

MACIEJ CZYŻ

The Land and the Village of An-Nā'ūra¹

Summary

While working on the translation of the chronicle of Al-Anṭākī (937/8–1034) I attempted to create a gazetteer of the geographical terms used in it. Some required in-depth research in historical sources in order to find a modern equivalent for the ancient expression. One of these terms is **the land of An-Nā'ūra** (أرض الناعورة; *an-nā'ūra* is a noria, a water-wheel), the topic I wish to discuss in this article.

Keywords: Syria, geography, history, historical geography, An-Na'ūra

I. The Land of An-Nā'ūra

There are two villages named An-Nā'ūra, one in the outskirts of Damascus and the other in northern modern Israel, but both are too distant to be the place Al-Anṭākī refers to. This author mentions An-Nā'ūra as the battlefield between Sa'd ad-Dawla (the ruler of Aleppo) and Bakgūr, a rebel who was besieging Bālis, a port on the Euphrates which remained loyal to Sa'd ad-Dawla. It means that An-Nā'ūra was located on the way from Aleppo (36,20N, 37,16E) to the east, towards Bālis (35,99N, 38,12E).

The information about the location of An-Nā'ūra on this way is confirmed by the author of the famous 13th-century geographical dictionary *Mu'ğam al-Buldān*, Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, who specifies that Maslama Ibn 'Abd al-Malik had a stone palace in An-Nā'ūra (Maslama was the son of one of the greatest Umayyad caliphs, and became famous during

¹ The article is based on a part of my PhD thesis: Maciej Czyż, *Bliski Wschód w kronice Yaḥyī al-Anṭākīego* [The Middle East in the chronicle of Yaḥyā āl-Anṭākī], PhD thesis presented at the Oriental Studies Faculty of Warsaw University 2016, vol. 3, p. 231–9. I'd like to thank my friend, Davide Arrigoni, for correcting my article for me.

the siege of Constantinople, 717–718); Yāqūt also adds that the citizens of An-Nā'ūra used to take water from streams.²

Another useful source is Kamāl ad-Dīn, also known as Ibn al-'Adīm, the 13th-century author of a chronicle of northern Syria (*Zubda*) and a biographical dictionary merged with a geographical description of the region (*Buġya*). In *Zubda* he writes about a fortress (*hiṣn*) Maslama had in An-Nā'ūra, and An-Nā'ūra itself, as is clear in the text, must have been located somewhere not far from Bālis.³ When Kamāl ad-Dīn mentions An-Nā'ūra again, he places it in the context of Bālis and calls it a *bandar*, which is a port or a trade centre.⁴ Among other references to An-Nā'ūra the most important are the one informing us that it was located in An-Nuqra / Nuqrat Banī Asad⁵, and the one specifying that it was located between Bazā'a (36,38N, 37,565E), Al-Bāb (36,37N, 37,52E) (and, in general, the valley of the river (*nahr*) Aḍ-Ḍahab, also known as the valley (*wādī*) Buṭnān) and Aleppo.⁶

In *Buġya* Kamāl ad-Dīn confirms that An-Nā'ūra is part of An-Nuqra and that Maslama had a palace built there. The historian claims that he himself saw a tower of that palace being dismantled; moreover, he writes that Maslama owned many villages in the neighbourhood, including Al-Ḥānūt, where Maslama died – in the historian's times that village was called Al-Ḥānūta, perhaps it's today's Rubay'at al-Ḥānūta (35,83N, 37,35E) in the Ġabal al-Aḥaṣṣ hills.⁷ The allusion to the palace of Maslama is coupled with an interesting reference to the residences of the Umayyad caliph 'Umar Ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz in Ḥanāṣir.⁸

The most valuable information about the location of An-Nuqra and An-Nā'ūra is elsewhere⁹. Kamāl ad-Dīn informs us that Nuqrat Banī Asad is the land of the Asad tribe, which was itself a part of the Muḍar tribe. The border of An-Nuqra was:

From Ḥanāṣira to the Al-Aḥaṣṣ hills, to the valley, up to the border of the land; next, going west, to the borders of An-Nā'ūra and the hills surrounding it: from Ḥaqlà to Al-Qabūn, to Al-Ġarrā'a, to Al-Mallūḥa and Kusyān; to the borders of the land in the land of As-Sabḥa; next along the hills¹⁰ going to the border of the river: from Sab'īn and Kāris; to the borders of Wādī Banī Kilāb.¹¹

² Šihāb ad-Dīn Abū 'Abd Allāh Yāqūt Ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Ḥamawī ar-Rumī al-Baġdādī (from now on: Yāqūt), *Mu'ġam al-Buldān* (from now on: *Mu'ġam*), Leiden 1860, vol. 5, p. 253.

³ Kamāl ad-Dīn Abū āl-Qāsim 'Umar Ibn Aḥmad Ibn Hibat Allāh Ibn al-'Adīm al-Ḥalabī al-Ḥanaffī (from now on: Kamāl ad-Dīn), *Zubdat al-Ḥalab min Tārīḥ Ḥalab* (from now on: *Zubda*), ed. Ḥalīl al-Manšūr, Beirut 1996, pp. 32–33.

⁴ Kamāl ad-Dīn, *Zubda*, p. 103.

⁵ Kamāl ad-Dīn, *Zubda*, p. 287 i 297.

⁶ Kamāl ad-Dīn, *Zubda*, pp. 316–317.

⁷ Kamāl ad-Dīn, *Buġyat āt-Ṭalab fī Tārīḥ Ḥalab* (from now on: *Buġya*), ed. Suhayl Zakkār, 1987, p. 64 and 530–1.

⁸ Kamāl ad-Dīn, *Buġya*, p. 3386.

⁹ Kamāl ad-Dīn, *Buġya*, p. 537.

¹⁰ I assume that حـ Ḥ-B-L, meaning 'rope' (line?) should be corrected to جـ Ġ-B-L, meaning 'hills' / 'mountains'.

¹¹ Kamāl ad-Dīn, *Buġya*, p. 537.

1. From *Ḥanāšira*

Ḥanāšira is most likely (based on similarity of the name and geographical position) the modern **Ḥanāšir**, a city and a plain to the south of Al-Ġabbūl lake (35,78N, 37,50E).

2. to the *Al-Aḥaṣṣ hills*

The Al-Aḥaṣṣ Hills (ar. Ġabal al-Aḥaṣṣ) are hills to the south-west of Al-Ġabbūl lake, and to the south-east of Aleppo. The approximate coordinates of a central point (Ṭayyiba village) are 35,91N, 37,37E, but Kamāl-ad-Dīn means their eastern edge, close to *Ḥanāšir*.

3. to the valley, to the border of the land

The Valley is most likely the **Ḥanāšir Plain**, which is a vast valley among the hills (Al-Aḥaṣṣ and Šabīṭ). This valley extends to the **shore ('border of the land') of Al-Ġabbūl lake**. These words may mean that the *Ḥanāšir Plain* ('the valley'), to the north of *Ḥanāšir*, was itself part of An-Nuqra, up to Ġabal al-Aḥaṣṣ in the west and the shore of Al-Ġabbūl lake in the north. But if we correct 'ilā' (إلى) to 'alā' (على) we shall be able to read 'up to the valley by the border of the land', which would mean that the (eastern) border of An-Nuqra extended from (the Plain of) *Ḥanāšir* up to the Buṭnān valley (to the north of the lake) along the shore. On the one hand it appears contradictory with the further mention of the shore, because it would seem unnecessary, but on the other hand in both cases there is the analogous expression 'next', and when it comes to the mention of the shore I will present a theory that explains it.

4. next, going west, to the borders of An-Nā'ūra and the hills surrounding it

Some of these **hills surrounding An-Nā'ūra** – as the author mentioned elsewhere¹² and which is clear anyway – are the **Al-Aḥaṣṣ Hills**:

a. from *Ḥaqlā*

Ḥaqlā, today **Ḥaqla** (36,00N, 37,54E).¹³

b. to *Al-Qabṭīn*

Al-Qabṭīn retains its old name (36,01N, 37,48E).¹⁴

¹² Kamāl ad-Dīn, *Buġya*, p. 428 writes about Ġabal al-Aḥaṣṣ that they lie to the south-east of Aleppo. To the west of Ġabal al-Aḥaṣṣ he writes there are plains, to the east the desert of Ar-Ruṣāfa, to the north Nuqrat Banī Asad. Among its many villages there is *Ḥanāšira*, the residence of 'Umar Ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz.

¹³ However, dr Samīr Al-'Abd Allāh informed me (personal communication) that this is also a name of the peninsula in Al-Ġabbūl lake, whose fragile and temporary link to the mainland lies in *Ḥaqla* village.

¹⁴ This mention of the borders of An-Nā'ūra should not be read as 'hills from *Ḥaqlā* to *Al-Qabṭīn*', because they lie next to each other. I read 'To' before *Al-Qabṭīn* not as an answer to 'from' before *Ḥaqlā*, but as an equivalent of 'to' before the subsequent villages mentioned by Kamāl ad-Dīn.

c. to Al-Ġarrā'a

Al-Ġarrā'a, probably today's **Ġa''āra** (35,98N, 37.365E¹⁵).

d. to Al-Mallūḥa

Al-Mallūḥa, probably the modern **Malīḥiyya** (36,07N, 37,20E), which is even more likely because it is located before the hills closing this land from the west.

e. and Kusyān

Kusyān remains unidentified¹⁶

5. up to the border of the land in the land of As-Sabḥa

The border of the land means shore (of Al-Ġabbūl lake), while **As-Sabḥa** is a salty swamp; today it's the name of **Al-Ġabbūl lake** (approximate coordinates 35,98N, 37,61E), but it used to mean the lands that were temporarily flooded, from winter to summer.¹⁷

In this case, in my opinion the preposition 'to' before the next stage of the border description should be ignored, as a symbolical marking of the next piece of the border, but not necessarily forming – as the aforementioned villages – one line. It explains why the lake's banks are mentioned twice, because, after going earlier north-west (as the Al-Aḥaṣṣ hills do), these banks turn east around the geographical width of Malīḥiyya (the penultimate village in the Al-Aḥaṣṣ hills mentioned by Kamāl ad-Dīn and the last that I managed to identify).

One may interpret the preposition 'to' in another way, i.e. as a reference to the aforementioned villages Kusyān, Malīḥiyya, Ġa''āra, Al-Qabṭīn and Ḥaqlā, and this would mean that the land of An-Nuqra (and An-Nā'ūra) included the lands between these villages and the swampy banks of Al-Ġabbūl lake: from Ḥaqlā to the lake, from Al-Qabṭīn to the lake, from Ġa''āra to the lake, from Malīḥiyya to the lake. This theory would explain

¹⁵ While K.P. Todt and B.A. Vest, *Syria. (Syria Prōtē, Syria Deutera, Syria Euphratēsia)* (from now on: *Syria*). Wien 2015, vol. 2, p. 1186-7 are not sure where Al-Ġarrā'a is located.

¹⁶ Kusyān (كسین). There is a village with a similar name Kursiyān كرسین, coordinates 35.713347, 36.893806, but it is too distant. There are a number of villages with a similar -ān ending: tell 'Assān and 'Ayn 'Assān (36.052152, 37.226143) around it, 'Assān (36.088783, 37.224426), Turkān (36.104596, 37.259102), Rayyān (36.153643, 37.423983), but I have no basis to equate any of them with Kusyān, although in the case of Rayyān it is tempting. Further in the north there are also Marrān (36.274431, 37.351027), Šūrān (36.265106, 37.373729), Ṭūmān (36.294374, 37.477970) etc. 'Arrān is already located on the river (Nahr) aḍ-Ḍahab, so too far east tell Maysān (36.090482, 37.519705). If we consider all these villages, we must admit that only Maysān and Rayyān might be changed into Kusyān, but barely كسین – کيسان – ميسان. Maysān is a bit too far east, not far from the estuary of the Nahr aḍ-Ḍahab; Kamāl ad-Dīn's allusion to the border reaching the shore and then going along the river might be referred to Maysān, but the border going through the plains of As-Safīra and Dayr al-Ḥāfir would be too long and slanted. What is interesting is that in this case the author wrote not 'to', but 'and' before Kusyān, which may mean that Kusyān was located close to Malīḥiyya.

¹⁷ Kamāl ad-Dīn, *Buġya*, p. 272.

why the lake's banks are mentioned twice and it would give to this repetition a different meaning.

However, if we ignore the preposition 'to' we might even suppose that Kamāl ad-Dīn has only described the western border of An-Nuqra going north, but as the border turns to the east, he describes the eastern border of An-Nuqra going north along Al-Ġabbūl, and then the northern border along the hills (the border of the Al-Bāb highland). This is pointed to by the word 'next' which appeared earlier when the border changed its direction.

The description of the border does not form a single line, which is proved by the fact that after talking about the border of the land (shore) Kamāl ad-Dīn mentions the hills going up to the river, while there are no hills close to the shores. I must add that I correct حبل (rope) to جبل (mountain = hills). The word 'rope' makes little sense in this context, unless we read it as 'line'. But even then it would make little sense, because a line from Malūḥa / Malīḥiyya and Kusyan (wherever it is) and the lake's shores would be highly artificial and it would also divide An-Nuqra into half, leaving a part of the lowlands north to Al-Ġabbūl outside An-Nuqra. Moreover, it would go against the mention of An-Nā'ūra being located close to Sab'īn, because – in this case – the land immediately west to Sab'īn would be outside An-Nuqra and, thus, outside An-Nā'ūra, too. That is why one cannot assume that the border went from Malīḥiyya and Kusyān to the lake and therefore one must choose one of the earlier presented alternatives.

6. Later along the hills¹⁸ going to the border of the river

The hills going to the border of the river are the southern edge of the Al-Bāb highland, which – from the perspective of the lowland north to Al-Ġabbūl – must have been seen as hills. The river is clearly **Nahr ad-Dahab** (current mouth 36,08N, 37,53E¹⁹).

a. from Sab'īn

Sab'īn village, which still exists today with the same name (36,12N, 37,515E), lies in place where the road from Aleppo to Bālis (and further east) crossed Nahr ad-Dahab and probably because of this it was a place of several battles. It is located quite close to the mouth of the river.

b. Kāris

Kāris is most likely the modern airport-town of **Kuwayris** (which means 'Small Kāris'); West Kuwayris 36,17N, 37,51E and East Kuwayris 36,17N, 37,54E. The part of the river between Sab'īn and Kāris / Kuwayris is approximately the same as the one between the mouth of the river and the Al-Bāb plain.

¹⁸ In the edition حبل, my own correction to جبل.

¹⁹ The border of the region in this place is confirmed by another passage (Kamāl ad-Dīn, *Buġya*, p. 523) saying that Al-Ġabbūl (at the mouth of Nahr ad-Dahab) is a big village on the edge of An-Nuqra, close to Ḥusāf desert, in its land.

c. to the border of Wādī Banī Kilāb

Kamāl ad-Dīn writes about **Wādī Banī Kilāb** (meaning ‘Kilāb Valley’, Kilāb being an Arab tribe dominating northern Syria) in another place²⁰, specifying that Bazā’a lies in it or close to it. It is therefore **Buṭnān Valley**, meaning the valley of Nahr aḍ-Ḍahab river north to Kāris, where it is surrounded by the Al-Bāb highland, and not by the Dayr al-Ḥāfir plain.

The problem is that I cannot identify Kusiyan. Nevertheless, up to Malīhiyya all the mentioned places form a logical line. According to Kamāl ad-Dīn therefore, the borders of An-Nā’ūra were: Al-Ġabbūl lake; Ḥaqla; the Al-Aḥaṣṣ hills; the hills (the Al-Bāb highland) up to the Aḍ-Ḍahab river; this river between Sab’in and Kuwayris. It means that the land of An-Nā’ūra is the modern **As-Safira plain**, which is located between the Al-Aḥaṣṣ hills and Al-Ġabbūl lake, and the western half of the **Dayr Ḥāfir plain**, west to the Nahr aḍ-Ḍahab river.

One must add, to confirm these claims, that if someone could travel from Al-Bāb and Bazā’a to Aleppo through An-Nā’ūra, An-Nā’ūra must have been located on this way, so it must have encompassed at least some parts of the road from Aleppo to the east and even – if the way was direct – to the north-east, so An-Nā’ūra might have stretched much further north into the hills surrounding the As-Safira plain. If the road from Aleppo to Al-Bāb was not direct, it must have been part of the road from Aleppo to Bālis through Sab’in and then along Nahr aḍ-Ḍahab to the north or it must have deviated north from this way even earlier. But the most logical border of the land of An-Nā’ūra would be – even without Kamāl ad-Dīn’s aforementioned and corrected references – the hills surrounding the plain north to Al-Ġabbūl lake, just as earlier the border went along the Al-Aḥaṣṣ hills surrounding the plain from the west.

Kamāl ad-Dīn also mentions the houses of Maslama’s offspring in An-Nā’ūra, close to Sab’in.²¹ This means that Sab’in lay close to An-Nā’ūra. One may not know if the author meant An-Nā’ūra itself, or just some nameless place in its land. However, one must assume that Maslama’s offspring lived in the place where his residence lay even though he owed some other villages in the surrounding area. This also means that An-Nā’ūra land stretched to the north of Al-Ġabbūl lake.

Kamāl ad-Dīn provides us with very useful information concerning the eastern borders of An-Nā’ūra.²² He writes that Balāṭ village (tell 36,17N, 37.35E, village 36,16N, 37,35E) lies in An-Nuqra. And this – taking the description of the An-Nuqra border into account – means that it lies in An-Nā’ūra as well. Therefore, the northern border of An-Nā’ūra – must have been the hills (the Al-Bāb highland) to the north of the plain.

²⁰ Kamāl ad-Dīn, *Buġya*, p. 547.

²¹ Kamāl ad-Dīn, *Buġya*, p. 532.

²² Kamāl ad-Dīn, *Buġya*, p. 272.

A summary of the information concerning the border of the land of An-Nā'ūra

An-Nā'ūra was surrounded by hills (therefore it was a plain). These hills were the Al-Aḥaṣṣ hills (referred to with their name and with the names of the villages in it, forming a line from Al-Ḥaqla through Al-Qabfīn and Ġā'āra to Malīhiyya) and other hills, forming a line to the river (*nahr*) Aḍ-Ḍahab. These hills must be the southern edges of the Al-Bāb highland, because the river Aḍ-Ḍahab is described as the border of the region between Sab'īn and Kāris (Kuwayris). We also know that the Land of An-Nā'ūra encompassed Sab'īn and Balāt and that the way from Bālis to Aleppo went through it. The eastern edge of An-Nā'ūra land was the 'border of the land', meaning the shores of Al-Ġabbūl lake. The land of An-Nā'ūra is therefore a geographical unit, a plain with natural borders, which were: the Al-Aḥaṣṣ hills to the west, the southern edges of the Al-Bāb highland to the north, and the river (*nahr*) aḍ-Ḍahab and the Al-Ġabbūl lake to the east.

II. An-Nā'ūra Village

While it is possible to delimit the borders of the land of An-Nā'ūra, it is not quite clear where its capital lay. It is obvious that it lay in the northern part of the land (further north than Al-Ġabbūl lake), otherwise one would not be able to travel through it from Bazā'a and Al-Bāb to Aleppo.

Concerning the village of An-Nā'ūra we are informed by Yāqūt that it lay 8 miles from Aleppo. It cannot be true, however, because such a length would mean that the village of An-Nā'ūra lay outside the land of An-Nā'ūra. K.P. Todt and B.A. Vest²³ write that An-Nā'ūra might be identified with the ruins lying 15 kms to the east of Aleppo, but they do not say where exactly they are located and whether these 15 kms should be counted from the limits of the town or its centre, so I do not know which place they mean. It is still too close to Aleppo anyway, because it would be located either outside An-Nā'ūra land or on its very edges, while one would expect the capital of the region to be located somewhere deeper into it. René Dussaud mentions An-Nā'ūra as being immediately east to Aleppo²⁴, but doesn't give any details and doesn't place this An-Nā'ūra on the map showing environs of Aleppo, while the land of An-Nā'ūra is not mapped by him at all.²⁵

²³ K.P. Todt, B.A. Vest, *Syria*, t. 2, pp. 1539–1540; the authors also mention the information taken from Ibn Ḥurdaqbih that in the year 864 An-Nā'ūra was a station on a road between Ar-Raqqā and Qinnasrīn. Similarly to K.P. Todt and B.A. Vest, G. Lehmann, *Bibliographie der archäologischen Fundstellen und Surveys in Syrien und Libanon*, Rahden 2002 claims that An-Nā'ūra is located approximately 13 km east from Aleppo.

²⁴ R. Dussaud, *Topographie historique de la Syrie antique et médiévale* (from now on: *Topographie*), Paris 1927, p. 474. In the footnote, R. Dussaud informs that An-Nā'ūra was mentioned by Ibn aš-Šihna, but his work are not available to me, just like K.A.C. Cresswell's *Early Muslim Architecture* that, according to G. Lehmann, *Bibliographie der archäologischen Fundstellen und Surveys in Syrien und Libanon*, Rahden 2002, mentioned An-Nā'ūra's Maslama's palace on page 376, but it appears that mention was based upon Kamāl ad-Dīn.

²⁵ R. Dussaud, *Topographie*, map X.

Apart from that, An-Nā'ūra was mentioned as a place between Bālis through Ḥusāf to Aleppo where an army took a rest. If it lay so close to Aleppo, its worth as a stage on the way between Ḥusāf and Aleppo would be none, because on the one hand it would lie immediately before the end of the journey and on the other hand (for example) the way between Ḥusāf and An-Nā'ūra would be too long. On the contrary, Qaṣr al-Wurūd lies much closer to the middle of the road between Ḥusāf and Aleppo. Between Bālis and Ḥusāf there are around 45 kms in a straight line, and there is no other place on this way one could stop at. Between Ḥusāf and Qaṣr al-Wurūd there are less than 25 kms in a straight line, and between Qaṣr al-Wurūd and Aleppo a little more than 30 kms. Both these lengths – the second and the third stage, a little increased because they are in a straight line – are around a one-day march.

Kamāl ad-Dīn claims that the Abbasid army went to Aleppo from Bālis through Ḥusāf (tell 36,09N, 37.68E, village 36,10N, 37,68E) and through An-Na'ūra.²⁶ The way from Bālis to Aleppo, as we know, went through Sab'īn (the distance from Ḥusāf to Al-Ġabbūl lake is similar). The further way is not clear. The closest would be in the line Burayġa (or Qaṣr al-Wurūd) – Tall Iṣṭabl – Turaydim – Balāt. But Al-Anṭākī mentions the battle of Tall Ḥāṣil²⁷, which suggests that Tall Ḥāṣil lay on the road, so the way went more likely a little further south, not through Balāt. It is interesting to remember that Tall Iṣṭabl means 'the hill of the stables', which may refer to the road.

The Balāt ('Palace') name may seem a reference to the palace of Maslama, but one could also say the same about Qaṣr al-Wurūd ('Rose Palace', 36,12N, 37,455E), and Kamāl ad-Dīn talks about Balāt village²⁸ without specifying whether it is An-Nā'ūra or whether Maslama's palace was located near by. On the other hand, Qaṣr al-Wurūd lies much closer to Sab'īn and the lake, which agrees with Kamāl ad-Dīn's statement that it is a *bandar* and that An-Nā'ūra lay close to Sab'īn.

Kamāl ad-Dīn also informs²⁹ that An-Nā'ūra is located in An-Nuqra between Ḥānūta and the valley of Bazā'a (Buṭnān valley). If we accept that Ḥānūta is the modern Rubay'at āl-Ḥānūta, it confirms the identification of the land of An-Nā'ūra with As-Safīra plain, but if we assume Kamāl ad-Dīn considers An-Nā'ūra as a village, we should search for it on the road between Ḥānūta and the valley of Bazā'a (Buṭnān valley), which – together with the knowledge that the village of An-Nā'ūra lay on the way from Aleppo to Bālis through Sab'īn and Ḥusāf – would mean that it lay on the crossroads of these two roads. Where it was I do not know, but if these roads were approximately straight, it would be around Rayyān, Burayġa, Tall Iṣṭabl and Qaṣr al-Wurūd.

Apart from that, Kamāl ad-Dīn informs us that, close to An-Nā'ūra, between Bālis and Ar-Ruṣāfa (by which he means the desert of Ar-Ruṣāfa, not Ar-Ruṣāfa itself), on the edge of the land of Aleppo, there was the monastery (Dayr) Ḥanīnā.³⁰ Close to An-Nā'ūra

²⁶ Kamāl ad-Dīn, *Buġya*, p. 809.

²⁷ Maciej Czyż, *Bliski Wschód w kronice Yahyi al-Anṭākīego*, vol. 2, I.VIII.13e; p. 320.

²⁸ Kamāl ad-Dīn, *Buġya*, p. 68.

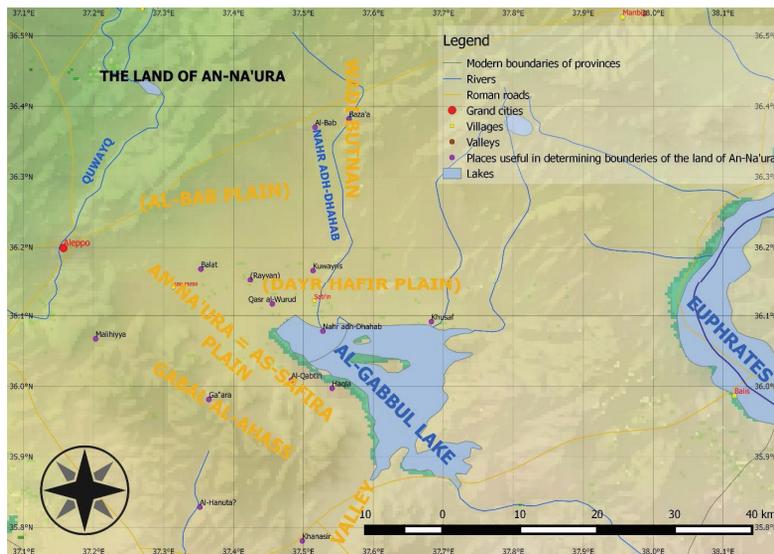
²⁹ Kamāl ad-Dīn, *Buġya*, p. 1957.

³⁰ Kamāl ad-Dīn, *Buġya*, p. 4737.

also lay the monastery of Isaac (Dayr Ishāq), known as the Raisin Monastery (Day raz-Zabīb).³¹ But as I do not know where these monasteries are, this information is useless to identify the location of An-Nā'ūra.

A summary of information concerning the location of the village of An-Nā'ūra

Yāqūt's statement that An-Nā'ūra is located 8 miles from Aleppo cannot be true, because then the village of An-Nā'ūra would lie outside the land of An-Nā'ūra and too close to Aleppo to be a station on the way to it. We know that An-Nā'ūra lay on the road between Aleppo and Bālis and that when an army crossed this way, it stopped in Ḥusāf and in An-Nā'ūra, which suggests a place in the middle of a line linking Aleppo with Ḥusāf (going through Sab'īn, where the road went through the river). An-Nā'ūra also lay on the way from Bazā'a to Ḥānūta. If we identify Ḥānūta with Rubay'at Ḥānūta, and if the road between them was straight enough, these two lines cross around villages Rayyān, Burayġa, Tall Iṣṭabl and Qaṣr al-Wurūd and it's probably there that An-Nā'ūra should be looked for.



The land of An-Nā'ūra – a map³²

³¹ Kamāl ad-Dīn, *Buġya*, p. 4689.

³² The map was created by the author of the article using QGIS program, as well as layers of land relief created by Jonathan de Ferrenti (<http://www.viewfinderpanoramas.org/>), layers of inland waters taken from <http://www.diva-gis.org/gdata> website, layers of rivers (<http://maps.library.utoronto.ca/cgi-bin/files.pl?idnum=809&title=Vector+World+Map+%28VMap%29>), layers of Roman roads (M. McCormick et al. 2013. "Roman Road Network (version 2008)", DARMC Scholarly Data Series, Data Contribution Series #2013-5. DARMC, Center for Geographic Analysis, Harvard University, Cambridge MA 02138), layers of aridity created by A. Trabucco and R.J. Zomer (A. Trabucco, R.J. Zomer, 2009. *Global Potential Evapo-Transpiration (Global-PET) and Global Aridity Index (Global-Aridity) Geo-Database*. CGIAR), layers of forests (<http://www.iscgm.org/gm/ptc.html>) and layers of Natural Earth Project.