

these specific questions. That said, neither possibility explains the situation we find in Taffuḥ. We are obliged to probe deeper to decipher the discord between documents.

It is prudent at this point to recall the observation previously made, that variations occurred in the *Emlak* register from one Hebron-area village to the next, in terms of patterns and categories of registration. It has been suggested that this was a reflection of differences in the way that each village organized information for the survey and registration committee. It should also be noted that the composition of the survey committee likely changed as it moved through the district. According to the Law on the Registration of Census and Properties issued 14 Jumadi I 1277 (28 November 1860), in the countryside the assessment and registration teams were to comprise, in addition to two, non-local, salaried property assessors, up to another six individuals from the village being surveyed and/or villages neighboring it.<sup>359</sup> Given that Hebron was the largest subdistrict (*qaza*) of the largest district in Palestine in the last quarter of the nineteenth century – the Jerusalem *mutassariflik* to which it belonged began at a line drawn between Jaffa and Jerusalem in the north and embraced the entire southern half of the region, even claiming (until 1906) the entire Sinai peninsula, then known as the desert of Tih – it is conceivable that the core composition of the Hebron-area survey committee changed several times as it progressed southward toward the edges of the district at the beginnings of the desert and the plains.

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<sup>359</sup> Ongley, 113-114.