

recovered. The Ottoman land registry records, incomplete as they are, still constitute the basis of a large number of claims to real rights ...⁴⁵²

However flimsy these claims may be,⁴⁵³ they have largely gone unchallenged⁴⁵⁴ even though the existence of registers has been documented, as was discussed in Chapter One.

The 1876 *emlak* register for the villages of Hebron is not a land register *per se*. But it is a register of lands and also of properties, both taxed and untaxed. The register reflects what by all available standards of measurement appears to have been an individualized, methodical process of registration resulting from negotiation and compromise carried out anew from village to village. I have argued that the varying patterns of registration observable in the different villages—privatization, shares, *musha*, *en bloc* registration, and combinations of these—demonstrate that the majority, if not all, of the villages made their own decisions how to register their lands, and that their wishes to privatize holdings, retain communal holdings of land, and/or find a compromise solution were respected and recorded by the committee(s).

⁴⁵² *Survey of Palestine*, 238, point 38.

⁴⁵³ See the discussion regarding located registers above, in the final section of Chapter 1. Also see Shimon Rubenstein, "Seker HaQarqa 'ot ve litur Sifre HaMeQarqa 'in, me-evnei HaYasod shel HaMediniut HaTsiunit BaAretz Israel b-1918-1919" (The Land Survey and Locating Land-Record Books, Building Blocks of Zionist Policy in the Land of Israel 1918-1919), *Kivunim* 37 (1987), 115-178.

⁴⁵⁴ For an historiographical illustration of this tension between narrative and fact see, Stein (1984), discussion on the disappearance/existence of land-registry documentation and British reasons for closing the Land registry offices for two years, between 1918-1920, pp. 23-24.