

first time, systematic investigation of the implementation of property-tenure reforms in Palestine at a district-wide level. This study demonstrates that many rural agriculturalists in rural Hebron had independent economic power and landed wealth above subsistence levels. Hebronites were invested in implementing modernizing reforms to protect their landed assets, which they registered with the *emlak*, property-tax commission as individual holdings and as communally owned properties. While it is commonly understood that traditional, communal land-tenure arrangements (*musha'*) were disallowed after land reform, this study demonstrates how it was incorporated into reform and protected the rights of shareholders. It also argues that property-tenure reform needs to be understood as a process, not an event.

Villagers have rarely figured as subjects of Ottoman histories. This study exploits the *emlak* register together with sharia court cases and 1905 Ottoman population registries to flesh out a picture of late-Ottoman villages, villagers, and rural society from below in southern Palestine.