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¹ I would like to thank my advisor, Professor Renata Holod for her help with this paper.

² Ali Drin (Institut National du Patrimoine), Elizabeth Fentress (American Academy in Rome) and Renata Holod (University of Pennsylvania) directed the Project. Field seasons took place in 1996-2000, and the final report is forthcoming. These institutions as well as the Fondation Van Berchem, the 1984 Foundation, the Packard Foundation, and the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology have supported it generously. The study of the *habus* documents was undertaken by the author under the auspices of the Project. Michael Frachetti created all maps of the Project, and the drawings in this paper were the result of collaboration between Erika Tapp and the author.

³ The North African term *habus* (French transliteration: *habous*) will be used to designate the deed of endowment of a pious foundation instead of *waqf*, the more common term used in Islamic legal literature.

⁴ The Tunisian collections of *habus* documents, either public or private, have not been catalogued and, therefore, are hard to handle; thus the hesitation of many scholars to use them. The major public collection had been located in the archives of the Habus Administration (*Jam'iyyat al-habus*) (HA) founded only in 1873/74, as were most *Habus/Waqf* Administrations in the Ottoman Empire. The HA was decommissioned by the abrogation of the entire *habus* system at the end of the 1950s by the new independent Tunisian state. Since then, the collection has been preserved in depots controlled by the Ministry of the Affairs of the State's Properties (*Wizarat Shu'un Amlak al-Dawla*). A large number of documents, 199 at least, was found in our preliminary search for Jerba's *habus* documents in the HA collection; we were

Fig. 1 (Left) The transects of the Jerba Project survey with an emphasis on the early modern sites. (Right) Map of Humat al-Suq in 1886 (Detail of the French Army map of Jerba made in 1886)

TRACING URBANIZATION IN EARLY MODERN JERBA¹

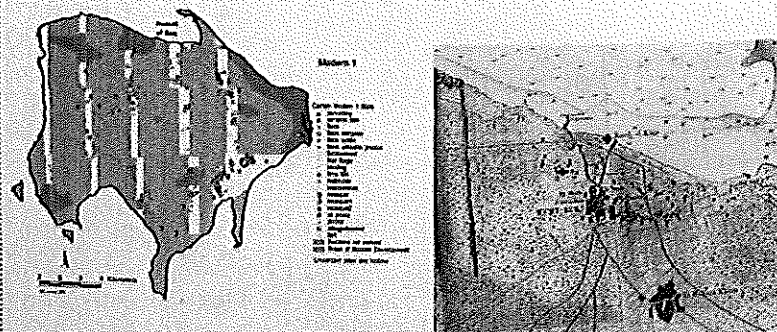
Tarek Kahlaoui

The Jerba Project, an archaeological survey and study of the Tunisian island of Jerba has provided an unprecedented opportunity to examine in detail the assumptions of modern scholars, most of which were based on textual sources, notably about the presence of an Islamic urban site within the area of present day Humat al-Suq.² It appears that such a project can certainly provide a new face for the island landscape and also might very well contribute to the discussion of the forms of human settlement in the Islamic context. Of special interest are the following two problems: is the rural contiguously built settlement, which will be our definition for the *village* (*qarya*), the dominant form of 'rurality'? Do the establishment and the survival of a self-sufficient political system necessarily need a centralized and concentrated settlement that is a *city* (*madina*)? For these specific questions, Jerba is an interesting case study. In this paper, I will be addressing these questions within the limits of the early modern period, that is the time when the impact of the Ottoman rule in Jerba was most acutely felt. The extensive collection of *habus*³ documents from the early modern period serves as a major source in this discussion.⁴ The case of Jerba certainly draws attention to the ambiguity of some terms and concepts that we are using without much discrimination in the Islamic context, notably *qarya* and *madina*. At this stage of the project, we can only offer an initial set of analyses, and not yet the full range of contributions that the consideration of Jerba should be able to provide to the study of urban and rural settlement forms.

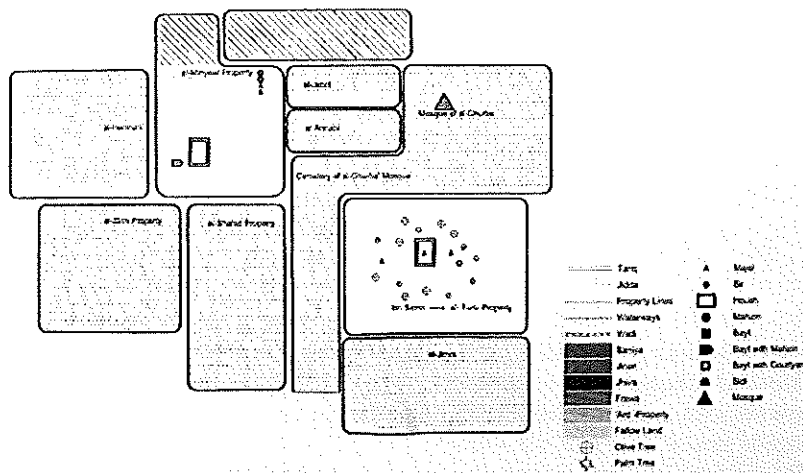
Early Modern Origins of the Formation of the City of Humat al-Suq: the Case of the Neighbourhood of Jami' (J.) al-Ghurba⁵

Even though some quarters of the contemporary city of Humat al-Suq were part of the Jerba Project transect, it was almost impossible to conduct any walking surveys in this densely built-up area, as was also the case on other urbanized sites. Still, the problem of "the formation of a city" in Humat al-Suq, located around the nucleus site of the market (*al-suq*), is an essential aspect of the problems raised by the project. The textual sources (both historical and archival) provide a reasonable and realistic alternative (for the moment) to surveys or other archaeological research of this particular area. We have chosen the monument of J. al-Ghurba' as the centre of the present alternative study because of its major role in the subsequent formation both of the city of Humat al-Suq and of the Sunni community on Jerba.

J. al-Ghurba', the main Maliki mosque on the island, is located in the eastern part of modern Humat al-Suq (Fig. 1). The old dividing line between the two major Ibadi groups on Jerba, Wahbi and Nukkari⁶ has been more or less maintained with the result that the western part of the city, where the first Wahbi Friday mosque was "built" (J. al-Shaykh),⁷ is still generally seen as a Wahbi neighbourhood. The eastern part of town is considered a Sunni neighbourhood, and, in fact, in addition to J. al-



Ghurba', we find there the only Hanafi mosque on Jerba, the J. al-Turk.⁸ The *habus* documents of Jami' al-Ghurba' are the largest series of documents for a single religious site within the available Jerba *habus* documents.⁹ More than one document dated between 1160 H and 1250 H tells us that prominent Sunni families such as al-Jimni, al-Minyawi (aka al-Minyi or al-Shahid), and al-Hanafi al-Turki were owners of large estates (*manazil*) around H. al-Suq, and at times around J. al-Ghurba' itself (documents 123, 124, and 125).¹⁰ In an 1197/1783 private *habus* document related to the family of al-Minyawi we have a clear description of the properties of this prominent Sunni family concentrated around J. al-Ghurba' and its cemetery (document #196). (Fig. 2) The series of documents that record the *habus* of the mosque



able to examine and to study 176 documents. A catalogue of these documents by the author will be available electronically within the forthcoming publication of the Jerba Project.

⁸ The local pronunciation is al-Ghurba' instead of the strict Arabic pronunciation al-Ghuraba', which means the «strangers». For a detailed description and a commentary on J. al-Ghurba' see al-Mrabit 24-29.

Fig. 2 Diagram of the neighbourhood of al-Ghurba' Mosque on the basis of a *habus* document dated 1197/1783 (document # 196)

⁹ This division between the two groups goes back at least to the end of the 3d/9th century. On the territorial division between these two Ibadite fractions see al-Hilali, note 111 and Ja'bir 162-163. It is important to notice, however, that there are no known sources that represent the view of the Ibadite/Nukkari. There are several indications (especially the embracing of Sufism) that indicate that the latter have become increasingly Sunni by the early modern period. Still it is not clear when exactly the Ibadite/Nukkari population of Jerba began converting to Sunnism. It is also significant to notice that by the eighteenth century some leading families of the Wahbis had already changed camps, like the family of al-Yunsi. (See al-Meryami Vol. 2: 361), or at least had imposed Maliki-like practices on the long-lived Wahbi customs, notably the introduction of the Friday prayer (see below). On the other hand, the Sunni community in Jerba was first established and strengthened through the small groups of Sunni Arabs and by a much lesser degree "Turks" who came to the island since the late medieval, but mainly in the early modern period.

¹⁰ There are at least two mosques called « Masjid al-Jami' al-Shaykh » in Jerba. J. al-Shaykh of Humat al-Suq, originally a regular Ibadite/Wahbi mosque, was rebuilt in the beginning of the seventeenth century before holding the first Friday prayer by the middle of the same century (see below). For a

includes the exchanges (*mu'awada*) of its *habus* properties with new properties often owned by the Wahbis, surely an indication of the conscious geographic relocation (even segregation?) of the different religious groups. In a 1229/1813-14 document, an exchange was made between two owners: seven olive trees located around H. al-Suq owned by a Wahbi family (al-Naffusi) were exchanged for land (*ard*) and a house (*hush*) in Humat Bumallal owned by the mosque (document # 97). In a document dated to 1240/1824-25, Abd al-Rahmān Ibn 'Ayyad, the *qayid* of Jerba between 1240-1242/1824-27 deeded as *habus* for the benefit of the mosque one of his properties just after he had purchased it from a Wahbi family (Bni Biyan) of Uffar (document # 103). The *habus* related to the mosque are concentrated around H. al-Suq (al-Hashshan, Bumallal, Tawrit...) while only some are scattered in the northern and the central areas of the island (Mellita, Uffar, al-May...).

The various descriptions of these properties point to a pattern of settlement that is no different than the traditional pattern, which characterizes the Jerban landscape. The *manzil* or estate is the major form of settlement around which all the other economic and social components are organized. It is composed of a habitation (*hush*) at the centre, which is a house organized around a courtyard and does not have to be walled in all parts. The absence of a clearly marked access to the *hush* can be explained by the simple fact that the courtyard of the *hush* includes the piece of land surrounding it. This piece of land can be, at least, in part a large garden (*jnan*) of various plantations (olive trees, apple trees... etc.) containing the basic water installations either for agricultural or human needs (wells, channels, and cisterns). Finally, the *manzil* is walled by earthen wall (*tibia*) in which we might find one or more accesses. In other words, the *manzil* with its habitation(s) and agricultural subsidiaries in its totality is "The House".

Other cases of Sunni settlements on Jerba adopt the same features. A close look to the Mahbuli estate that was developed at least since the eighteenth century in the rural areas southwest of H. al-Suq confirms the Sunni appropriation of the *manzil*

detailed description and a commentary on J. al-Shaykh of Humat al-Suq see al-Mrabit 15-17.

⁸ For a detailed description and a commentary on J. al-Turk see al-Mrabit 22-24.

Fig. 3
Diagram of the Mahbuli family's *manzil* on the basis of a private document dated 1284/1874

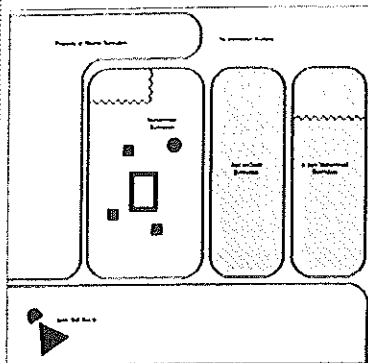
⁹ We have 28 documents related to the *ahbus* of J. al-Ghurba (dct 92 to 114, dcts 123 to 126, and dct 198). Even though the attachment of the Sunni population to this mosque goes back to the late medieval period (as is shown in the 1449 *ahbus* document mentioned in Ibn Azum's *fatawa*, [See Qasim, Vol. 2: 387-389]) the degree of attention that the Sunni/Maliki had lent this mosque during the Ottoman period in order to mark their economic and social presence on the island is unprecedented. Its role in the weakening of the Wahbis is reflected in the latter's expressions (in an early modern poem) of "losing it" to the "strangers" *ghuraba* (Ja'bir, 337) Its "minaret" overlooking Humat al-Suq was an unbearable image for the early modern Wahbi imaginary - probably signifying to them the elevated place that the "foreign" religious group, i.e., the Sunni, was enjoying.

¹⁰ The biographies of the leading Sunni figures in Jerba especially during the eighteenth century are included in Maqdish's *Nuzhat al-Anzar*. Among these is one of the most extensive biographies of Ibrahim al-Jinni, the major seventeenth century Sunni figure in Jerba and the founder of *al-Zawiya al-Jinniyya* (along with the biographies of his successors from his own descendents) and other Sunni figures in the island such as the Mufti of the Sunni of the mid-eighteenth century, Ali b. al-Shahid al-Minyi and the Sufi shaykh Abū Maghāra (Maqdish Vol. 2: 436-448 and 452-457).

¹¹ The families with the surname of Bukhubza who belong to the Mahbuliyyin, an Arab tribal faction that was involved in the transhumant networks in the mainland, seem to have settled

form. To the north of the "Gru' transect", and precisely within Humat Bazim, we came across a wide flat agricultural field with some ruined habitations and water installations surrounding the current habitations of the Bukhubza (aka Mahbuli) families.¹¹

The "Mahbuli's *manzil*" is demarcated to the northwest by a small cemetery of the family and to the southeast by a mosque/zawiya by the name of Sidi Bus'id. The description of their estate is, in effect, provided through some of their private



documents that were made available to us. One of these, which included an order sent from the Bey of Tunis to the governor of Jerba Rustum Basha, contains a 1284/1874 detailed description of the entire estate, on which we have based a visual reconstruction (Fig. 3). This document includes a delineation of the properties of Muhammad al-Mahbuli Bukhubza al-Jirbi (d. 1284/1874) in Humat Bazim and mentions a *saniya* to the east of his house (*manzil suknah*), which was bounded by a *tabiya* in its south and east ends, and by a channel (*saru*) to the north. The document also identifies the enclosed space as a

rayih and mentions the existence of more than one *makhzan* (storage hut) The *manzil* (identified as being "all the houses (*adwar*) and makhzans" and all that is "in it" (lands and *saniya*-s), is delimited to the south by the mosque Sidi Bus'id and the owners include other families than Muhammad's.

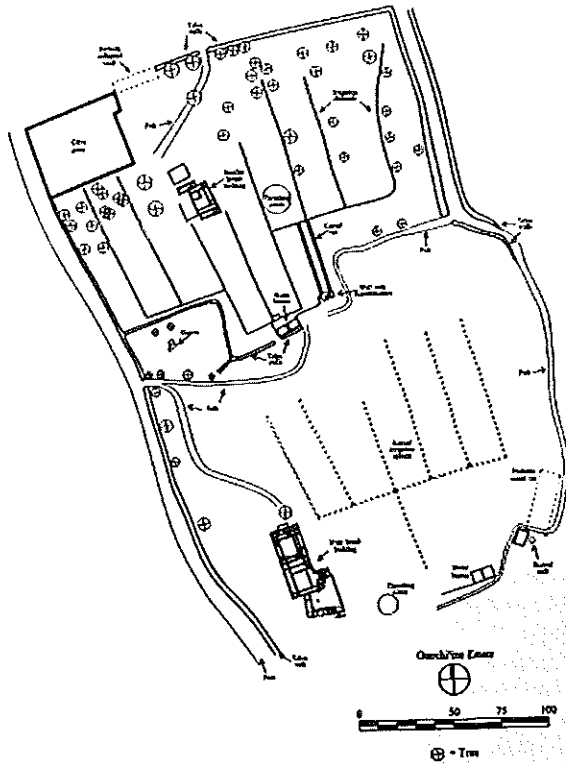
The same patterns can be found in Ibadi/Wahbi in Jerba like the area surrounding the mosque of Ibn Ya'la (document # 74 1088/1677) or the properties of the families of Ibn Imghar (document # 195 1194/1783). During the survey conducted within the framework of the Jerba Project we have frequently come across the ruins of early modern *manzils*. This is the case notably of *manzil al-Gish'iyyin* (Humat al-Gish'iyyin is south of Humat al-Suq towards the centre of the island), which is a large complex of composed basically of two *manzils* of the same unknown owner. (Fig. 4)

The *manzil*, a self-sufficient and enclosed pattern, was the basic form of settlement in Jerba before the inflow of the Sunni population and afterwards when the latter appropriated it. Therefore, in principle, nothing would designate it as an Ibadi form of settlement. It is rather a Jerban form of settlement. It is also the dominant form of settlement that defines the general rural nature of the Jerban landscape. This was, however, possible only until the nineteenth century when the fall of the Wahbi self-rule coincided with the emergence of the first urban sites in the island since Late Antiquity. By this time, however, Jerba landscape had become part of the Ibadis' religious rhetoric and defence of their principles.

Jerba Landscape and the 'Sunnization' of the Ibadis' Thought

The problem of urbanization in Jerba seems to have become, at least from the point of view of the Ibadis, a religious/doctrinal issue. At the end of the eighteenth century, an Ibadi scholar found it plausible and necessary to argue against the holding of the Friday prayers in Jerba by affirming the predominantly rural aspect of Jerba.

The *Jawab al-Risala al-Ghadamsiyya*¹² written by an unknown Ibadi/Wahbi scholar in *Dhu'l qa'da* 1210/ May-June 1796, originally a response to an anti-Ibadi/Wahbi epistle sent from Ghadamis,¹³ contains a rare insight into the Ibadi/Wahbi position toward contemporary religious issues. When justifying the Jerbi Wahbi refusal on Jerba to perform the Friday prayer, the author provides us with a specific landscape picture he perceives of the island, noting the predominance of the rural, and non-contiguously built habitations, contrasting them with the existence of a "*madina*" in Mzab (*Jawab*: 106-107). This is not, however, the usual reason advanced by the Ibadis to explain their



sometime during the early modern period in some areas of Jerba, including in Humat al-Gru'. The Mahbuliyyin seem to be one of the major tribal factions among many others that got drawn into the internal conflicts of the island towards the end of the seventeenth century. According to the Wahbi chronicle, *The Epistles (Rasa'il) of al-Hilati*, many Arab tribes especially Wirghimma and Wiryimma were brought to the island by the order of the current governor Sa'id Ibn Musa Ibn Jjud (d. 1097/1686) to help him in his fight against his brother 'Abd al-Rahman. To do so, he seems to have helped them settle on the island. The supporters of his brother, however, were not based on *ahl Jerba* but on other Arab tribes from the mainland, including the area

Fig. 4
Manzil al-Gish'iyyin
(Gish'iyyin Estate)

of al-A'rad. Sometime just before 1686, Abd al-Rahman landed in Ajim by passing through the small island of al-Qat'aya al-Bahriyya in a failed attack against the Arab allies of his brother. Among the Arab tribal factions that participated in the latter attack were the Mahbuliyyin as al-Hilati cites a dialogue that occurred between him and a man from the Mahbuliyyin injured during the attack (*rajan min al-mahbuliyyin al-halikin*). The nineteenth century presence of the Mahbuliyyin as shown by the private document point to an early modern infiltration into the island most probably within the context described by al-Hilati dating from the seventeenth century (al-Hilati 69 and 72).

¹² *Jawab al-Risala al-Ghadamiyya* is an unpublished manuscript preserved in the library of L'Association de la Conservation de Jerba. This manuscript, eighty pages long, may be the autograph itself.

¹³ The letter is sent from the Wahbis of NADU newly installed in Ghadamis to the Wahbis of Jerba seeking support from them against the hostile actions by some local scholars.

¹⁴ See Renata Holod's study in the forthcoming

resistance to the holding of the Friday prayer. As in the case of the Shi'is, usually their main reason has been the absence of the "Just Imam".

During the Rustumid imamate of the ninth century in Tahart, there had been a Friday mosque "*masjid al-jami*" where the Friday prayer was lead by the Rustumid imam (Ibn al-Saghir 34 and al-Baruni 30-31). It is generally accepted that the beginning of the Ibadis' refusal to hold a Friday prayer happened after the fall of the imamate in Tahart. Even though we do not have sufficient evidence from the Ibadi sources of Jerba whether or not they ever held Friday prayer during the medieval period at any time, various indications point to the fact that was known more generally during the early modern period, namely that the Ibadis refused to hold such a prayer. Al-Tijani's early fourteenth century long account about Jerba reports the Ibadi omission of this communal prayer because of the absence of the "Just Imam" (al-Tijani 127), thus echoing earlier sources, such as al-Bakri. For the Ibadis of Jerba, all the prayers were the same, and there were no special prayers on Friday; so too all the mosques in the island were the same and there was no indication of the usual Sunni functional differentiation between the *jami'* and the *masjid*.¹⁴ Yet, this does not mean that all the mosques in Jerba were regarded exactly as equals. Some of them were highly regarded and designated with adjectives that pointed to their special status; but in all of these cases there was no a single major mosque that would be called "*The Masjid Jami*" as is the case in Sunni contexts. For instance, the so called "*al-Masjid al-Kabir*" (Great Mosque) in Humat al-Hashshan was neither the largest nor the major Ibadi mosque. It was called so only because it was related with Abi Miswar al-Yahrasni, a major Ibadi figure to whom it is attributed.

To argue for the conditions of establishing the Friday prayer partly on the basis of the existence of a specific form of settlement ("at least a village that has contiguous

publication of the Jerba Project on « The Mosques of Jerba ».

¹⁵ For instance in Suhnun's Mudawwana the conditions of the Friday prayer include mainly « a concentrated village that its houses are contiguous to each other » and « the village that has continuously linked buildings », which might have one market or more (Suhnun Ibn Sa'id 152-153)

¹⁶ In al-Ghazali's *thya* "among the conditions of the Friday prayer is « the location: [the Friday prayer] is not permitted in the deserts and wilderness or even among a community inhabiting tents. It is required only in a location that has at least a group of forty buildings [families]. » He also specifies: « it is not permitted in villages (*qarya*) or locations (*balad*) that have forty dispersed houses. » (al-Ghazali Vol. 1: 238)

¹⁷ In this context we can explain the existence of various treatises dealing exclusively with the holy dimensions of the day and the prayer of Friday. See: al-Nisā'ī's *al-Jumu'a* and al-Sayyūnī's *al-Lam'a fi Khasā'is Yawm al-Jumu'a*.

¹⁸ A scholar from al-Yunsi family -from which would come those who supported the initiation of the Friday prayer (al-Hilati 60) and from which originated the major case of conversion to Malikism from Wahbism during the eighteenth century (al-Meryemī Vol. 2: 361)- was among the main figures who financially supported the expansion of J. al-Shaykh (al-Hilati 24).

¹⁹ This standard image was first established by al-Bakri (9th/11th century) and then was recopied by later sources (al-Bakri Vol. 2: 668 and Yaqūī Vol. 2: 118)

²⁰ The discussion of al-Tijani's « *madīnat Jirba* », his overall account, and the problem of the medieval habitats can be found in Holod's studies in the forthcoming publication of the Jerba Project on the « Medieval Sources » and « Medieval Habitats ».

²¹ In addition to his report, Piri Reis produced a map of Jerba. The map is rotated to the right in relation to the mainland. The coast is more accurately depicted along

buildings") is essentially a Sunni argument, either for the Maliki¹⁵ or the other Sunni groups.¹⁶ Among the Sunnis, it is even possible to notice veneration not only for the Friday prayer but also for the day of Friday itself.¹⁷ This is just one of the many indications from which we can perceive that not only the Ibadis were implementing Sunni arguments but also that their hard core was using the Sunni law to defend other non-Sunni traditions. These processes take place during the later part of the early modern period, the time of dissolution of the Ibadis hegemony over the island. It seems that by the nineteenth century only some "pockets of resistance" among the Ibadis still refused to hold Friday prayer.

According to al-Hilati, the main Ibadi reporter during the seventeenth century, the first Friday prayer ever held in Jerba was during the time of Musa Ibn Sa'id Ibn Jلود in *Safar* 1079/July 1668 with the support of some Ibadi scholars, notably from al-Yunsi family (al-Hilati 60). The problem of the Friday prayer at this time was apparently the subject of significant controversies among the Wahbi scholars and it cannot be a mere coincidence that a treatise banning the Friday prayer was written by a contemporary scholar, Abd Allah al-Sidwikshi, during this period (al-Hilati note 169). The choice of J. al-Shaykh of Humat al-Suq, located in the main Ibadi market in the north, as the site of this "Sunni" innovation would have been a particularly pointed one.

It is important to notice that J. al-Shaykh was the subject of major architectural transformation in 1028/1618 ordered by the pro-Tunis governor Sa'id Ibn Jلود to commemorate his victory against his brother after a violent struggle over the governance of the island. The introduction of forty-two domed vaults (Al-Mrabit 15) was entirely unique compared to the standards of the Ibadi religious architecture on Jerba. (These changes were characterized by al-Hilati as "unique": al-Hilati 24). For that reason it should be understood as a conscious decision to imitate Ottoman architecture.¹⁸ The neighbouring J. al-Turk, the typical Ottoman mosque on Jerba with its round minaret and dome, was probably built by the end of the sixteenth century (al-Mrabit 22-24), thus making it the most likely model imitated by the builders of J. al-Shaykh. The dome seems to be the common language of the pro-Ottoman groups of Jerba during the seventeenth century since it was also the model followed in J. al-Ghurba', whose superstructure was entirely rebuilt by the 1640s with the introduction of one of the largest domes ever built in Jerba (al-Mrabit 29). These reconstruction projects also expanded the prayer hall, obviously reflecting the growing population in Humat al-Suq, a fact indicated by Abu Ras (Abu Ras 98). Thus, it was only since this time, and at this market area and around it that the earliest known urban settlement since the Islamic conquest on Jerba was being slowly formed. "Al-Suq al-Kabir", also known by the toponym of "Suq al-Khamis" and later "Humat al-Suq" was finally becoming a *madina* with its own *jami'*. "A space without cities" the basic designation for Jerba in the non-Jerban representations, either textual or cartographic, throughout the medieval and early modern periods, finally had a city again.

The Geographic and Cartographic Representations of Jerba

According to the geographical sources from the medieval period, one of the main characterizations of Jerba is that it is a location of "many gardens" (*basatin kathira*). At the same time, not a single source mentions the presence of urban sites.¹⁹ Al-Tijani, the main Arabic source about Jerba during the medieval period, decides to call the ruins of Meninx the "old city of Jerba" (*madīnat Jirba al-qadima*) but when he describes the contemporary inhabitants on the basis of his own observation he notices only the abundance of "one or more small huts (*akhsas*) made of palm trees built by each one of them in his land" (al-Tijani 122-123), a description that corresponds with the earlier sources' indication of "many gardens" and the later definition of the *manzil* from the early modern *habus* documents.²⁰ By the beginning of the sixteenth century, Leo Africanus notices the existence only of a weekly market at the location of Humat al-Suq on which gather not only the

inhabitants of the island but also the Arabs of the mainland (Leo 399). Likewise, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Jerban chronicler Abu Ras al-Jirbi describes Humat al-Suq (he calls it the "great market" *al-suq al-kabir*) as simply a "weekly market" held in Monday and Thursday among six other weekly markets throughout the island. He uses the term the "cities" (*mudun*) only when he describes the "ancient ruins" (*athar qadima*), which are the known pre-Islamic sites (Meninx, Haribus, Burgu...). As for the contemporary landscape, he talks about the *huma*, an ambiguous term meaning generally a rural quarter but not exactly *qarya* (Abu Ras 76-88). Therefore, his overall representation of the landscape of the island corresponds with the contemporary unknown Ibadī scholar of the *Jawab al-Risala al-Ghadamsiyya* mentioned previously.

The cartographic sources provide a clearer image of the usual visitors' impression of the island, also corroborating the textual sources. On Piri Reis' map of Jerba dated at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the only sites mentioned are the coastal forts and some mosques (Piri Reis 699).²¹ Although the map was essentially part of Piri Reis' military report of the island-Jerba would be one of the major bases for the Ottomans' sea battles in the Mediterranean during that century-it was the earliest cartographic representation made specifically of Jerba. However, Humat al-Suq or any other urban site for that matter was not represented, obviously because it was not a city, merely a weekly market as the contemporary account of Leo Africanus indicates.

Likewise, in the eventual European engravings of Jerba made during the Spanish-Ottoman 1560 war over the island, the present-day area of Humat al-Suq is occupied by an exaggerated representation of the fort of Burj al-Ghazi Mustafa.²² The depiction of vegetation is also informative: even though the emphasis on palm trees reflects the impact of the coastal landscape on the imaginary of the engraver, the spread of plantations and the absence of urban centres mirrors the general impression of most textual sources that always record the predominance of the rural settlements and the overwhelming presence of tree groves.

The same impression of the Jerban landscape was still dominant until the middle of the nineteenth century- more than forty years after Abu Ras' account-when the students of the newly founded *Military School of Bardu* made a survey and a map of the island (*Madrasat Bardu al-Harbiyya* 33-40). The map (Fig. 5) presents the entire island but only covers the coasts in detail. Although in a different style, the image of a highly dispersed form of settlement is further elaborated. The domestic habitats, spread throughout the island, are indicated as little crosses and parallel strokes in the middle of what is meant to show cultivated land, represented by little green dots. The buildings that are more emphasized are as usual the fortifications (both forts and lookouts). The religious buildings are as dispersed as the domestic ones. No urban or any contiguously built settlement is indicated either on the map or in the written report, including in the area of Humat al-Suq.²³

The Absence of the Urban Centre and the Unstable Location of the Political Power

Although the outsiders' eyes were focused on the coastal fortifications, the latter were rarely the seats of political power of the Jerbans. An invader attempting to control the island, as for example the Spanish in the late thirteenth and beginning fourteenth centuries, found it much easier to concentrate on the forts than to defeat the local population in the interior of the island. Burj al-Ghazi Mustafa, known during the medieval periods as Burj al-Qashūl, is the nearest fort to the site of present town of Humat al-Suq. Over the medieval centuries, and especially by the early modern period, it became the major fort in the island. The Catalans may not have built it initially at the end of the thirteenth century as Bartolomeo de Neocastro suggests (Neocastro 63), yet all other possible suggestions do not point to the Ibadī Jerbans as the initiators of such a building project. The Jerbans did use the Jerba forts as a temporary refuge or prison from time to time, but there is no indication that they ever

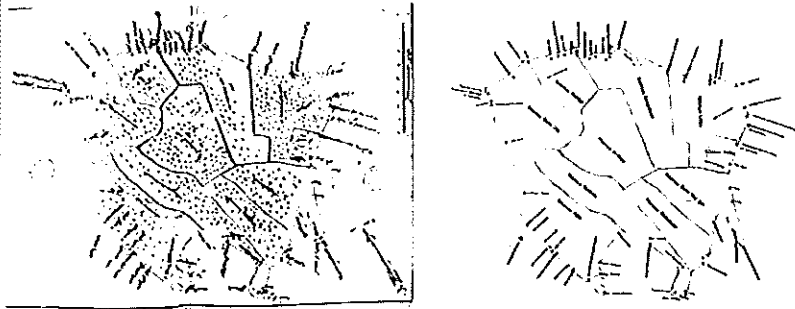
the eastern and southern parts of the island. Little sketches representing different types of buildings are put in to emphasize specific locations mentioned in the text, especially when describing the way to recognize the coast of the island. Military installations are the best represented. In fact, two distinct buildings forms differentiate between the forts and smaller fortifications. Small notes were made to ensure emphasis on the fort, the *Da'a* of Jerba, i.e. *Burj al-Ghazi Mustafa*. The two other fortifications are probably *Burj al-Qantara* and *Burj Qachil al-Wadi*. Two mosques are represented in the south-western part of the island by a domed building with a minaret. These certainly were not meant to represent all the mosques seen by Reis, the only reason they were located on the map were as aids to the sailing directions in the text. The interior of the island, far from the coasts that interested the Reis' expedition, is indifferently indicated by the domestic habitats presented as little house-like forms scattered throughout the island with palm trees. The causeway (*al-qantara*) is clearly distinguished, and pointed out with the topographical elements surrounding it, like the sea channel (*wadi al-bah*). The causeway is shown cut, the break in communication with the mainland at the time is mentioned also in the text. This area seems to be the most carefully detailed and comprehensible, since Reis would have needed to present all the available information about access to the island. In fact, thanks to this type of knowledge, the Ottoman fleet lead by Dragut (Turqu) in 1560 was able to deal with the Spanish attack and respond to it effectively later. The textual sources mention the role played by the local population in helping the Ottomans; Reis' map indicates that the latter would not have been totally ignorant about the topographical specifics of the region in any case. Reis' map (for one like it) reflects the state of information possessed by sixteenth century Ottoman fleets like Dragut's (Sources 289-96).

²² The major engraving according to Marcheseourt is Gastaldi's *Disegno dell'isola*

Fig. 5
(Left) Bardu Military School map 1850s. (Right) Transliterated map

de Gerbi (Monchicourt 30-33 and Fig. II). This first accurate map of Jerba made by non-Muslims was reproduced in many copies preserved in various libraries including the *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris and the *British Museum*. It depicts an episode dated probably to June 1560, i.e., before the defeat in July of the Spanish garrison barricaded in Burj al-Ghazi Mustafa and after the naval battle fought weeks earlier. Unlike Reis' map, the elements composing the drawing were not meant to give the general topographic description of the island. This map is instead a visual representation of a specific moment in a military conflict as depicted by a contemporary witness who was mostly related to the Spanish army itself. The purpose of the engraving as part of a *Gazetta* that is supposed to bring to the reader an exciting moment of news, explains the emphasis on the military moment rather than the geographical representation of the island. The disproportionate scales of the ships (*galere*), the fortresses, and the army barricades in relation to the geographical scale point to such an intention. Still, the map is full of information, mostly unknown in the previous sources, about the existence of many small fortresses, which are identified with their name, though generally misheard and wrongly located like *Agira* and *Torre de Teste*.

²³ The map is totally different in style than the previous ones. A distinctive intention of applying the basic modern knowledge of cartography can be read throughout. For example, the northern coast of the island still shows the absence of the north-western sand spit, a feature that makes its appearance only later. Outlines on many locations are far from the real geographical points, however. Although there is a clear indication of both direction and scale (*lmqyas amyah*, nothing suggests the use of a precise scale, making it difficult, for instance, to translate the map indications of the administrative borders (*khumus*) into precise



built one.²⁴

More importantly, the major, and basically the only, presence of the various invaders was confined within the forts themselves. For instance, the Catalans in the late thirteenth century and early fourteenth century avoided adventuring inside the island as the account of a local military leader of these forces, Ramón Muntaner, suggests. Their movements were restricted along the coasts - except when they were supported by their local allies (Muntaner Vol. 2: 593-621). The same can be said about the attacks and the movements of the Spanish forces during the sixteenth century (al-Hilati 28-41 and Monchicourt 86-104). On the other hand, the Ibadī/Wahbī shaykhs during the medieval period (Bani Yahrasi and Bani Smumin) or in the early modern period (Bani Jلود and Bani 'Ayyad) continued to locate themselves on their estates a good distance away from the forts and coasts. Especially of high interest is the account of al-Sghayyir Ibn Yusuf about Shaykh Sa' d Ibn JI d (d. 1739-40) whose activities were mainly centred on his private estate in Sidghiyan where it seems that a small-armed force of slaves was protecting him. He would go twice a week to the market in Humat al-Suq where he exercised his prerogatives as the highest legal authority in a periodically held but temporary court, - a pattern following the periodic but temporary market. Just like his ancestors, he had good reason to stay away from the forts: the small Ottoman force that was located near Humat al-Suq was directed to assassinate him probably because of his involvement in the intrigues of the power struggle in Tunis (al-Sghayyir Ibn Yusuf 176-181).

The military forces that came to Jerba tried to break down their isolation in the forts by seeking to control the interior territory through local alliances. Muntaner records a remarkable instance, when he tried to enlarge the fort territory into a nucleus of a fortified village. He made an attempt of reorganizing the local population by the expulsion of his enemies, the Ibadī/Nukkaris, and the concentration of his allies, the Ibadī/Wahbis around al-Qashtil, the fort. He built a small surround with many huts and provided them with rations of food.²⁵ The textual, cartographic, and habus sources show us that such attempts were short lived, however.

The Ibadī self-sufficient system of governance based both on the political governance (*mashyakhat al-hukm*) and on the strong legal authority of the religious elite (*al-'Azzaba*)²⁶ survived for more than eight centuries without the need to found a central and densely built-up site. Such survival was in close harmony with the economic landscape of the island based on a dispersed but densely packed form of rural settlement that can be called "the manzil order". The question stands, however, whether Ibadism as an ideological apparatus - "insistence on justice" and so on - would have been directly instrumental or responsible for the establishment and the persistence of the *manzil* form of settlement. Other Ibadī concentrations elsewhere in North Africa show other patterns of settlement - not only in the early centre of the Imamate in Tahart, but also the densely settled centres of the Mزاب pentapolis.

Perhaps, the understanding of Jerba cultural landscape lies solely within the context of the island. Probably, its unique ecology and geography created the underlying conditions for the development and the persistence of such a pattern.

While the site of Humat al-Suq began expanding into a nucleus of an urban centre

night with their wives and children and I gave, at once, rations of flour and vegetables and cheeses, which were coming in abundantly. And so likewise, I sent to tell the traitor who was chief of Miscona [Mistawa/Nukkari], namely Alef [Khalaf], to come to me; but he would not. However, two old men of Miscona [Mistawa/Nukkari] came to me, but their followers would not leave the others; and of these two one was Amar Ben Buceyt and the other Barquet. What shall I tell you? I had not been in Jerba a month before I had in my power, altogether, three hundred men of Moabia [Wahbis] with their wives and children" (Muntaner 605)

²⁶ On the religious elite of the Ibadī/Wahbis of Jerba (*al-'Azzaba*) see the work of Ja'biri.

²⁷ About the persistence through the early modern period of many standard Ibadī features in the mosques of many areas of the island see Renata Holod's study on the « Mosques of Jerba » in the forthcoming publication of the Jerba Project.

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