

Agricultural Bank.³⁷ I also argue that land forfeiture was far from preordained in the event of loan default.

Doumani argues the opposite. He suggests that the infrastructure of market mechanisms that developed before the Tanzimat to permit transactions in land-as-commodity, paved the way for urban economic domination of the countryside after the institutionalization of these rights during the era of Land Code reforms.³⁸ His argument dovetails with the conventional paradigm:

The 1858 law, which required the registration of lands, must have seemed to the peasants like yet another initiative by the Ottoman government to improve its tax collection efforts and to acquire knowledge about individual persons for conscription purposes. This perception was not far from the truth, and it helps explain the peasants' lack of cooperation in implementing the law. Unfortunately for the peasants, their unwillingness to vigorously pursue the registration of their lands in their own names made it easier for urban notables to lay claim to these lands and to expand their holdings.³⁹

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Until the introduction of the Law of Tapu of 1858...registration was voluntary. ... Moreover, the natives—often completely unaware of the meaning of concepts such as 'private property'—feared 'collateral effects' that would follow registration: tax and conscription in the army. This mix of suspicion and hostility towards the newly introduced provision were

³⁷ This follows an argument Amos Nadan has made for the Mandate period in his *The Palestinian Peasant Economy Under the Mandate: A Story of Colonial Bungling* (Cambridge, MA and London, UK: Harvard University Press, 2006).

³⁸ Doumani, 159.

³⁹ Ibid.