

trends and aberrations from them in order to explain and interpret a phenomenon or set of phenomena.¹⁹⁷ While the explanatory utility of these efforts is valuable, there is a danger inherent in the abstraction of statistics from non-statistical Ottoman sources. Tapu registers and the *emlak* register examined in this study are not land and property surveys or ownership surveys. (Similarly, Ottoman population registers are not and were not intended to be censuses.). The methodology of property-tenure reforms was to assign rights of responsibility for taxes and rights of ownership. As will be argued in the following chapter, the Ottoman's priority was registration, whether to individuals or in communal forms like *musha*. To the extent feasible, the Ottomans wanted to register properties to individuals and small groups of partners. It is important to remember, however, that this was subservient to the goal itself. To most reliably assess rural propertied wealth according to available Ottoman data on property assessments it is essential to scrutinize the registers contextually. The task is somewhat formidable, but doing so, the clearest, sharpest picture possible comes into focus.

This chapter has demonstrated that the rural sphere in Hebron was a heterogeneous amalgamation of settlements, varying in wealth, size, and amenities from one village to the next. It has brought to light that the envisioned broad scope of *emlak* registration, which was

¹⁹⁷ For examples of such studies, see Grossman (2011), Hutteroth and 'Abdulfattah (1977), Brawer (1989), Frantzman (PhD dissertation, 2010); and U.O. Schmelz's treatment of the 1905 population registers in his "Demographic Research of the J-m and Hebron Regions Towards the End of the Ottoman Period." in David Kushner, ed. *Palestine in the late Ottoman period: political, social, and economic transformation*: 363-371.