

families.³⁸⁰ Khalīl's plot had been registered in the tapu in the name of Ḥamdān Bashīr al-Salīmī and his group (the phrase used was *wa-jamā'atīhi*), among which numbered Khalīl's father, Muhammad Salāme.³⁸¹

Here, too, as in the Taffuḥ case, we can understand that tapu records (and certificates) had not been updated since the date of the initial registration (the date of which, unfortunately, was not a detail recorded in the court record, since it was not relevant to the dispute at hand). While we do not know how long the search in the tapu records took, the orderliness of the record books is hinted at in the court record. It informs us that plots were organized and recorded according to geographical units and subunits. As the court record also makes clear, one who wished to demarcate on the ground the land's borders based on the relational-border system employed in the tapu register would require the cooperation of the villagers. On the other hand, however, there was no effective way to be more precise in the open countryside. If you, the reader, were now sitting with me, the author, over a cup of tea, I might try to emphasize this point by way of analogy to present-day Guam, where I was perpetually lost until I learned to recognize the landmarks by which locals navigate around the island and with which they peppered their answers to my

³⁸⁰ See also *Atlas of Palestine 1917-1966*, sheet 473.

³⁸¹ As we will see below, Hamdān clarifies that this group was his extended family (*hamūla*). Mundy and Saumarez-Smith likewise found this form of joint ownership-registration occurring in the Transjordanian hill village of Khanzira (today Ashrafiya). While all the shareholders were listed by name in the tapu register of 1884, in the tax register of 1895 only one name appeared in relation to the lands. Mundy and Saumarez-Smith: 181-182.