

were to appear before the registrars and register themselves and their properties. Women were to be represented before the registrars by male representatives.<sup>72</sup>

When registering properties and lands with the commission, individuals were to present their title deeds. According to Article 12 of Chapter 2 of the law, if property transfers had been made informally, property owners would be sent either to the sharia court (*mehkeme*) or, if the property was endowed, to the waqf offices, so they could renew their title deeds.<sup>73</sup> Similarly, Article 3 of Chapter 6 also indicates that property and land sales could take place in both the sharia courts and the waqf offices, *if* the tapu certificate (*kuşan*) was presented and it was noted on it that taxes had been paid.<sup>74</sup> The explicit inclusion here of courts as an acceptable forum at this stage to deal with land deeds, *in addition to* the tapu offices appears to contradict the procedure dictated by the previous year's *Tapu Nizamnamesi*. Why the turnaround? Was this a nod to previously existing practice? Was this a stop-gap measure until clerks were in place at the district level? Answer(s) to these questions will be discussed below (in part two of the "On the Ground" section) and in Chapter Four, where we will run into land-related cases heard before the sharia court more than a quarter-century later, in 1895.

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid., Chapter 2, Article 7b, p. 117.

<sup>73</sup> While Ongley and, likely, the original, does not state that the *mahkeme* in reference is a sharia court, the reference in the same article to the *qāḍī* as the head of that court makes this point clear. See E. Tyan, "Qāḍī" in P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, and W.P. Heinrichs, eds. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, second edition. Brill Online, 2015. Accessed 26 November 2015.

<sup>74</sup> Ongley, 131-132.