

that he requested validation that his fellow villagers were legal inheritors of individuals who held tapu certificates issued two decades previous. Secondly, it is observed that the monetary stakes involved were likely not at the heart of the lawsuit. If, as is probable, ownership was based on a system of shares, each litigant was to receive about fifty kuruş after the case. Although not an insignificant sum, this was no fortune. At the time, fifty kuruş would cover the cost of five-days' rent of a store on the south row of the vegetable market in the Muhtasibin quarter of Hebron,³³⁵ or about one-and-a-half weeks' wages for a clerk in the regional Court of First Instance at the time,³³⁶ or about three weeks' of daily maintenance-money (*nafaqa*) loaned by the court at the time to women whose husbands had left them temporarily without financial means.³³⁷

Thirdly, the case appears in form and procedure to be what Zouhair Ghazzal has characterized as fictitious litigations. Quite unrelated to bribery or corruption, fictitious litigations were procedural fictions, which Ghazzal describes as “judicial inventiveness”, spurious litigations brought about to engender a procedure (a court case) that would produce a needed outcome (a documented ruling) which would validate the existence of an

³³⁵ HR 16/ 93/ 40 (3 Rajab 1312 / 31 December 1894).

³³⁶ HR 16 / 2 / 2 , 7 Sh 'aban 1311 / 13 February 1894. The deceased clerk, 'Alī b. Ḥassan Ghalma(?), was owed six weeks' salary, equivalent to 225 kuruş.

³³⁷ *Nafaqa* loans granted by the Hebron court between the 1870s and 1914 averaged 2.5 kuruş per day for the women of Hebron. See, for example, HR 16 / 78 / 11 (24 Rabi' II 1312 / 25 October 1894), HR 18/55/70 (5 Rajab 1316 / 19 November 1898), and HR 3/122/305 (25 al-Qada 1286 (26 February 1870), and HR 16/78/11 (24 Rabi II 1312 /25 October 1894), and HR 4/19/476 (3 Rabi I 1287/ 3.6.1870).