

required to sow them, or in dunums the number of which was arrived at by the merest guess. In other instances areas were entirely omitted.<sup>126</sup>

This passage reveals lingering British confusion regarding Ottoman laws and procedure, after more than two decades of having interpreted these laws as rulers of the land.<sup>127</sup> Yet, it has served as the framework that has dominated the historiography of land-tenure reform in Palestine for almost a century. In light of the preceding discussions in this study, a number of inaccuracies mentioned in this quotation have likely struck you, the reader. First, the notion of land registries is vague. As we have seen, individuals were able to register land with the *tapu* already in the early 1860s. Second, when land and property registration officials were installed at the provincial and district levels, voluntary registration continued for some time before *yoklamas* were carried out. The commissions' work was not "the" only procedure for registering land.<sup>128</sup> Third, the claim that "no survey was carried out" because not all lands in the country were included in the registry indicates a fundamental misunderstanding about the role and *modus operandi* of the *yoklama* commissions. Additionally voiced in this short

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<sup>126</sup> *A Survey of Palestine, Prepared in December 1945 and January 1946 for the information of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry*, vol. 1 (Palestine: The Government Printer, 1946): 237-238.

<sup>127</sup> On British adoption and adaptation of Ottoman land laws during the Mandate, see Martin Bunton, "Inventing the Status Quo: Ottoman Land-Law during the Palestine Mandate, 1917-1936", *The International History Review*, 21/1 (March 1999): 28-56, and *Idem.*, (2007), particularly Chapter 1.

<sup>128</sup> Although the Turkish pronunciation and common transliteration is *yoklama* (see the previous section), the transliteration used in the *Survey* is closer to the Ottoman-Turkish spelling of the word. An Arabic speaker would read the word as *yūqlāma*. The understood Ottoman pronunciation puts the stress on the first syllable.