

evidential substantiation. Raymond E. Crist's early, general study (1957-1961) on Middle Eastern land tenure provides a rough general sketch of this paradigm-in-the-making:

In 1858 the Ottoman government decided to establish a Land Registration Service, which would clarify the general land-holding situation and give each holder of *mulk* or *miri* land a clear title, or *sanad tapu*. The service was a signal failure. Many peasants, convinced that the purpose of the proposed reform was to increase taxes, refused to talk, or they gave false information. Unscrupulous officials from the central government could write their own names in on the titles instead of those peasants who were working the land. A village notable would declare all the land of a village to be his There were no surveys, boundary lines or written documents.⁶

Toward the end of that decade, a study that would be influential for decades was published on the first half of the Tanzimat by Moshe Ma'oz. Regarding the Land Code of 1858, Ma'oz argued that it discouraged large landownership in theory but encouraged it in practice since

many peasants, unwilling to register their land for fear it would involve more taxation or conscription, registered it in the name of their chiefs or powerful urban notables.⁷

Already you, the reader, begins to become convinced that this was *indeed* what happened.

The uneducated peasants could not grasp the meaning of this modernizing reform and

⁶ Raymond E. Crist, *Land for the Fellahin: Land Tenure and Land Use in the Near East*. (New York: Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, 1961), 31-32. The chapters of this book were originally published in serial form 10.1957-1.1961 in *The American Journal of Economics and Sociology*.

⁷ He relies on Avraham Granott's classic 1952 study, *The Land System in Palestine* and Bernard Lewis' 1961 work, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*. Moshe Ma'oz, *Ottoman Reform in Syria and Palestine 1840-1861: The Impact of the Tanzimat on Politics and Society* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968, 162-163.