

register of every owned property, from small rooms and quarter-dunam vegetable gardens to parcels of land that were hundreds of dunams in size—I make an argument that by all measurable indicators the registration was remarkably thorough.

The Historical Creation of a Historiographical Paradigm: the Middle Years

Scholarship of the 1980s and 1990s did not offer a serious challenge to the paradigm which by virtue of repetition had become firmly established as common knowledge in the field.

Gershon Shafir, in his seminal study of the late-1980s, *Land, Labor and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, points to this issue, if unwittingly so:

The peasants, *as has been pointed out by all historians who studied this topic*, by trying to use the ayan as a foil...indirectly contributed to their influence. Being fearful that land registration was the harbinger of new taxes, or military conscription, the peasants frequently preferred, or even sought, the protection of an urban notable, under whose name they consented to have their land registered.³³

Beshara Doumani's groundbreaking 1995 study of the political economy of Ottoman Jabal Nablus in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries remains influential today for a number of reasons, among them the researcher's successful effort to bring Palestinians to center stage in historical studies of Ottoman Palestine. Doumani discusses in some detail

³³ Emphasis added. Gershon Shafir, *Land, Labor and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict 1882-1914* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 34.