūq ad-dawāb*—in which donkeys, mules, camels, sheep and cattle were sold. In the documents, the animal market is specified according to the type of the animals sold in it such as *sūq al-ḥamīr*, the donkey market. (L. 6 in the inscription). We also learn from the Qānūnnāmeḥ of Gaza about the industry of the city. It had a spinning and dyeing market—*sūq al-ghazl wa-aṣ-ṣibāghah*. (*ibid.*, 62) Our inscription speaks about spinning and tanning. (L.4) Dyeing and tanning usually go together and tanners and dyers of cloth are usually in the same industrial area.

The inscription also mentions a few functionaries that were connected with the economic activity in the city; all of whom were in one way or another attached to the authorities. The *muḥtasib*, the market inspector, was a government official. His main function was to collect the taxes imposed on the market activities (*iḥtisāb*), these also included brokerage dues. (Cohen-Lewis, 1978:46). Next to the *muḥtasib* in the inscription we have two more functions: the *mashā'iliyyah* (sing. *mashā'ilī*) and the *saqqāyīn* (sing. *saqqā*). The first refers to torch (*mash'al* pl. *mashā'il*) lighters, the second to water bearers. In which way could these functionaries, if one may call them so, extract unjust payment? I imagine that the water supply and the lighting of torches for special functions at night (see Lane, *Manners and Customs*, 1908:136, 175; CIA, *Jérusalem*, “*Haram*” 2:320, n.7 and references there) were the responsibility of the government, and were paid for from the public budget. In time, so it seems, the fire- and water-men began to extract money from the public, which this inscription tries to stop. The inscription supplies us with another insight, which reveals a further side of daily life in the city. Apparently, the officials and semi-officials like the ‘*ulamā*’, water bearers, and fire lighters used to help themselves to fruit, vegetables and other products sold by the merchants in their shops, without payment. The decree orders the stopping of this practice, which is tantamount to theft.

As Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī only visited Gaza in Jumādā I, 922 (began 3 June 1516) (Ghazzī, *Kawākib*, 1945, 1:295); the decree must be from this year since he died a few months later.

### Mosque (Maqām) of Shaykh ‘Alī al-Munṭār

The designation of the site, situated in the south east of the city on Tell al-Munṭār as a mosque, appears in van Berchem’s notes: “Mosque of Shaikh al-Munṭār. A small sanctuary, without architectural interest, marks the traditional site where Samson, whom the Arab legend calls Abū l-‘Azim, toppled the columns of the Philistine temple.” (MvB Coll. “Gaza”) Hence, the names “Tell Abū al-‘Azim” and “Tell Abū al-‘Azm.” (See above No. 45 for the year 765 for details. Gatt’s plan of Gaza B6)

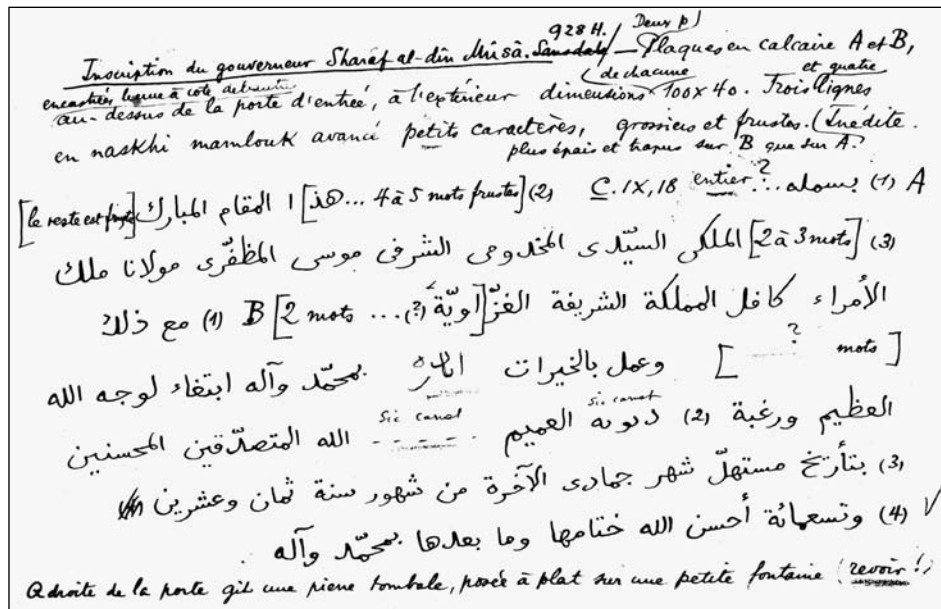
79

GAZA 928

Reconstruction text

1 Jumādā II, 928/28 April 1522

Two slabs of limestone, A and B, each 1.00x0.40m. embedded one beside the other, above the entrance door of Maqām ‘Alī al-Munṭār. 3 and 4 lines; adorned Mamlūk *naskhū*. No photograph. Publication: MvB Coll. “Gaza” env. 24, c.VII, 109-110. Pl. 20.



Pl. 20 MvB copy of inscription No. 79

(A) ١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم انما يعمر [مساجد الله من امن بالله واليوم الآخر واقام  
 الصلاة واتى الزكاة ولم يخش الا الله فعسى اولئك ان يكونوا من المهتدين] (?) [٢] [4-5 words]  
 ... هذا المقام المبارك [the rest is illegible] [٣] [2-3 words] الملكي السيدي المخدومي الشرفي  
 موسى المظفري مولانا ملك الامراء <ء> كافل المملكة الشريفة الغز [اوية؟/ية ... [2 words]

(B) ١) مع ذلك [some words] وعمل بالخيرات ... [1-2 words] بمحمد وآله ابتغا <ء> لوجه  
 الله العظيم ورغبة ٢) [لثوابه] العميم [رحم(?)]] الله المتصدقين المحسنين ٣) بتاريخ مستهل  
 شهر جمادى الآخرة من شهور سنة ثمان وعشرين ٤) وتسعمائة احسن الله ختامها وما بعدها  
 بمحمد وآله

A. Basmalah. Q. 9:18 (complete?) ... (Has ordered the building) of this blessed sanctuary (the great amīr) ... al-Malikī (the ruler), as-Sayyidī (the master), al-Makhdūmī (the one who is served) Sharaf ad-Dīn Mūsā al-Muẓaffarī, our lord the king of the amīrs the governor of the province of Gaza ... B. with that, and dispensed with charitable deeds (placing his confidence?) in Muḥammad and his family, seeking to please Allah, the most great, and yearning (to gain his) all embracing (reward) (May?) Allah (pardon) the beneficent and the charitable people. On the first of the month of Jumādā II of the months of the year 928 (=28 April 1522). May Allah cause it to end well, and bestow goodness on what follows it through Muḥammad and his family.

In the translation I tried to guess some parts of the missing text, to give more coherence to the inscription. Fortunately, we have the excellent copy that van Berchem prepared in 1894. He wanted to see the inscription once again, as he noted at the end of this copy, but it seems that he never did.

L.2: [لثوابه] العميم See No. 69 above.

A L.3: الملكي Qalqashandī explains that the *lām* is in *fathah* in the *nisbah* to *malik* following the rule of *nasab* when creating the *nisbah* “*namarī*” from *namir*. (Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, 6:30) For *as-sayyidī* and *al-makhdūmī* see *idem*, *vol.cit.*, 16, 27.

المظفري is one of the sultanic titles, and a title conferred on the greatest military commanders (*akābir arbāb as-suyūf*). (*Ibid.*, 27)

Four years into the Ottoman rule there is no sign of any change in the language of the inscription. The titles, the style, and even the description of the office relating to the administrative division of the various provinces are the same as before (*kāfil al-mamlakah al-gazziyyah*).

80

GAZA 931

Tell 'Alī al-Munṭār

Epitaph of a Muslim

1 Rabī' I 931/27 Dec. 1524

A slab of limestone, 1.04x0.31x0.06 kept in storage at the Public Works Department, Municipality of Gaza. 8 lines, primitive provincial *naskhī*, points, many vowels; incised. Bands divide the lines. Fig. 63.

(١) بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ (٢) کُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذٰئِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ هٰذَا (٣) قَبْرِ الْعَبْدِ الْفَقِیْرِ اِلَى اللّٰهِ (٤) تَعَالَى  
 مِصْطَفٰی مَمْلُوکٍ مَّتَوَلٰی (٥) غَزَّةَ وَالْقُدْسِ وَالرَّمْلَةَ (٦) عَلٰی بَاک (!) تَوَفَا (!) فِی مَسْتَهْلٍ رَّبِیْعِ  
 (٧) الْاَوَّلِ سَنَت (!) اِحْد (!) وَثَلَاثِیْن (!) (٨) وَتَسْعَمٰیة رَحْمَه اللّٰهِ تَعَالَى

Basmalah. Every soul shall taste death. (Q. 3:185; 21:35; 29:57. Trans. Arberry) This is the tomb of the slave who is in need of Allah the Exalted, Muṣṭafā the Mamlūk of 'Alī Bāk the governor (?) of Gaza, Jerusalem and Ramlah. He died on 1 Rabī' I 931 (27 December, 1524)

Note that the vowels in the above reading are in the inscription. A later hand blackened the letters.

The inscription was brought to the storerooms of the Municipal Public Works Department in Gaza from the cemetery on Tell 'Alī al-Munṭār. The burial next to the sanctuary of this saint seems to have been reserved for special persons. In this case this was the Mamlūk of the governor.

L.4: The word *mutawallī* at the end of the line is a wild guess, but it is not impossible since the hand, which blackened the inscription, did not touch some unclear letters. I also thought of *wālī* because of what seems to me a *lām* and *yā'* at the end of the line. However, *wālī* was not a title used by the Ottomans at such an early period, and should be ruled out. The letters *mīm*, *tā'* and *wāw* of *mutawallī* could be hiding in the space before the vertical long line of the *lām*(?). The short blackened diagonal line, which looks like a letter, is part of a diagonal scratch crossing lines 4 and 5 of the inscription, from left to right. The only other possibility that comes to my mind is to read *bāy* for sanjaq-beg which was the official title of the governor of Gaza who was the highest ranking governor in Palestine. (Heyd, 1960:40) This is exactly the title used here for 'Alī, the master of the deceased Mamlūk. As usual in the Mamlūk period, it is spelt *bāy* with long *alif*. The term *wālī* was used in the Mamlūk period as general word for governor, but not necessarily as an official title. Here the official title is attached to the name: 'Alī Bāk or Beg. (Cf. Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ*, 5:207, 496; 7:157, 171)

81

Gaza 955

Jāmi‘ ash-Shaykh Khālid

Epitaph of Shaykh Khālid 749/1348

Restoration text

Jumādā I 955/ June 1548

A slab of marble, 1.20x0.60m. (Husseini: 1.05x0.50m.), on the tomb in the court of the sanctuary of Shaykh Khālid to the east of the main entrance gate to the mosque. For details about the mosque, its sketch plan, and its inscriptions see above No. 57. 3 lines, Mamlūk *naskhī*, medium size, crowded, worn out letters. Fig. 64 (IAA squeeze photo No. 1853. IAA photo No. 33769). Publication: MvB Coll. “Gaza” env. 24 and c.VI, 95-96; Husseini, IAA files “Gaza” Sh. Khālid; ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, *Ta’rīkh Ghazzah*, 347-348 (with many mistakes).

١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم فانظر الى اثر رحمت الله كيف يُحيي الارض بعد موتها جدد هذا  
المكان المبارك ٢) المحتوي على ضريح ولي الله تعالى سيدي خالد بن شبيب المتوفي الى رحمة  
الله تعالى في سنة تسع واربعين وسبعماية ناظره ٣) الشيخ شهاب الدين احمد بن ابراهيم  
المقدسي الانصاري في اوائل شهر جمادى الاولى سنة خمس وخمسين وتسعمائة

Basmalah. And look at the results of Allah’s mercy, how He quickeneth the earth after it has become dead. (Q. 30:50. Trans. after Bell, Q. 30:49). Has restored this blessed place which includes the tomb of the friend of Allah the Exalted, the saint, Khālid b. Shabīb who died (lit. passed unto Allah’s mercy) in the year 749 (=1348-9), its superintendent, the Shaykh Shihāb ad-Dīn Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm al-Maqdisī al-Anṣārī at the beginning of Jumādā I, 955 (=9 June 1548).

L.2: MvB سيدنا Read سيدي, the title which precedes the name of a saint especially in the Maghrib. The *yā’* can easily be seen above the *dāl*.

### Khān al-Kittān—the Linen Khān

The Khān is situated in the centre of the city at the angle of two lanes some 150m. to the north of the Great Mosque, in the northern part of the bazaar quarter (Gatt Plan of Gaza D4).

82

GAZA 962

Endowment, *waqf* text

Dhū al-Ḥijjah 962/17 Oct.-15 Nov.1555

A slab of limestone, 0.80x0.40m. above a great door (restored and modernized) in Khān al-Kittān. 2 lines, Mamlūk style Ottoman *naskhī*, medium size characters, points, no vowels; in relief. No photograph. Publication: MvB Coll. env. 24 c.VII, 56.

(١) بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ هٰذَا [١] الْخَانِ (٢) وَقَفَ مَوْلَانَا مُصْطَفٰی پَاشَا فِی شَهْرِ ذِی الْحِجَّةِ  
سنة ٩٦٢

Basmalah. This Khān is the waqf of our lord Muṣṭafā Pasha in the month of Dhū al-Ḥijjah 962 (began 17 October 1555).

Muṣṭafā Pasha could well be Lālā Muṣṭafā Pasha who served as the first Ottoman governor of the *Tihāma* after the conquest of Yemen 1539-1540. In 1554, he commissioned the building of a complex of a mosque and funerary buildings outside *Zabūd*, all in the Ottoman style which was different from the local architecture.

L.2: I read the first word in this line “*waqf*,” but it can also be a verb “*waqafa*,” and then the translation reads: “Has endowed this *khān* as a *waqf* our lord etc.” I prefer the first reading.

83

GAZA 965

Jāmi‘ Kātib al-Wilāyah

Construction text

Beginning of Dhū al-Qa‘dah 965/Middle Aug. 1558

A slab of marble, 1.40x0.30m. above the entrance door of Jāmi‘ Kātib al-Wilāyah (see above Nos. 65, 72). 2 lines, Mamlūk style Ottoman *naskhī*, small to medium size characters, white over green background; in relief. The inscription is framed and a band divides the lines. Pl. 21. Figs. 65, 65a, 65b (IAA squeeze Nos. 1823, 1824). Publication: ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, *Ta’rīkh Ghazzah*, 339; MvB Coll. “Gaza,” env. 24, c.VII, 135.



Pl. 21 Gaza 965 (995)

١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم انما يعمر مساجد الله من امن بالله واليوم الاخر واقام الصلاة  
 واتي الزكات (!) ولم يخش الا الله ٢) أمر بانشا <ء> هذا المسجد المبارك العبد الفقير احمد بك  
 كاتب الولاية في اوائل ذي القعدة سنة ٩٦٥

Basmalah. Q 9:18 (first part, until *illā allāh*). Has ordered the foundation of this blessed mosque the needy slave (for the mercy of Allah) Aḥmad Bek Kātib al-Wilāyah (government secretary) at the beginning of Dhū al-Qa‘dah 965 (began 15 August 1558). [or: beginning of Dhū al-Qa‘dah 995 (=early Oct. 1587).]

MvB notes: “This text provides the explanation for the popular name Kātib al-Wilāyah. Similar to many other inscriptions from Gaza, it also proves that the word *inshā*’ is synonymous with *‘imārah* or *tajdīd*, since the inscription of the minaret (Fig. 65 for the year 835) proves that it is also only a restoration.” Like ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, van Berchen also heard some people in Gaza suggesting that instead of Kātib al-Wilāyah the name should be pronounced Kātib al-Awliyā’ which actually means nothing, for what does “the Secretary of the Saints” mean? In his review of the monuments of Gaza, van Berchem refers to “Djāmi‘ Kātib al-auliyā” remarking: “this is what my carnet gives (VII, 71). Gatt’s plan and his list offer *K. wilāyāt*. The exact form and the origin of this name should be Kātib al-wilāyat, that is to say secretary of the provincial government, who restored the edifice in 965.”

On 6 February 1923, Leo A. Mayer, then a junior inspector in the newly established British Department of Antiquities, prepared a preliminary survey of the Muslim monuments in Gaza in which he listed the inscriptions of “Kātib al-Wilāyah 1) Mosque by Īnāl al-‘Alāṭ: 835 AH (with blazon). 2) Aḥmad Bek 995. 3) Fragment of waqf inscription without name and date mentioning a Bāb al-Baḥr (Sea Gate) in Gaza.” (IAA “Gaza” file)

L.1: The spelling of the words *ṣalāt* and *zakāt* does not follow the Qur’ānic spelling. Both words are written with *lām alif* instead of *wāw* (this is the common spelling in most of the inscriptions), and the word *zakāt* is written with a “long” *tā*’.

L.2: The date is written in digits, which began to replace the date in words in the first third of the 10<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> century. The year 995, suggested by Mayer for our inscription, is interesting. This is also the date that ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif (*loc. cit.*) gives in his reading. On

the other hand, van Berchem is sure about his reading of the date—965. Examining the photograph of the squeeze very closely with the help of enlargements (Fig. 65b), I am sure that van Berchem's reading is the correct one. The number ٦ was engraved in such a way that it could easily be confused with a ٩ with a broken top.

**Madfan (Maqbarat) Āl Riḍwān  
Riḍwān Family graveyard**

A graveyard to the south of the Great Mosque (Ārif al-Ārif 1943:278; Gatt Plan of Gaza D5). Gatt remarks that Āl Riḍwān was the name of the descendents of the former Pasha of Gaza, and because of this they are also called Dār al-Bāshā, the family of the Pasha, and the graveyard, Maqbarat al-Bāshā. (*ZDPV*, 11, 1888:151) The place was described by Husseini as “a few graves built with marble stones. One grave with an inscribed marble slab”. The following is Husseini's reading in his report. (IAA archive, “Gaza” file No. 233 date: 28 August 1942)

84

GAZA 971

Epitaph of a Muslim

24 Rajab 971/8 March 1564

A slab of marble, no details and no photograph available. 5 lines, early Ottoman *naskhī*. Publication: Husseini (IAA *loc. cit.*)

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم (٢) هذا قبر السعيد الشهيد (٣) سرور بن عبد الله (٤) المندرج الى  
رحمة الله تعالى (٥) في ٢٤ شهر رجب ٩٧١

Basmalah. This is the tomb of the happy one, the martyr, Surūr b. ‘Abdallah who passed away unto the mercy of Allah the Exalted, on 24 Rajab, 971(8 March 1564).

L.5: Since I do not have a photograph of this inscription, it is difficult to know whether the date was written in digits or in words. Since Husseini's report was short, made, so it seems, in haste, it is very possible that he transcribed the words into digits. However, in this period the dates in the inscriptions, particularly on gravestones, already appear in digits, so the report may well be accurate.

c.974/1566

A fragment of a slab of marble, 0.75x0.40m. (squeeze measurements), kept in the storeroom of the Great Mosque. 2 lines, monumental, highly artistic, Mamlūk-early Ottoman *naskhī*, points, some vowels and signs; in relief. Fig. 66 (IAA squeeze photo No. 4182)

(١) ناصر الدنيا والدين سلطان الاسلام والمسلمين محيي العدل في العالمين منصف المظلومين  
من الظالمين قاتل الكفرة والمشركين مبيد الطغاة ومهلك المارقين قانع المبتدعين جامع كلمة  
[الإيمان] (٢)... بساط الأرض براً وبحراً على يد الفقير الى الله عبد الرحمن <بن> الفار الزيني  
صوباش الجيوش المنصور [ة] بغزة المحر [وسة]...

(...the protector of the world and of the Faith, the Sultan of Islam and the Muslims, the reviver of justice) on earth, the saver of the oppressed from the oppressors, the killer of the infidels and the polytheists, the eradicator of the rebels, and the slayer of the heretics, the suppressor of the introducers of novelties, the unifier of the Faith...(the ruler over) the platform of the globe on land and sea. This was (accomplished) by him who is in need of Allah the Exalted, ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān al-Fār al-Zaynī (or: Zayn ad-Dīn ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān (b.?) al-Fār), the commander (*Ṣūbāshī*=*Sū-bāṣī*) of the victorious army in Gaza, the (divinely) protected...

This was a long inscription, which commemorated, no doubt, an important building or reconstruction project in the Grand Mosque or its near vicinity from which ruins it was retrieved. The monumental script is very elaborate, and belongs to the style used for some of the inscriptions of Sultan Sulaymān II (Qanūnī) “The Magnificent” (926/1529-974/1566). It is very similar to the style of the inscription over the mihrāb of the Dome of the Chain (*qubbat as-silsilah*) in Jerusalem (*cf. CIA, Jérusalem*, 3, pl. CV of No. 196). This is the reason for attributing the inscription to the time of this Sultan. I chose the date of his death, 974/1566, arbitrarily, for the sake of keeping the inscriptions in order.

On the whole, the reading of the inscription posed no particular problems, however the missing parts at the beginning and the end, leave a gap concerning the building project and the exact date.

L. 1: All the honorific titles in this line that refer to the sultan are well known from Mamlūk protocol and had been used for the sultans in Egypt, particularly the latter ones. (*Qalqashandī, Ṣubḥ*, 6:124, quoting two sources) For the title قاتل الكفرة

والمشركين etc. see for instance the inscription of Qāyit Bāy from Jerusalem, *CIA, Jérusalem, "Ville,"* 1:339 No. 103.

The title قانع البدعة appears in Qalqashandī's report in a similar form, قانع البدعة "the suppressor of novel doctrines." This title was used for the sultan as well as for the great 'ulamā', ("akābir al-'ulamā." *Ṣubḥ*, 6:124 for the sultan; 6:63 for 'ālīms. Cf. *CIA, Jérusalem "Ville,"* 1:339)

مبيد الطغاة: In one of his documents Qalqashandī (*Ṣubḥ*, 6:124) has: مبيد الطغاة والبلغاة والكفار.

جامع كلمة الإيمان is one of the sultan's honorific titles.)*Ibid.*, 6:124 ll.4, 12) I added the missing word (*al-īmān*) accordingly.

L.2: بساط الأرض etc. The previous words referred to the sultan's rule, which is described here as extending over the whole earth (*bisāṭ al-arḍ*) on land and sea (*barran wa-baḥran*). This idea appears in Mamlūk documents speaking about the sultan as *malik al-baḥrayn*, the ruler of the two seas, that is to say, the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. In the case of the Ottoman Sultan, it refers to the vast territory of his empire, and the three seas over which he ruled.

It is not surprising that the honorific titles of the Mamlūk sultans were transferred to the early Ottomans, and were used in the inscriptions from the time of Sulaymān II and after him (cf. for instance *CIA, Jérusalem, "ville,"* 1, No. 103; "*Haram,"* 2, Nos. 188, 282). It should be admitted, however, that we do not have such an inflation of titles from his time as we find in Qalqashandī's report about the late Mamlūk protocol. For this reason this inscription could have been attributed to one of the late Mamlūk sultans, such as Qayit Bāy for instance. What eliminates such a possibility is the official title *ṣūbāshi*, or in Turkish spelling: *su-başı*, which appears in l.2. "In the sixteenth century this official's functions were those of the prefect of the police in the service of the Sanjaq-Beg." (Heyd, 1960:56, note to No. 10) In this inscription his function is well defined: he is the commander of the army unit stationed in Gaza. He could be regarded, I suppose, as the local commander of the police.

His name is given as az-Zaynī 'Abd ar-Raḥmān al-Fār. Al-Zaynī is usually a shortened form of Zayn ad-Dīn. I do not know how al-Fār is connected with the name if I am reading this word correctly. The remote possibility of "ibn al-Fār" has been suggested.

### The Rifā'iyyah Well

One of the four main public wells of Gaza. In addition to many private wells both in the city and the agricultural area around it that were called *sawāqī* (pl. of *sāqiyah*, draw-well, or bucket-well, for both drinking water and irrigation, hence the name). The wells were relatively easy to dig, since the underground water in this area is

near the surface and could be reached at a depth of 30-40m. above sea level. The information below was recorded by ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, who is also the only source for the following inscription. This particular well is said to have been dug in 1285/1868-69 by Aḥmad Rif‘at Bak ash-Sharkasī (the Circassian), the *mutasallim* of Gaza at the time. However, the following inscription attests to the fact that the well was in use over three hundred years earlier. It is possible that this is the well called Bi‘r al-Burj the Well of the Tower, which the *mutasallim* in the 19<sup>th</sup> century only cleaned and returned to use (not for a long time, due to the small amount of water it yielded). This particular well does not appear in Gatt’s list under this name (Gatt, *ZDPV*, 11, 1888:156-158).

86

GAZA 976

Construction text

976/1568-69

A slab of stone, (no measurements or other technical details) fixed on the public fountain of the Rifā‘iyyah well, commemorating the building of a *Sabīl* using its water. Publication: ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, *Ta’rīkh Ghazzah*, 282, and photograph of a modern *Sabīl*.

هو ابن المصطفى باشا تكون الجنة مثواه  
سبيل الله يا عطشان بسم الله  
سنة ٩٧٦

(١) بناه بهرام بك امير اللوا <ء>  
(٢) فلما انتهى تأسيس هذا قيل للتاريخ

Has built it Bahrām Bak (Beg) the district governor

He is the son of al-Muṣṭafā Pasha may Paradise be his dwelling place.

And when the foundation of this was finished, the date was evoked:

The fountain (for the sake of) Allah, O thirsty! In the name of Allah.

The year 976 (= 1568-69)

The reading of ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif cannot be accurate, particularly since the numerical value of *سبيل الله يا عطشان بسم الله*, which refers to the date, only adds up to 776 and not to 976. There must have been another word or two, with the numerical value of 200, which were left out in this reading. (I can think about *سَبَّحَ قُل* = 200 added before *سبيل الله يا عطشان سَبَّحَ قُل بسم الله* rendering the last hemisphere: *سبيل الله يا عطشان سَبَّحَ قُل بسم الله* “The fountain for the sake of Allah O, thirsty! give praise, say: in the name of Allah”).

The other reservation about the reading is that, since the inscription is a two line poem, one would not expect such a broken metre (although this is not a serious consideration).

This inscription has important historical value since it leads us to the early career of the Āl Riḍwān family in Gaza (see No. 84 above). A few years after the Ottoman conquest, members of the family emerged as the hereditary Sanjaq-Begs of Gaza. The first to receive this position, apparently in 931/1524, was Kara Şāhīn Muştafā (later: Pasha) who was the slave (*köle*) of Sultan Sulaymān II. (Heyd, 1960:186, n.2) In an Ottoman document from 959/1552, he is already mentioned as “formerly beg of the sanjaq of Gaza,” (*ibid.*, 115-116) which means that by then he was already en route to a higher position and the rule in Gaza had been inherited by one of his sons, Riḍwān. It should be noted that the sanjaq-beg of Gaza was regarded as the highest-ranking Ottoman governor in Palestine, due to the high income allotted to him. Because of this he could rise quickly to the position of *beglerbeg*. Indeed, a few governors of Gaza in the sixteenth century, and early seventeenth century were promoted from the governorship of the Sanjaq to become *beglerbegs* of a province. Thus in 972/1564-5 when Riḍwān, Muştafā’s son, was the Sanjaq-Beg of Gaza he was appointed as the governor general of the province of Yemen. Sinān Beg, who was also Sanjaq-Beg of Gaza, was promoted to Grand Vizier. In this inscription we learn about another son of Muştafā, Bahrām (“he is the son of al-Muştafā”) who built the Sabīl in Gaza, one of the many building projects connected with the name of the family.

After two years in Yemen, Riḍwān was dismissed, and some time later became the Sanjaq-Beg of Gaza for the second time, and subsequently the *beglerbeg* of a few more provinces. In 979/1571 his name appeared on two documents issued in Istanbul concerning the state of security in the country. (*Ibid.*, 105-106)

Riḍwān was followed by his son Aḥmad who, like his father and grandfather, displayed much interest in the safety of the main route to Egypt, and the condition of the fortresses along this road. (*ibid.*, Docs. 49, 52, 60, 96) He served as the Sanjaq-Beg of Gaza for almost 30 years. In 1099/1600-1 he resigned in favor of one of his sons. He died in 1015/1606-7. (Muḥibbī, 1:187-189)

Aḥmad was followed by his son Ḥasan known already as Ḥasan Pasha, and he in turn was followed by his son Ḥusayn (Muḥibbī 2:16, 88; Heyd, 1960:186, n.2), whom the traveller Evliyā Çelebī visited and about whom he left us a very favorable description. Evliyā Çelebī visited Palestine for the first time in 1059/end 1649, and again in 1071/1670-71. His meeting with Ḥusayn, who assumed the governorship of Gaza in 1660, took place during his second visit. In addition to describing the magnanimity and culture of the governor, Evliā also left us a very detailed description of Gaza in his time. In it the traveller described in great detail the physical features

of the city, its economic conditions, its population, its religious life, its agriculture, its industry, and its major buildings including the Great Mosque, the market, the bathhouses, and so on. (See copy in Arabic, ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, 1943:178-182).

The time of Ḥusayn b. Ḥasan Pasha was a period of great prosperity and development for the Sanjaq of Gaza in general, and the city of Gaza in particular. The city gained such importance that it was said that its governor made it the capital of Palestine. Ḥusayn developed very good relations, both political and economic, with the French whose representative, the Chevalier D’Arvieux, resided in Sidon as quasi-consul of France. D’Arvieux’s memoirs are an excellent source for life in Palestine in the seventeenth century. From him we have detailed reports about Ḥusayn Pasha and his brother Mūsā. (See No. 87 below.) The prosperity of Gaza and great parts of the country were the outcome of the safety on the main roads and the countryside which Ḥusayn established by winning over the leaders of the Bedouin tribes, and securing their friendship. As a consequence they refrained from their usual raids on the countryside, and on the sedentary settlements.

Ḥusayn was also kind to non-Muslims, mainly the Jewish and Christian communities in Gaza. He even allowed the Christians to build a new church. In 1663 he was compelled to help another governor against some rebellious Bedouins, from which expedition he emerged defeated and disgraced. He was summoned to Istanbul and there his enemies succeeded in having him executed. The governorship of Gaza was given to his brother Mūsā, who was far more cautious than him and far less liberal in his attitude to the non-Muslims. He left behind an inscription over the small *mīhrāb* of the Great Mosque. (Meyer, 1907:97-978)

As noted by Gatt, Āl Riḍwān, came to be known as the House of the Pasha, due to the fact that many of the family members were Pashas, particularly Muṣṭafā Pasha the founder of the family. The graveyard of the family is still called “*Madfan or Maqbarat Āl Riḍwān*,” which Gatt mistakenly wrote and transcribed ar-Riḍwān. (*ZDPV*, 11, 1888:151)

In Gaza, Āl Riḍwān accumulated great wealth, particularly agricultural land and many buildings. They also dedicated a considerable amount of their wealth as *waqf* and donated many public buildings. In their time, the minaret of the Great Mosque was built anew as were two new minarets for mosques in the Sajā‘iyyah Quarter. They built a mosque in the city fortress, reconstructed the old covered market—the Qaysāriyyah—the Khān az-Zayt, Ḥammām as-Samrah, the governor’s palace, which was in fact their own residence (*ad-Dabawīyyā*), and many more. (‘Ārif al-‘Ārif 1943: 176-177)

87

GAZA 1074

Construction text

1074/1663

The only report about the following inscription is in the literary sources:

“The inscription over the small *mihṛāb* in the Great Mosque was set up by Mūsā Pasha in the year 1663 (AH 1074-5)”. (Meyer, 1907:98)

Mūsā Pasha was the brother of Ḥusayn Pasha Āl Riḍwān (governor of Gaza 1660-1663). The circumstances of his succession to his brother’s position are described in No. 86.

88

GAZA 1096

Shaykh (Nabī) Ilyās

?

1096/1685

A small inscription, embedded on a door in the vaulted room in Shaykh Ilyās. Mentioned by van Berchem. MvB Coll. “Gaza,” env. 24. No copy, no details. On the sanctuary see No. 11 above.

89

GAZA 1123

Shaykh Khālīd

?

1123/1711

On the sanctuary see No. 57 above.

a. A slab of limestone, 1.00x0.20m., above the entrance door of the Mosque of Shaykh Khālīd in the ad-Daraj quarter. Mentioned by van Berchem, MvB Coll. “Gaza,” env. 24. No copy.

b. A marble column, embedded in the eastern wall of the mosque, bearing a funerary inscription in *naskhī*. Mentioned by van Berchem, MvB Coll. env. 24. No copy.

90

GAZA 1156  
Jāmi' ash-Sham'ah  
Construction text(?)

1156?/1743

On the mosque see No. 26 above.

A slab of limestone, 0.35x0.35m. fixed above the lintel of a gate opposite Jāmi' ash-Sham'ah. 5 lines, primitive script, no points, no vowels; incised. Fig. 67 (IAA squeeze photo No. 1851)

١) بسم الله الرحمن ٢) الرحيم انشأ هذا ٣) المكان المبارك ٤) بعد دماره ؟...٥) ١١٥٦

Basmalah. Has founded this blessed place after its ruin ... 1156.

The inscription was produced by a non-professional hand, which makes its reading very difficult. This is the most I could extract from it. The puzzling part is what could be the date. It seems to have been written from right to left. The digits are clear but, if we read from left to right, the number 6511 means nothing. For this reason I think that the numbers should be read along with the text in the same direction, from right to left: 1156/1743. The inscription is an example of a “village inscription.” It is not clear from the report in the IAA archives where the inscription was actually fixed. On the squeeze we find: “Jāmi' esh-Sham'a inscription above the lintel”. The date of the squeeze is 7 January, 1931. However, in the registration entry it was written: “Built into arch. Side road, oppos. Jāmi' to N. Fragment.” According to this, the inscription was not fixed on the mosque itself, but on an arch opposite it. It seems to commemorate some local work, a minor building, pathetically emulating the language of the monumental inscriptions.

91

GAZA 1203  
Great Mosque  
Reconstruction text

1203/1788-89

A slab of marble, 1.00x0.40m. on a pillar at the eastern side of the courtyard of the Great Mosque. 3 lines divided into 9 frames by two horizontal and two vertical

bands intersecting each other. In the following reading the number of each one of the frames appears after the number of the line and separated by a dot: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3; 2.1, 2.2, etc. Professional Ottoman *naskhī*, points, a few vowels and signs, in relief. Fig. 68. Publication: MvB Coll. “Gaza,” env. 24, c.VII, 112; ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, *Ta’rīkh Ghazzah*, 335.

١٠١) جدد هذه المنارة (٢.١) وتم للمسجد بها شعاره (٣.١) ورمَّ هذا الصهريج  
 ١٠٢) واتي بهذا الحوض البهيج (٢.٢) ابتغا<ء> مرضاة السلام (٣.٢) امير الامرا<ء>  
 الكرام  
 ١٠٣) درويش حسن باشا (٢.٣) متصرف غزة بلغه الله ما شا (٣.٣) عام ثلاثة ومايتين والف  
 ١٢٠٣

Has reconstructed this minaret, and with it the characteristic feature of the mosque has been completed. He restored this water tank, and constructed this beautiful basin seeking to please Peace, the amīr who is above all the noble amīrs, Darwīsh Ḥasan Pasha the district officer of Gaza. May Allah bestow on him whatever he wishes. The year 1203 (=1788-89).

Another inscription of Darwīsh Ḥasan Pasha, was mentioned by van Berchem (c. VII, 112) which he did not copy. See the following entry No. 92.)

L.1.2: *Shi‘āruhu*, read *shi‘āra* to rhyme with *manārah*.

L.1.3: *Wa-ramma* not *wa-lāma* (correct ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, *loc. cit.*)

L.2.1: *Ḥawḍ* here means the basin that is used for ablution; the *ṣihrīj* supplies it with water.

L.2.2: The inscription is written in rhyming prose (*ṣihrīj—bahīj*; *salām—kirām*; *bāshā—ma shā*). For this reason, in order to rhyme with *kirām* the name of Allah, or one of his more frequently used names, was replaced here by *salām*, which is also one of His Beautiful Names.

L.3.1: Ḥasan not Ḥusayn (correct ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif, *loc. cit.*)

Ll.3.1, 3.2: Note *mā shā* necessary for the rhyme with *bāshā*, and not *mā shā’a*.

92

GAZA 1203a  
Great Mosque  
Construction text

1203/1788-89

1230 ?/1814-15

Three slabs of marble, fixed together on a pillar at the eastern side of the courtyard of the Great Mosque, near the former inscription (No. 91). All three, 1.20x0.45m. (approx.). 3 lines divided into 12 frames, professional Ottoman *naskhī*, points, some vowels and signs; in relief. Fig. 68a. Mentioned by van Berchem MvB Coll. c.VII, 112.

١.١) نظام أمر من قد سمي (٢.١) حجازي حسن باشا شفا الصدور (٣.١) يجاهد في الله يرجو  
الرضى (٤.١) محاميا عنا يروم الأجور

١.٢) سيعطيه مولاي ما يرتجي (٢.٢) ويفتح اليه جميع الثغور (٣.٢) ودرويش باشا امر العلا  
٤.٣) أدام الهي اليه السرور

١.٣) اقام المنارة تراكا (؟) (٢.٣) أصاب /اضات (؟) حماه صلاة البكور (٣.٣) اليه أُوْرِّخ...  
٤.٣) الا الى الله تصير الأمور سنة ١٢٠٣

A rule by the order of he who is called Ḥijāzī Ḥasan Pasha brought solace to the chests. He participated in the Holy War for the sake of Allah, protecting us, seeking the (divine) rewards. My Lord will bestow on him that which he anticipates, and there will fall into his hands all the frontier strongholds. And Darwīsh Pasha has ordered lofty things, may my God preserve for him happiness for ever. He has erected the minaret ... .. fitted/lit the morning prayers. I shall calculate the date for him (two words) “Surely unto Allah all things come home.” (Q. 42:53. Trans. after Arberry) The year 1203 (=1788-89).

Although the photograph, which I possess, is quite clear, I found difficulty reading this inscription and translating it, although the general intent of the inscription is clear—to eulogize Darwīsh Ḥasan Pasha, and to commend him for reconstructing the minaret of the mosque.

It is not clear what the frontier fortresses have to do with this inscription, although they connect well with the idea of *jihād* (in l.1.3).

L.3.1: I could not offer a meaningful reading for the last word in the frame. The letters and the diacritical points are clear but the combination of ن، د/ر، أ، لك، brings nothing to my mind.

L.3.2: The beginning of this frame is also not clear to me. The words **حماء صلاة البكور** seem to attach Darwish's protection to the morning prayer. It is very strange but then, again, there is nothing to which one cannot attach some exegesis.

L.3.3: I could not read the words in this line, the numerical value of which complete the date.

L.3.4 The numerical value of the words in the Qur'ānic verse is 1087. The missing words in L.3.3 should complete the date to 1203.

L.1.2 has the name Ḥasan Pasha to whom the appellation "Ḥijāzī" is added, and in l.2.3 the name Darwīsh Pasha appears. The two names seem to belong together creating the full name of the builder: Darwish Ḥasan Pasha, who also appears in the previous inscription.

There is a remote possibility that the inscription is from the time of a mutaṣarrif of Gaza whose name was Ḥasan Darwīsh Pasha. He was nominated to his post in 1230/1814-15. His rule also extended to Jerusalem, (ʿĀrif al-ʿĀrif, 1943: 184). The style of the script permits this later date. The riddle of the date can only be solved with a certain reading of l.3.3.

### **Masjid Shaykh ʿAbdallah al-Hajjānī**

A small, village-type mosque in ad-Daraj Quarter, originally in the northern part of the city to the east of the Mosque of Shaykh Khālid (Gatt Plan of Gaza F2 without a name, which van Berchem later added to the map in his handwriting). ʿĀrif al-ʿĀrif (1943:349) has one line about the mosque indicating that it had no clergy attached to it, not even a caretaker (*laysa lahu imām wa-lā mudarris wa-lā khādim*).

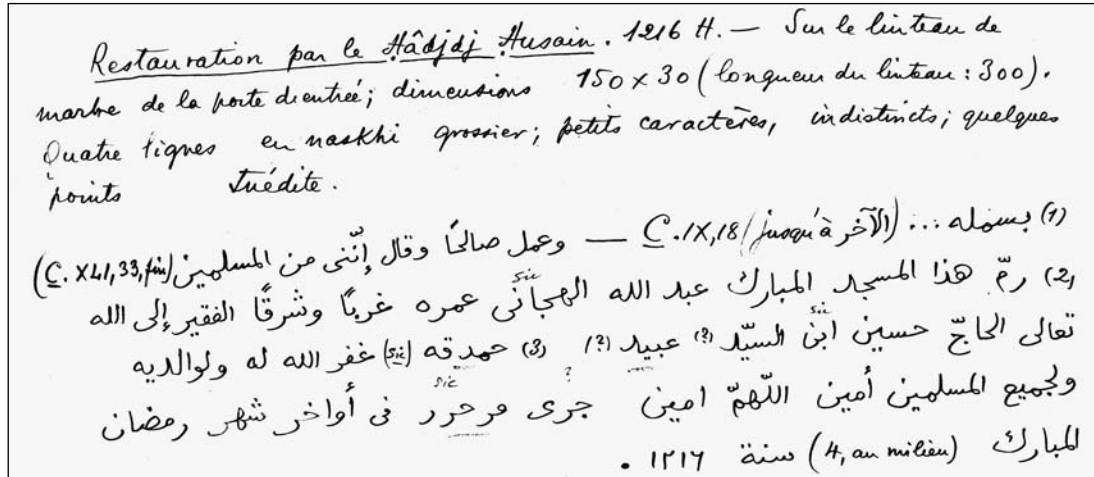
93

GAZA 1216

Reconstruction text

End of Ramaḍān 1216/Beginning of Feb. 1802

The inscription 1.50x0.30m. is on the marble lintel (3m. long) of the entrance door of the mosque. 4 lines, coarse, provincial, Ottoman *naskhī*, small indistinct characters, a few points; in relief. On the two sides of the date there are some designs and some indistinct words. No photograph. Publication: MvB Coll. "Gaza," env. 24 and c.VII, 97-98. Pl. 22.



Pl. 22 Gaza 1216. MvB copy

(١) بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم انما يعمر مساجد الله من آمن بالله واليوم الآخر وعمل صالحاً  
 وقال إنني من المسلمين (٢) رمّم هذا المسجد المبارك عبد الله الهجاني عمره غرباً وشرقاً الفقير  
 الى الله تعالى الحاج حسين ابن (!) السيد (١) عبيد (٢) حمدقه (!) غفر الله له ولوالديه ولجميع  
 المسلمين آمين اللهم آمين جزي (٣) من حرّره (٤) في اواخر شهر رمضان المبارك (٤)  
 ١٢١٦ of the line

Basmalah. Q. 9:18 (until “*wa-al-yawm al-ākhir*”) (And who speaks fairer than he who calls unto Allah) and does righteousness and says, ‘Surely I am of them that surrender?’ (i.e. Muslims) (Q. 41:33. Trans. Arberry). Has repaired this blessed mosque ‘Abdallah al-Hajjānī. Has reconstructed it on the west and on the east sides he who is in need of Allah the Exalted, Hājj Husayn the son of Sayyid ‘Ubayd Ḥamduqah/Ḥamdaqah may Allah pardon him and his parents and all the Muslims, Amen! O Allah Amen! May the writer be rewarded. At the end of the blessed (month of) Ramaḍān 1216 (beginning of February 1802).

Two people were involved in the reconstruction of the mosque: the initiator of the project and probably its financier ‘Abdallah al-Hajjānī and the actual builder who reconstructed it completely (“on the west and the east”) Ḥusayn b. ‘Ubayd whose *nisbah* is not clear, if what looks like *H-M-D-Q-H* is read correctly, and is actually a *nisbah*.

L.3: The two words, which van Berchem left unread, seem to be as I suggest. It is not unusual in such inscriptions to bless the person who wrote, or composed, the inscription (*harrara* or *kataba*). See above No. 31.

### Mosque of ‘Alī b. Marwān

MvB note: “Between the town and the Ḥarat as-Sajjā‘iyyah Quarter there is a vast cemetery—Maqbarat ‘Alī b. Marwān (Gatt Plan of Gaza E6). It contains a great number of graves with epitaphs. In the far, northeast side, stands the Welī ‘Alī ibn Marwān, a small sanctuary inside an enclosure open to the sky, where one can see many trees and tombs with epitaphs, most of which are modern. (Figs. P19, P19a, P19b) The gate, which is of no interest, opens on the west side. On the lintel of marble, dimensions 190x30[cm] three lines in Turkish *naskhī* Mamlūk style, small characters. Unedited. The inscription calls the edifice ‘Alī b. Marwān. It is dated 1218 H.”

Max van Berchem did not copy the inscription and his notes pose a problem, since the existing three line inscription is not in “Turkish *naskhī* Mamlūk style” but is in fact a Mamlūk inscription from the year 725. (See above No. 29 and No. 30). The inscription from “1218 H.” is the long inscription from 1217 discussed below. It is possible that this inscription was placed over the gate of the mosque sometime after van Berchem’s visit to the city.

Having said that, I have to consider other alternatives that could explain van Berchem’s statement, since it is very unlikely that he mistook a Mamlūk inscription for a late Ottoman one, even if it was not typical of the period and was written in “Mamlūk style.” According to ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif’s copy, the inscription consists of eight verses and an additional line containing the date. It is possible that this text, like other inscriptions from that period, was arranged in frames like the inscriptions Nos. 91 and 92 above, from the year 1203 (Figs. 68, 68a) in which every one of the frames contained three verses. This assumption has also to take into consideration the possibility that a very common mistake was made when copying the date in digits and the 7 (v) was replaced by 8 (ʾ), either by ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif or by van Berchem. There is, of course, a chance that there was another three-line Ottoman inscription which van Berchem did not copy, but suspected that “it may contain an allusion to a more ancient construction.” (MvB Coll. “Gaza,” env. 24, c.VII, 68)

94

GAZA 1217

Reconstruction text

10 Sha'bān 1217/6 Dec. 1802

Above the entrance door of Jāmi' 'Alī b. Marwān. No technical details. Publication:  
'Arif al-'Arif, *Ta'rīkh Ghazzah*, 341-342.

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| رحب لصاق الكون بالاكوان | (١) لولا المحبة في القلوب وانها                   |
| هي منة في جنة الرحمن    | (٢) هي سر فرقان الاله وجمعه                       |
| امير غزة هاشم الجزران   | (٣) بجود وحلم ساد يحيى على الملا                  |
| جزاه خيراً خالق الانسان | (٤) بنا بناء خالصاً في صنعه                       |
| بيناء مسجد علي بن مروان | (٥) يحيى حباه الله كل فضيلة                       |
| وبالخليل مبرد النيران   | (٦) حصنته بالهاشمي محمد                           |
| والآل والاصحاب والاقران | (٧) صلى الاله عليه بعد نبينا                      |
| من منزل الزبور والفرقان | (٨) ما دام خير الدين يرجو رحمة                    |
|                         | (٩) حبر وحرر في عشرة من شعبان المبارك سنة ١٢١٧ هـ |

Were it not for the love in the hearts, and their  
Vastness, the world would have been too narrow for the beings.  
It is the secret of God's dividing and joining;  
It is a benevolent gift in the Paradise of the All Compassionate.  
With generosity and gentleness, Yaḥyā ruled the people;  
The Amīr of Gaza, the city of Hāshim who chopped slaughtered camels.  
He built a perfectly designed building;  
May the Creator of man reward him.  
Yaḥyā, let Allah grant him every merit,  
For building 'Alī Ibn Marwān's Mosque.  
I strengthened him through Muḥammad the Hāshimite,  
And through the Friend (Abraham, "al-Khalīl") who cooled the fires.  
May God bless him, after (blessing) our Prophet,  
And (his) family, friends and peers;  
As long as Khayr ad-Dīn asks for mercy  
From Him who revealed the Zābūr and the Furqān.  
Composed and penned on the tenth of the blessed Sha'bān the year 1217H.

The metre of the poem is a common variant of *al-kāmil*., but line 4, has a broken meter. (Wright, *Grammar*, 2:362-363 § 206).

Unfortunately, for lack of a photograph or squeeze, I have to rely on ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif’s reading. However, in one case at least (1.5), his reading is clearly mistaken and should be corrected.

L. 1: *وانها رحبة* instead *وانها رحب*; poetry permits this elegant variant. The exact meaning is that hearts are (or love is) “wide” broad and extensive.

L. 3: The word *juzrān* as a plural of *jazar*—a slaughtered animal—or *jazrān* (on the model of *fā’lān*)—describing a person who slaughters animals does not exist in the Arabic dictionaries. It seems to me that the poet in this case created a word that may have been used in colloquial Arabic and which gives a good impression as a classical form. The allusion in this verse is very clear. Gaza is called *Ghazzat Hāshim*—Hāshim’s Gaza, after the great-grandfather of the Prophet, who, according to tradition, died there during one of his trade voyages. In all the accounts about Hāshim it is reported that he was responsible for the institution of the two trade caravans, or trading voyages of Quraysh, one in the winter to Yemen and Abyssinia, and one in the summer to Syria, commemorated in Q, 106. His real name was ‘Amr, but he earned the nickname Hāshim because of his unusual generosity. One bad year, when the Meccans were suffering from hunger, he provided them with *tharīd*—a broth mixed with crumbled bread. The story says that he traveled to Syria where he bought a large quantity of bread, and on his return to Mecca he killed the camels of his caravan, and prepared a broth from the meat into which he broke up (in Arabic: *hashama*) the bread, saving the Meccans from hunger and earning the honorable name, Hāshim—“the bread breaker”. The Qurayshite poet Ibn az-Zibārā composed the following lines in his honor (Ibn Hishām, *Sīrah*, 1, 1955:136 and notes 2-4: = *The Life of Muḥammad*. 1955:58. cf. for variants Ibn Sa’d, *Ṭabaqāt*, 1(1) 1905:45-46; Balādhūrī, *Ansāb*, 1, 1996:66)

‘Amr who made bread-and-broth for his people,  
A people in Mecca who suffered lean years.  
He it was who started the two journeys,  
The winter caravan and the summer’s train.  
(Trans. Life of Muḥammad, loc.cit.)

The reading of the verse can be as I voweled it above, which means that Yaḥyā is the amīr of the city of Hāshim’s Gaza, namely of he who made the broth of chopped, slaughtered camels and broken bread, or it can be read: *امير غزّة هاشم الجزران* which would mean that the word *hāshim* takes the same case of the word *amīr* and the hemistich then means that Yaḥyā himself is so benevolent that he chops the slaughtered the animals to feed the people like the famous Hāshim.

L. 5: ‘Ārif al-‘Ārif read *حياه*, which does not permit any satisfactory meaning. *حَبَاهُ* is the correct reading as above: *حَبَاهُ الله كل فضيلة*. (*Lisān* 14:162, s.v. *h-b-w*) This combination is frequently used in modern poetry *حَبَاهُ* particularly in panegyric

poems. (e.g. *al-Jamāhūr*, Daily, Aleppo, 16 Nov. 2007 last page: **فلقد حباه الله كل فضيلة**).

L. 6: al-Khalīl, namely Ibrāhīm (Abraham), was saved from the furnace into which Nimrod (Namrūd) threw him. In the Jewish legend, God would not allow Gabriel or any other angel to save Abraham from the furnace, but He Himself ordered the fire to cool down ( *BT, Pesahūm* 118a). The identical idea appears in the Qur’ān 21 (*al-Anbiyā*): 68-69 (“They said burn him ... We said ‘O fire be coolness and safety for Abraham’”). The Islamic legend in the literature of *Qiṣaṣ al-Anbiyā* contains a detailed description of the cooling of the huge fire which had been prepared for Abraham and into which he had been catapulted, since no-one could come near it. In the Islamic legend, as in the Jewish one, it is Allah himself—not Jibrīl—who ordered the fire to cool itself. (Ibn Kathīr, *Qiṣaṣ*, 1987:124-125)

L.8: Khayr ad-Dīn must be the title of Yaḥyā. The *Ṣabūr*, is the Holy Book that was revealed to David–Dāwud and the *Furqān* is the Qur’ān revealed to Muḥammad. The verse refers to Allah as the revealer of these two Holy Books.

### Zāwiyat al-Hunūd

Max van Berchem calls this Zāwiyah: “chapelle des Indiens.” ‘Ārif al- ‘Ārif, who had no information about the place, wrote that it was a mosque (which is also correct since *zāwiyah* is a small mosque) and named it Masjid Zāwiyat al-Hunūd, and put it in the list of the mosques of Gaza. (*Ta’rīkh Ghazzah*, 348-349) The *Ṣabūyah* is situated near the centre of town, about 200m. to the northwest of the Great Mosque in the Daraj Quarter and in the northern part of as-Sūq al-Kabīr—the great Bazaar (Gatt Plan of Gaza D4; *ṢDPV*, 11, 1888:153)

95

GAZA 1236

Reconstruction text

1 Rajab 1236/4 April 1821

The lintel of a small door in Zāwiyat al-Hunūd 1.80x0.30m. 2 lines, Turkish *naskh* in Mamlūk style, small to medium characters, points, no vowels. No photograph. Publication: MvB Coll. “Gaza,” env. 24, c.VII, 56.

١) امر بتجديد زاوية الهنود  
الراجي لثواب الملك المعبود

الطامع في سعة بحر كرمه ٢ الممدود  
حضرة سيد الوزراء العظام افندينا ووالينا السيد عبد الله باشا في غرة رجب سنة ١٢٣٦

Has ordered the reconstruction of the small mosque of the Indians, he who hopes for the reward of the worshipped King, who yearns for the vastness of His outstretched sea of benevolence, his Excellency the master of the great viziers our Effendi and our lord, the master 'Abdallah Pasha on the first of Rajab 1236 (=4 April 1821)

The first part of the inscription is written in a rhyming prose which can be seen in the arrangement of text of the inscription.

'Abdallah Pasha, the Ottoman governor of Acre and Sidon, was also the ruler of the rest of Palestine including Jaffa, Ramlah and Gaza, from 1819 until the Egyptian occupation of Syria in 1832 which put an end to his rule and his career. (Cf. *CIAP*, 1:27-28) A few months before the invasion of Syria by the Egyptian army under Ibrāhīm Pasha (November 1831), the people of Gaza, helped by the Bedouins of the Tiyāhah and the Tarābīn tribes, rose against 'Abdallah Pasha and his emissaries in Gaza. A detailed letter (kept in the Egyptian archives) from May 1831 that was sent by him to the Gazans, was an attempt at appeasement and, at the same time, a forewarning of punishment. He did not have time to reestablish his authority in the city for he soon found himself involved in a quarrel with Muḥammad 'Alī, which gave the latter the necessary excuse to begin his Syrian campaign. This led to the occupation of Acre after seven months of siege and to his falling into Egyptian hands. (See the full text of 'Abdallah Pasha's letter to the leaders of Gaza in 'Arif al-'Arif, *Ta'rīkh Ghazza*, 185-187)

96

GAZA 1287

Two inscriptions (construction texts?)

1287/1870

I found the following note in MvB's files (c.VII, 114):

Next to the old *Serai*, opposite the telegraph office (in 1894). Gatt Plan of Gaza D5. A slab of marble, embedded in a remnant of a ruined wall; elegant inscription dated 1287. In the same ruin, to the left of a modern arcade, another slab of marble, bearing another inscription also dated 1267 H.

I did not find anything else in the archives.

97

GAZA 1342  
Great Mosque  
Reconstruction texts

1342/1923

1345/1926

A slab of marble, 0.80x0.50m., fixed above the gate of the minaret. 2 lines monumental modern *naskhī*, full points, vowels, and decorative elements; in relief. Figs. 69, P14 (IAA photo No. 12.161).

١) جدد عمارة هذه الماذنة المجلس (٢) الشرعي الإسلامي الأعلى سنة ١٣٤٢

Has reconstructed this minaret the Supreme Muslim Judicial Council in the year 1342 (1924)

Following the heavy bombardment of Gaza on 17 April 1917, a large part of the city, including the Great Mosque, was damaged. Its minaret and medieval structure suffered heavy damage. (Figs. P6, P7, P8) The mosque remained in ruins for a few years until its reconstruction by the Supreme Muslim Council. The reconstruction was finished in 1345/1926, but the building of the Minaret was completed three years earlier. The restoration of the mosque followed the original plan of the Crusaders' church, and incorporated the original columns and pillars into the building (Mosque plan, see pl.3 above). However, the whole structure may be regarded as a new building (Fig. P9. Restored Great Mosque), as 'Ārif al-'Ārif rightly observed (*Ta'rīkh Ghazzah*, 337). The minaret was renewed "in a form which greatly surpassed its former one." (*ibid.*)

The inscription commemorating the new building is over one of the main gates of the mosque. It reads:

جدد عمارة هذا الجامع المجلس الشرعي الإسلامي الأعلى سنة ١٣٤٥

Has reconstructed this Friday Mosque the Supreme Muslim Judicial Council in the year 1345 (=1926)

98

GAZA 1349

Great Mosque

Construction of *mīhrāb* and *minbar*

1349/1930-31

When the Great Mosque was rebuilt it was fitted with a new impressive *minbar* about 3m. high, next to the newly built main *mīhrāb*. The inscription over the *minbar* commemorating this project is 1.27m. long and 2.7m. above the ground. 1 line, monumental modern *naskhī*, complete with points, some vowels and a decorative element at the end. Fig. 70.

أنشأ هذا المنبر والمحراب المجلس الشرعي الإسلامي الأعلى (in the middle) سنة ١٣٤٩

Has built this minbar and the prayer niche (*mīhrāb*) the Supreme Muslim Judicial Council in the year 1349 (=1930-31)

### Greek Orthodox Church

“Saint Porphyrius Church”

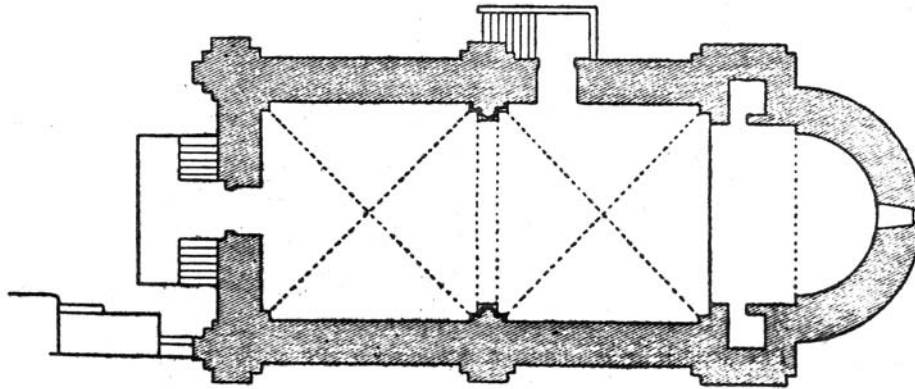
The following description is copied from the IAA Archives “Gaza” file 55, dated 28 March 1939:

The church is situated in the Zeitun Quarter. It is built of small sand stone with marble columns pinned into the walls (photo No. 19.348). The floor level of the church is about 2.00 ms below the present ground level. The west entrance is reached by a flight of steps and is surmounted by a pointed arch. An inscribed marble panel about 40.0x60.0 cms. stands above the lintel of this door (photo 19.344 [Fig. P28]). The inscription consists of 8 lines in Greek and an Arabic translation in three lines.

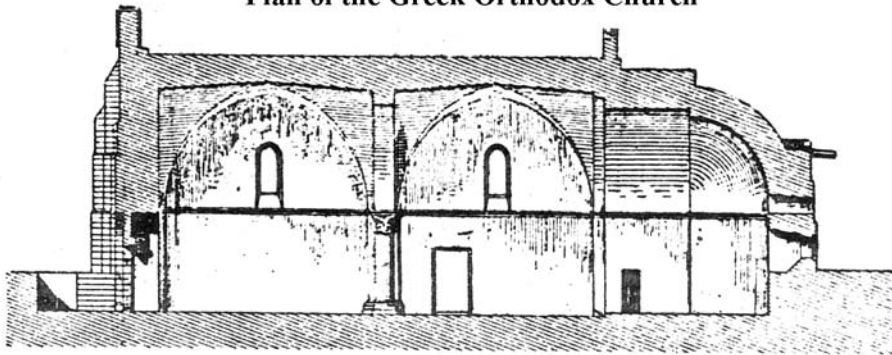
(See Arabic text and translation below).

The north entrance (photo 19.357) is also reached by a flight of steps and has a relieving arch. The marble lintel of this entrance as well as other stones of the building bear diagonal dressing. The south entrance with the semicircular cement steps are modern (photo 19.345 [Fig. P28a 1865a]). The roof is drained by stone conduits (photo 19.345).

The central arch of the nave is pointed, it is carried by two marble columns with acanthus carved capitals (photo 19.364). An ancient circular marble font stands in the north west side of the nave (photo. 19.362).



**Plan of the Greek Orthodox Church**



**Longitudinal section Greek Orthodox Church**

**Source:** *AR* 2:382

Pl. 23 Greek Orthodox Church 1874. Plan and section prepared for Clermont-Ganneau.

In 1863 Victor Guérin visited Gaza for the second time (his first visit took place in 1854), and saw this church after its renovation. Apparently the narthex was added to the church in the course of these renovations. Clermont Ganneau spent six days in Gaza between 20 to 26 September 1874 during which he carried out an intensive study of the city, and left a description of this church as well as of the Great Mosque. He identified the Greek Orthodox Church as “a small medieval church” He remarked that “from its diminutive size it was rather a chapel than a church. It is an architectural gem in its way, in a rare state of preservation with all the features complete, even to the roofing, eaves, and buttresses. The building consists of a single nave with only two bays, and was erected by the Crusaders, though apparently on the plan of a previously existing Byzantine chapel, to judge by the depth of the apse, and also from materials provided by an earlier structure.” (*AR*, 2:381)

1856CE

Bilingual, Greek Arabic inscription. A slab of marble, 0.60x0.40m. 3 lines, modern *naskhī*, in black paint. Fig. 71 for the year 1856 CE. Publication: IAA archives, “Gaza” file 55.

Both the Greek and the Arabic inscriptions are in a bad condition. (The Greek version is in a better state than the Arabic). The reading below of the Arabic is the one found in the IAA archives with a few corrections, and the translation of the Greek follows that of Guérin who saw the inscription about seven years after it had been fixed over the main gate of the church.

Greek inscription (Guérin, *Judée* 2, 1869:183)

This temple was previously founded under the Emperor Arcadius and under the episcopate of St. Porphyry, the bishop of Gaza, in the year of Jesus Christ 405. As for the restorations, which it underwent, these were carried out under the Patriarchate of Cyril the bishop of Jerusalem at the expense of the Greek community of Gaza in 1856.

١) بسم الله الحي الواحد الإله القدوس إبتدأ عمارة هذه الكنيسة بسعي الأب برفيريوس  
مطران غزة سنة ٤٠٥ بأيام الملك أركاديوس ٢) وقد جرى قصارتها في مدة البطريق  
الأورشليمي كرايوس بمسعا (!) الأب فليموس بمناظرة المهندس بلاشوتي بشاريوس ٣) الكاين  
مصروفها من القيامة المقدسة ومن بعض مسيحيين غزة سنة ١٨٥٦ مسيحية بشهر آذار

In the name of Allah the Living, The One the Holy God. The beginning of the construction of this church was through the efforts the father Porphyry the Bishop of Gaza in the year 405 during the days of the King Arcadius, and it was plastered during the time of Cyril the patriarch of Jerusalem due to the endeavor of the father Philymos, under the supervision of the architect Balashuti Basharius. The expenses were (covered by funds that came) from the Holy Sepulchre, and from some of the Christians of Gaza. The year 1856 Christian (Era) in the month of March.

L.1: أركاديوس Flavius Arcadius (377/378–1 May, 408) Emperor in the Eastern half of the Roman Empire from 395 until his death. The date of the establishment of the church should be 405 not 425 (the date which appears in the text in the IAA file). In 401 Emperor Arcadius gave the order to destroy all the pagan temples in Gaza, and brought an end to the stubborn resistance to Christianity in the city. Porphyry (برفيريوس) the Bishop of Gaza (347–420) who was the instigator, and the organizer of this violent ending to paganism in Gaza, received support and funds from Aelia Eudoxia (d. 6

October, 404), the Empress, consort of the Emperor, and built a cruciform church in Gaza naming it Eudoxiana after her; it was solemnly dedicated on Easter Day 406. (cf. *SWP, Memoirs, Judaea*, 3:251)

The inscription claims that the present church is the one originally built by Porphyry over the ruins of the Marneion, the temple of Marnas (Aram. Marnā), the chief deity of the city, identified sometimes with Dagon of the Philistines, and with the Cretan Zeus. (Bury, 1958:142ff). For this reason it is also known as “Saint Porphyrius Church.” This claim is doubtful in spite of the ancient materials used in the existing medieval structure. It seems more plausible that St. John’s Church of the Crusaders, which the Muslims transformed into the Great (“Umari”) Mosque, was built on the site of the Eudoxiana.

There are some differences between the Arabic and the Greek versions of the inscription. The Arabic is more detailed and its opening is interesting. It conveys the feeling that the Christians made an effort to imitate the Islamic inscriptions by beginning with a formula, which sounds like the *basmalah*. This part is lacking in the Greek version. Moreover, although in common usage the Christians adopted the name Allah to refer to God, in the inscription it sounds more Islamic than neutral or Christian. The inclusion of the words *al-ḥayy al-wāḥid* in this Christian *basmalah* emphasizes still further the nature of the imitation. It is only with the third adjective *al-ilāh al-quddūs* that there is a sign of the Christian origin of the inscription.

By mistake, the year 405 was rendered 425 in the reading of the inscription in the IAA file. Since Porphyry died in 420, this date is impossible.

L.2: **قصارتهها** The word *qīṣārah* means to bleach, to whiten and to whitewash. In Palestinian, colloquial Arabic, the word is used for plastering (a wall, ceiling). Here the meaning of the word is probably repair or renovation.

The transcription of the name of the priest Philymos or Philymus is a guess.

**بلاشوتي بشاريوس** This is the name of the architect who must have been Greek, but I could not find him in records which represent the Latin spelling of his name. I, therefore, copied the Arabic spelling but without the signs for the elongation of the appropriate syllables. This name, as well as the name of Father Philymos, does not appear in the Greek version translated by Guérin.

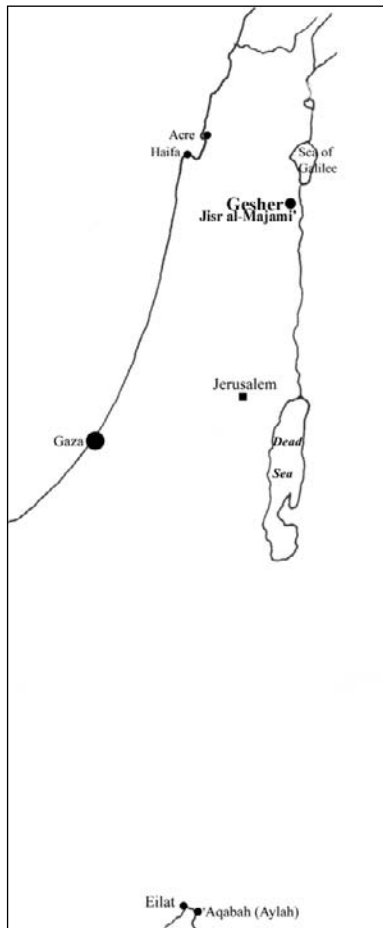
L.3: **الكاين مصروفها من القيامة المقدسة** According to the Arabic inscription the expenses of the renovations were covered by money that was received from the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and “some Christians from Gaza.” In the Greek inscription, the money came solely from the Christians of Gaza.

Overall, the Arabic language of the inscription gives the impression that it was composed by a foreigner, who learnt Arabic, and tried not to make lexicographical errors. The expressions *al-kāyin maṣrūfuhā* etc., or *masihyyin Ghazzah* sound strange.

## GESHER

### Jisr al-Majāmi‘

Is. Gr. 2032 2254 (N.Is. Gr. 2532 7254)



At the beginning of 1996, Abdullah Mokary and Zvi Gal conducted excavations for the IAA on the site of a *khān* on the western bank of the Jordan river, 9 Km. to the south of the Sea of Galilee and 14 Km. north of Beth Shean—Baysān, near one of the main crossings of the Jordan. The site, occupies a small peninsula surrounded by the river on the north, east and south. It is not far from the modern Kibbutz Gesher, and is next to the bridge over the Jordan, over which the road from Damascus to Beth Shean passed at different times. This bridge is known locally as Jisr al-Majāmi‘, “Bridge of the Meeting” (of the river Yarmūk with the Jordan).

Guérin, who visited the site in June 1875, wrote that he saw the ruins of an ancient fortified *khān*, which was deserted and dilapidated. It was built from well-dressed, basalt stones. The gates were built of alternating white and black stones (in the *ablaq* style). The architecture of the *khān* itself is typical of similar buildings from the Mamlūk and Ottoman periods: two stories with vaulted chambers built around a courtyard. (Aerial view, Mokary-Gal 2005:196 fig.20) The outside walls were completely sealed, with only one main gate leading into the complex. Not very far from the *khān* lay the Crusader—Mamlūk bridge

over the Jordan, resting over a few arches. The central arch, under which the Jordan flows, is built over huge basalt boulders and is larger than the side ones (Guérin, 3(1) *Galilée*, ch. 9; Mokary-Gal 2005:195ff).

There were in fact three separate bridges, one Crusader-Mamlūk (which is relevant to this inscription), one Ottoman and one British, that were built next to the *khān* and in association with it. At different times each of these bridges carried traffic over the river on the road that connected Egypt with Syria: the ancient *Via Maris*.

The archeologists discovered an inscription from the early 14th century under the late Ottoman floor of the *khān*, which was still active at the time of the Napoleonic invasion in 1799. It belongs to the time when travellers crossed the Jordan over the Crusader-Mamlūk bridge. (Fig. P32)

### Epitaph of a Muslim

25 Rabī II 708/12 Oct.1308

A slab of limestone, 0.45x0.40 broken and lost on top, and slightly damaged on the left, discovered under the Ottoman floor of the ruins of the *khān*. 5 surviving lines, in elegant, provincial Mamlūk *naskhī*, points, no vowels; in relief. The inscription is framed by raised borders, narrow on the right and left, wide at the bottom, bands divide the lines. Pl. 24, Fig. 72. Publication: M. Sharon, 2005:217-218.



Pl. 24 Gesher 708/1308

(One or two lines) ... ..

(١) [الله] تعالى... [هذا قبر] (٢) عثمان ابن (!) عبد الرشيد ابن (!) عثمان البدليسي الشهير  
(٣) بالإسعردى وكان غرقه ووفاته في تاريخ يوم ٤ الجمعة خامس عشرين (!) ربيع الآخر

سنة ثمان وسبعمئة (!) ٥) والحمد لله رب العالمين وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد وآله وصحبه  
وسلم.

...Allah the Exalted... (This is the tomb of) ‘Uthmān b. ‘Abd ar-Rashīd b. ‘Uthmān al-Badlīsī (also) famous as al-Is‘irdī. His drowning and death occurred on Friday, 25 Rabī‘ II the year 708 (=Saturday, 12 October 1308). And praise be to Allah the Lord of the worlds, and may Allah bless our master Muḥammad, his family and his companions, and give them peace.

LL.2-3: The *nisbah* Badlīsī refers to the city of Badlīs (Bitlis) on the southwestern corner of the Lake Van in eastern Anatolia (Le Strange, *Lands of the Eastern Caliphate*, 1930:184 and authorities there; Yāqūt, *Mu‘jam*, Dar Sadir, 1:358). This *nisbah* refers, no doubt, to the family’s place of origin. The deceased was, however, widely known (*shahīr*) by another *nisbah*—Is‘irdī, referring to a town on the tributary of the upper Tigris called Is‘ird (Ibn Mākūlā, *al-Ikmāl*, 1990, 1:154, n.3) as well as Sā‘irt, Is‘irt and Sī‘ird. It was a large town, renowned for its coppersmiths, and copper vessels. Its widely exported copper drinking cups were particularly famous. The town, also near Lake Van, was not too far from Badlīs, to the south (Le Strange, *op. cit.*, 114 and map III). The two *nisbahs* refer, therefore, to the same area, and reflect the movement of the immediate family of ‘Uthmān from one town to another, neighbouring, one. It is clear from the inscription that in time, the first *nisbah* to Badlīs was less known and less used by the deceased.

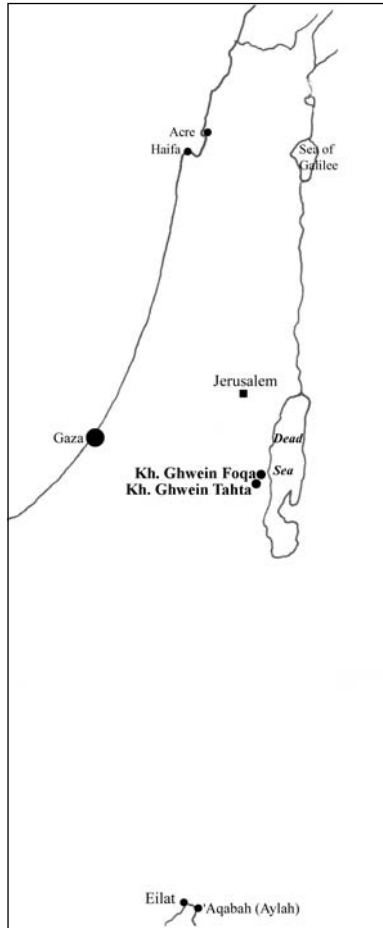
The information about the death by drowning is interesting. It is known locally that in this area the Jordan claimed many lives even in modern times. In the Middle Ages, before the building of the dam in the southern outlet of the Sea of Galilee to the Jordan, and when the water of the Yarmuk river ran freely into the Jordan, the latter’s water level was much higher than it is today. October can be a very rainy month particularly in the north, and the flow of the Jordan then can be very violent.

I could find no other information about the ‘Uthman b. ‘Abd ar-Rashīd. The beautiful, professional inscription shows, however, that he must have been an important person.

L.4: The reading *khāmis ‘ishrīn* (twenty fifth) is sure.

It is impossible to read 25 Rabī‘ II 908 (Friday, 28 October 1502) instead of 25 Rabī‘ II 708 (Saturday, 12 October 1308), in spite of the temptation to do so because of the complete concurrence of the day of the week. The dot under the *bā’* of the *sab‘umīyyah* (*sic!*) is clear, and, there is the sign over the letter preceding the *bā’* to indicate that it is *sīn* not *shīn*. The reading of the date is, therefore, sure. The discrepancy regarding the day of the week is negligible.

**GHUWAYNAH AT-TAḤTĀ (KH.)**  
 (Colloq. Khirbet Ghweineh at-Taḥtā—Lower Ghweineh).  
 Is. Gr. 156 084 (N. Is. Gr. 206 584)



The name is also pronounced: Khirbet Ghwein. Ruins of an ancient settlement situated on the southern slopes of the Judean desert plateau, (or the “Hebron Mountains—Jabal al-Khalīl”) some 20 km. south of Hebron (al-Khalīl), identified with the Biblical ‘Anīm (Josh. 15:50) and mentioned in an inscription from the Israelite period found in ‘Arad. (Aharoni, 1975:52, No. 25; *idem*, 1987:275, 306) In the 4<sup>th</sup> century, Eusebius (*Onomasticon* 26, 9) described it as “a very large village of Jews” named Ἰουδαία and next to it a Christian village with the same name (*ibid.*, 26, 130) This corresponds well to two ancient ruins called Khirbat Ghuwaynah (Ghuwayn) el-Fōqā (colloq. the “Upper”) or esh-Sharqiyyah (“the Eastern”), which was the Christian village, and Kirbat Ghuwaynah (Ghuwayn) at-Taḥtā (colloq. the “Lower”) or el-Gharbiyyah (“the Western”) the Jewish one. Ceramic evidence and other archeological finds confirm the existence of an Iron Age settlement in the place. Like many other sites in the area, it was settled by Jews until sometime after the Islamic conquest. In the excavations carried out at the site of the Lower Ghuwaynah, David Amit and the late Zvi Ilan found a synagogue which, according to their estimates, existed until the late 7<sup>th</sup>

early 8<sup>th</sup> century CE, when it was replaced by another building which seems to be a mosque. The mosque ceased to function sometime in the Mamlūk period, probably when the Muslim settlement was abandoned under Bedouin pressure. (Ilan, Z. and Amit, D. 1988-1989: 6-8; Amit, D. 1993: 62; Magness, J. 2003:103-105.). The Arabic inscription found in the excavations that were carried out in the ruins in the late 1990s, confirms the suggestion of Amit and Ilan, for it proves that the Muslims settled in the place soon after the conquest, and eventually drove the Jews out of it.



Pl. 25 Khirbat Ghuwaynah at-Taḥtā: inscription

101

Invocation

c85/705

A broken slab of natural, undressed limestone, 0.155x0.08m. found above the ground during the excavation in Kh. Ghuwaynah at-Taḥtā. The inscription could have come from a gate of a private dwelling. 2 lines, excellent early 8th century angular script, reminiscent of the monumental inscriptions of ‘Abd al-Malik, no points and no vowels; incised. (Pl. 25)

(١) بركة (٢) للخضر بن أيوب

Blessing to Khaḍr b. Ayyūb.

An inscription of this kind, asking for *barakah* is usually found on mobile objects; it is usually a fixed formula, requesting blessing for the owner of the object. In this case the stone, which came from a building, contains a similar *barakah* for the owner of the property. However, instead of the anonymous type of such inscriptions (“*barakah li-ṣāhibihi*”), in this case the owner’s name was given in full. The reading of the name is not sure, although the writing is very clear. It can also be Ḥiṣn b. Ayyūb.

## LIST OF INSCRIPTIONS ACCORDING TO SITES

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