

It has been attempted in this dissertation to read the 1876 *emlak* register of Hebron simultaneously on three levels. This study has been concerned with the implementation of reform, the character of property tenure in the rural areas, and the history of the neglected non-urban Ottoman sphere. It has also been concerned with recovering a history that is inaccessible to the descendants of those whom it is about, the villagers of the Hebron district. They, like the majority of Palestinians who are not citizens of Israel, are more often barred from the country than granted permission to enter it and to access its archives. Along the way, this dissertation has also proven that pillars upon which rest the conventional paradigm of mass evasion and failure of land reform measures in Palestine – such as the persistence of *musha*, land mortgages for loans from urban moneylenders, and the continued use of the court system for land matters – were not aberrations from reform procedure but, rather, well within the realm of the legal and the sanctioned.

When we examine the historical facts of rural land tenure in Hebron closely (and thickly), it becomes clear that it is incumbent upon us to expand and complicate the conventional understanding of rural Palestinian society in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Firstly, while it is true that the majority of villagers were born and died in the same place, there was by the late nineteenth century a broad, documented network of rural commercial exchange and movement that merits study and recognition.⁴⁵⁵ One

⁴⁵⁵ I have made this argument in more detail in “Villagers on the Move: Re-thinking Fallahin Rootedness in Late-Ottoman Palestine”, *Jerusalem Quarterly* 54 (2013): 56-68.