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The Abu Hameds of Mulabbis: An Oral history of a Palestinian

Village Depopulated in the Late Ottoman Period

Roy Marom¹

Introduction

Mulabbis (colloquial Arabic: [U]mlabbes) was the first Arab village whose lands were acquired by Jews for settlement purposes, ushering an age of increasing Jewish-Zionist settlement in Palestine (1878).¹ Some Post-colonial scholars consider Zionism to be a form of settler colonialism, which sought to displace and replace the non-Jewish populations of Palestine with the creation of a restored Jewish homeland.² Petah Tikva, which supplanted Mulabbis, is popularly known in Israel as the ‘Mother of the Colonies’ (Heb. *Em HaMoshavot*), and came to be seen as the cornerstone of this project.

Jewish accounts of the history of Mulabbis appear in the writings of *maskilim* (intellectuals of the Jewish Enlightenment) like Moshe Smilansky and Avraham Ya‘ari. However, these authors have made the history of Mulabbis part of – and subservient to – their nationalist narrations of the first wave of Zionist immigration to Palestine, known in Zionist historiography as the First Aliya (1878-1904).³ Broadly speaking, these narratives are the products of European imperialist knowledge and colonialist perceptions of the indigenous ‘other,’ and cannot be easily decoupled from their inherent ideological bias.⁴ The subservience of Palestinian history and identity to Jewish history, one may claim, has deprived the residents of Mulabbis (and of other villages similarly depopulated during the

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Late Ottoman period) of their independent place in Palestinian social, cultural and political history.

Although the name of Mulabbis does figure in Palestinian historiography, it is surprising to discover that the history of the village has yet to be studied in any detail. The great Palestinian educator and geographer Mustafa al-Dabbagh, the author of the comprehensive encyclopedia *Biladuna Filistin* (“Our country of Palestine”), refers to Mulabbis only as a parcel of land (*al-buq‘a al-ma‘rūfa bi-sm...Mulabbis*).⁵ *Al-Mawsu‘a al-Filistiniyya* (“The Palestinian Encyclopedia”) notes that Mulabbis was an Arab village that preceded the establishment of Petah Tikva, but in contrast to its treatment of most other villages, it does not devote a separate entry to it.⁶ Mulabbis is also missing from *All That Remains*, Walid Khalidi and Sharif al-Musa’s book about Palestinian villages depopulated in 1948.⁷ As of March 2021, Mulabbis is absent from sites dedicated to the history of depopulated Palestinian villages, such as *Palestine Remembered* and *Zochrot*. Nearly nothing is known about the Arab residents of Mulabbis from published Palestinian or Western scholarship, neither is any alternative reading of its past offered.⁸

This regretful state of research is illustrative of the rest of the Arab villages fully depopulated during the Ottoman period like al-Mutilla (Metulla), Yamma (Yavni’el), Mas-ha (Kefar Tavor), Deiran (Rehovot), Karkur, al-Burj and al-Zurghaniyya (Binyamina), al-Marah (Giv‘at ‘Ada), al-Khudeira (Hadera), Dardara (Gan Shemu’el), Umm al-Tut (Bat Shelomo), Shfeyya and Zummarin (Zichron Ya‘akov) (see figure 1). As part of Jewish state-enforced regimes of truth, control of knowledge, and public remembrance, the physical remains of many Palestinian villages had been expunged, and archival sources pertaining to them, and to their inhabitants’ expulsion, had been closed for access by Israeli authorities.⁹

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Oral documentation is, therefore, of great importance as a tool to recover the narrative of the

dispossessed. In the case of Mulabbis, it offers evidence for reconstructing the geographical-

historical reality of these depopulated villages, and as a source for uncovering the history

and worldviews of their inhabitants. While Marom has recently addressed the first issue in

two articles about Mulabbis, the socio-cultural aspects of these narratives remains to be

examined.¹⁰ Mulabbis' absence from the formal recollection of Palestinian scholars is

surprising, given its prominence in the collective memory of the Palestinian people, and its

centrality to the Zionist narrative of the renewed Jewish colonization of 'The Land of Israel,'

which Palestinians naturally reject.¹¹

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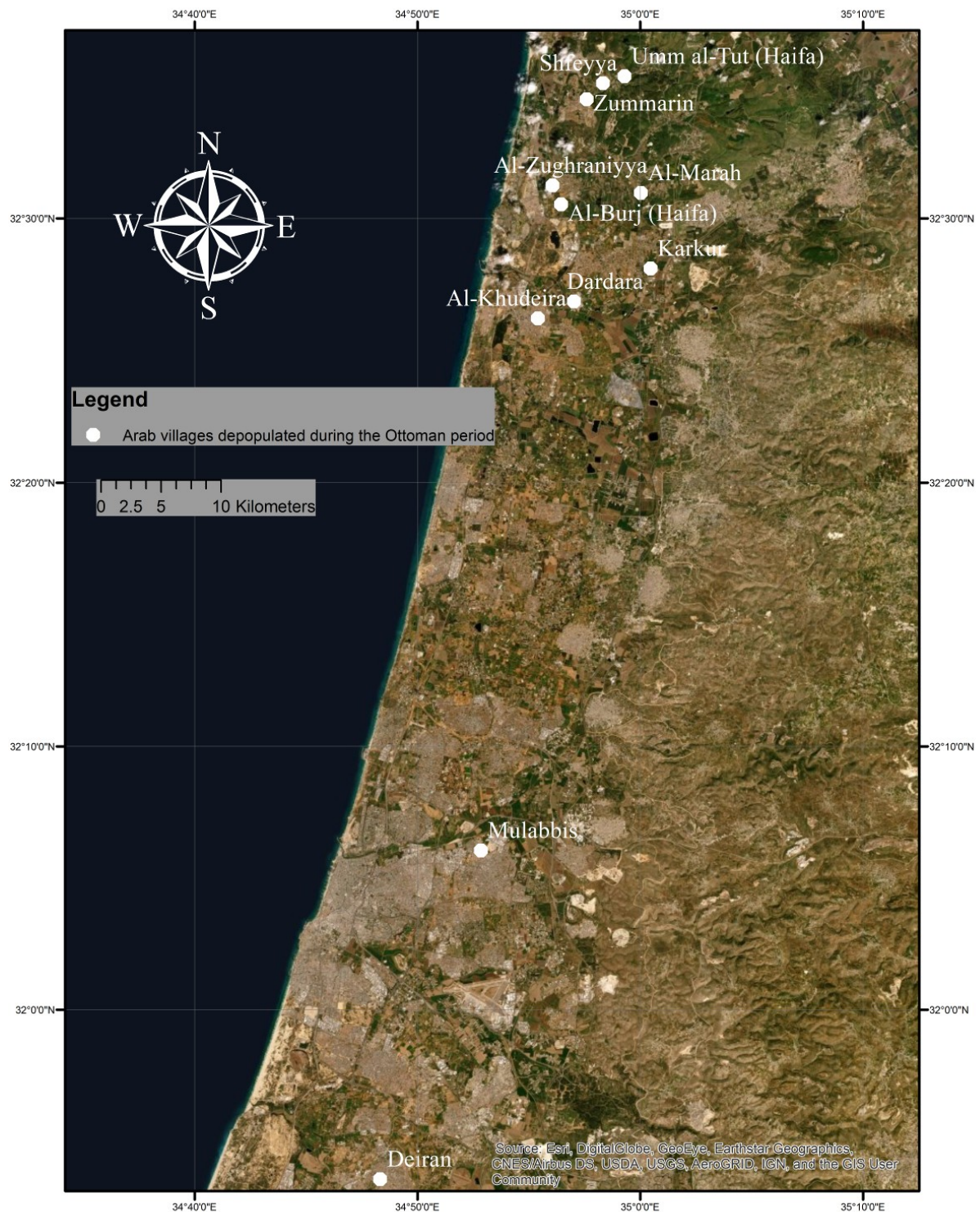


Figure 1: Map of Arab villages fully depopulated during the Late Ottoman period in the central part of Palestine.

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A key reason for Mulabbis' absence in Palestinian oral documentation projects is their focus on the life experiences of participants in the armed struggle of the Palestinians since the British Mandate period, and their suffering during the Nakba.¹² Notwithstanding the importance of those issues, this focus has led them to forego earlier, economic, social, and cultural manifestations of the conflict over Palestine, properly highlighted by Mark LeVine in his book about Jaffa/Tel Aviv.¹³ While the complex and multifaceted interactions of the residents of villages depopulated in the Late Ottoman period with the newly arrived Jewish (and later Zionist) immigrants undoubtedly had a major influence on the formative episodes of the developing Zionist-Palestinian conflict, they are rarely attested to in surviving written sources.¹⁴ Therefore, tracing, documenting and historically contextualizing oral histories of descendants of residents of such villages is vital both for recovering the lost life-stories of their ancestors, and for understanding how such local narratives developed, influenced and were influenced in turn, by prevailing Arab-Palestinian and Zionist national narratives.¹⁵

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Figure 2. General location map.

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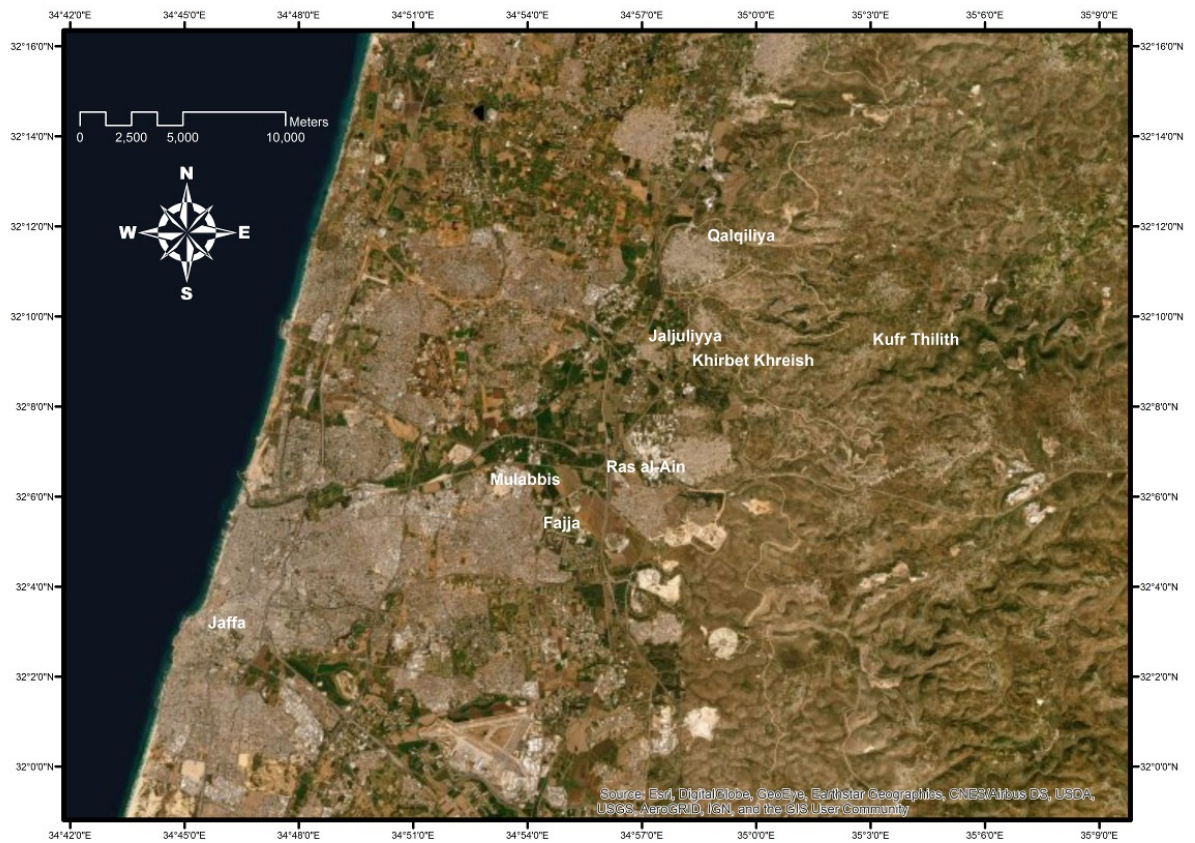


Figure 3. Mulabbis and its region, superimposed on modern satellite imagery.

Historical Background

Tell Mulabbis is situated on a low hill 37 meters above sea level, about 1.25 km south of the Nahr al-‘Awja (Yarkon River), on the border between the river’s alluvial plain and the red sandy loam (*hamra*) hills to the south within modern-day Petah Tikva, Israel (New Israel Grid, 18886.66750). Mulabbis’ early history is told mainly through the archaeological record, when the site belonged to a broad space of consumption and population movements with links to the wider Levant and beyond.¹⁶ In 1478 CE, Sultan Al-ashraf Sayf al-Din Qaitbay (r. 1468–1496 CE) endowed a quarter of Mulabbis’ revenues to mosques in Gaza and Jerusalem.

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During Late Ottoman period, Mulabbis had links to the mountainous hinterland, the coastal plain and the Gaza- al-‘Arish region.¹⁷ In the eighteenth century, the hinterland of Nablus suffered from civil strife due to the Qays (northern Arabians) and Yaman (southern Arabians) rivalry.¹⁸ Most of society – including *fellahin* (the peasantry), Bedouins and *ahl al-mudun* (townsfolk) was affiliated with one of these factions. The strife disrupted rural life, precipitating emigration and village formation in areas that were less densely populated. Oral accounts maintain that one group of refugees from the Jamma‘in region of Jabal Nablus settled in Mulabbis. The first evidence for renewed habitation at Mulabbis appears on Pier Jacotin’s map of Napoleon’s Palestine Campaign in 1799.¹⁹ After conflicts with neighboring villages and high mortality due to malaria, however, a final massacre led to the village’s abandonment sometime before Ibrahim Pasha’s campaign to Greater Syria in 1831-1840.²⁰

Following Ibrahim Pasha’s campaign, Egyptian immigrants, headed by Abu Hamed al-Masri, settled in Mulabbis. It was a part of a larger wave of Egyptian migration to Palestine’s coastal plain.²¹ Ottoman cadestral (*tapu*) registers mention common Egyptian names, like ‘Abed b. ‘Abd al-‘Al and Musa b. Muhammad Bardawil, indicating that the village was mainly, if not solely, inhabited by Egyptian immigrants.²² In the second half of the 19th century, Hebrew sources report that some of the residents moved to the neighboring village of Fajja, but they continued to cultivate their lands in Mulabbis, and even entered into expensive litigation proceedings to deal with encroachments by outsiders. In order to cover the ensuing debt, the residents of Mulabbis sold most of their lands to Anton al-Tayyan and Salim al-Kassar, merchants from Jaffa.²³ In turn, both sold the land to the founders of Petah Tikva.²⁴

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Petah Tikva was founded in 1878 by orthodox Jews from Europe, headed by Yehoshua Stampfer, Yoel Moshe Salomon, Zerach Barnett, Moshe Shmuel Raab, Aryeh Leib Frumkin among others. It was the first modern Jewish agricultural settlement in Ottoman Palestine. The initial wave of immigrants divided into several groups, each of which attempted to settle at a different location: the Yarkonim built their houses on the shores of the Nahr al-‘Awja, Raab and Stampfer settled on *Giv‘at ha-Meyasdim* south of the village of Mulabbis, and Rabbi Frumkin’s group colonized lands purchased from the neighboring village of al-Yahudiyya, forming the *moshava* of Yehud.²⁵ For a short time, between 1878 and 1890, the lands of Mulabbis\Petah Tikva were a spatial configuration occupied by competing Arab and Jewish populations. Zionist sources profess that the inhabitants of Petah Tikva strove to displace their Arab neighbors in Mulabbis, and after purchasing the remaining quarter of village lands and dwellings in 1890, razed the village to the ground, an event that served as a precedence for later examples of this practice by Jewish colonists in Palestine.²⁶

The establishment of Petah Tikva pre-dated the foundation of the World Zionist Movement during the First Zionist Congress (Basel, 1897). However, the *moshava* adopted the tenets of Zionism, and became an important center from which free-capital entrepreneurs from within the *moshavot*, and socialist pioneers (Heb. *haluztim*), spurred by revolutionary movements in Imperial Russia, established Kefar Saba (1903), ‘Ein Hay (1913), ‘Ein Gannim (1908) and Nahlat Yehuda (1913). These settlements both disrupted Arab rural life, by displacing long-time tenant farmers, and created new sources of income for their Arab neighbors and workers in the *moshavot*.²⁷

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Among the watchmen responsible for security in Petah Tikva was Avraham Shapira, more commonly known in Arabic circles by his nickname Ibrahim Mikho, the 'elder of the guard' in Petah Tikva (1870-1965).²⁸ The Jewish settlers employed Arab labor in their fields and citrus groves, a form of plantation labor, while Petah Tikva itself continued to be known for official purposes as Mulabbis. To this day, residents of surviving Palestinian villages in the region use the name of Mulabbis as a synonym for Petah Tikva.²⁹

Materials and Methods: oral history in the context of Palestinian history

For over a century, oral sources have proved themselves as an indispensable, varied and adaptive source of evidence for the study of Palestinian history. Palestinian and foreign researchers alike benefitted from their material contributions to studies exploring such diverse fields as folktales, cuisine and dress, linguistics and toponymy, genealogy, agricultural practices and religious cult.³⁰ Moreover, for scarcity of surviving native records, oral histories remain instrumental for the ongoing effort by Palestinian scholars for the telling of key episodes in the history of Palestine.³¹ The flowering of Palestinian oral history research during the last quarter of the twentieth century ushered a flurry of methodological discussions among researchers, some of whom published their recommendations in dedicated manuals aimed for standardizing and informing oral history research in the Palestinian context.³²

Many positivist historians hold written sources to reflect historic truth, and contrast them to oral history, which they consider inaccurate, subjective and ultimately unreliable.³³ As Lynn Abrams, Paul Thompson and Johanna Bornat have shown, comparing different narrations, and finding points of agreement with other sources can compensate for these

The Version of Record of this manuscript has been published and is available in the British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies since June 9, 2021 at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13530194.2021.1934817> shortcomings.³⁴ For example, by using both oral and written sources, Mark Levine has offered a more nuanced and complex picture of Jewish-Arab relationships in Jaffa/Tel Aviv. He did so by framing them in the context of competing modernities and settler colonialism, and exploring the formation of local and national identities in the context of their production.³⁵

In his works about the destroyed Palestinian villages, Palestinian historian Sharif Kanaana coined the term “peoples’ history” (*ta’rikh sha’bi*) to refer to the knowledge, beliefs and views of the inhabitants of a place regarding its history.³⁶ Methodologically, Kanaana’s concept of peoples’ history is expressive of the speakers’ personal and collective identities.³⁷ Oral history attests to a speaker’s subjective understanding of the past, and accounts can differ significantly between one speaker and another. Personal biographical aspects, like degree of education, vocation, social status, marital status, gender, health, political views, and other life experiences also contribute to the formation of each narrative.³⁸ Among oral-history researchers today, there is a growing tendency to “hew closely to the particulars of people’s experience and to the terms they use to describe their lives and account for their actions.” The author followed Diana Allan’s example by foregrounding the voices of the informants, and using extensive quotation rather than manipulative cherry picking.³⁹ However, two other aspects of oral history, language and body-performance, will not be dealt with in this article.

The history of Mulabbis is of importance as an early example of Zionist-Arab interaction in Palestine. More significantly, it serves as a rare and documented example, illustrating how a family narrative developed over multiple generations within the broader

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outlines of the Palestinian national narrative. In the course of conducting ethnographic

fieldwork in the villages of the Triangle region in Israel, I met the Abu Hamed al-Masri family, which I have previously known from Hebrew and Ottoman sources to be the former residents of the village of Mulabbis. During a number of visits to Jaljuliya, I recorded, and translated, various family traditions, as well as family members' life experiences under British and Israeli rule.⁴⁰ When arranged according to chronological considerations, these accounts assembled into a more or less coherent narrative reflecting the historical understanding of the family. On my part, it was, admittedly, a participatory process. I worked on comparing and contrasting the narrations of the oldest members of the different branches of the family, placing them in a concrete historical context, and re-discussing the narrations with the speakers in order to better understand the meaning that they ascribed to them. Members of the Abu Hamed family cooperated fully, while acknowledging that each one of them bears but part of the larger story formerly known to their ancestors.⁴¹ It soon became apparent, that the memory of Mulabbis, dim as it is, nonetheless casts a lingering shadow on the past and present lives of the family in Palestine and the Palestinian diaspora.

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Figure 4. The author interviewing Saleh Muhammad Abu Hamed (2017).

Abu Hameds' arrival in Mulabbis and their life in the village

The arrival of the Abu Hamed family in Palestine was part of a broader wave of migration, precipitating and following Ibrahim Pasha's campaign in 1831-1840. Originally from al-Sallum oasis on the border between Libya and Egypt,⁴² its members moved to the Nile valley, and then migrated west and settled in 'Iraq al-Tafila (in southern Jordan), becoming known by the surname al-Masri (e.g., the Egyptian).⁴³ When Abu Hamed and his relatives reached the ruins of Mulabbis, they found it deserted,⁴⁴ and soon undertook to build modest accommodations for themselves. Their vast and fertile lands extended as far as Nahr

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al-‘Awja in the north, Fajja in the east and the lands of al-Shaykh Muwannis in the west.

There, they cultivated *dhurra* (sorghum) and *batikh* (watermelons)⁴⁵.

According to Saleh Muhammad Abu Hamed (b. 1939) “Abu Hamed used to shepherd cattle, goats and sheep. He alone was shaykh surrounded by many Bedouins.”⁴⁶ These Bedouins, headed by the Abu Kishek family, leaders of the ‘Arab al-‘Awja tribal confederation since the 1850s, were the main antagonists of the family prior to the arrival of the Jews. Abu Hamed’s son, Mahmud, was in constant conflict with Bedouins that trespassed on his land:

My grandfather used to guard his pastures and water sources. He would drive away the Bedouins that would enter these lands and disturb him. One day, ‘Arab al-Sukhur came from Jordan to graze in Mulabbis. Forty people on horseback came out against him to the pasture where he sat. When these horsemen (*khayāle*) came, they asked, “Where is Mahmud?” He told them, “He went to Mulabbis” (they asked Mahmud himself and he said that “He went to Mulabbis”. He sent them to his home). He fed their horses barley and brought one of them to check that he gave them pure straw without chaff. He said to his men, “Slaughter cattle and prepare a meal for them,”⁴⁷ and he posted sentries on guard so that if anything transpired, they would be ready to react. When they [e.g. the horsemen] finished eating, they asked, “Where is Mahmud?” And he [Mahmud] told them “Stretch forth your hand (*maddū ’idkom*) to the food that is placed in front of you.” They continued to eat and said, “How can we eat without the owners of the house being present?” Then he disclosed to them, “I am Mahmud, the one who hosted you.” When he said that, they split up. Twenty were with him and twenty were against him. When the group split up, twenty of them told the other twenty, “Leave him alone,” and they expelled those who wanted to kill him, [even] after they had eaten and drunk [under his auspices]. They said, “It’s *haram* to kill him who behaves so.”

...

In the end, their leader rose from their midst and said, “I give you my daughter without any compensation (*lā jazā’ wa lā wafā’*).” Hamed, his brother, married her, and she gave birth to Mahmud

The Version of Record of this manuscript has been published and is available in the British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies since June 9, 2021 at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13530194.2021.1934817> (named after his grandfather) and Hamed (named after his uncle). Do you see how much respect [has been accorded to him?]?⁴⁸

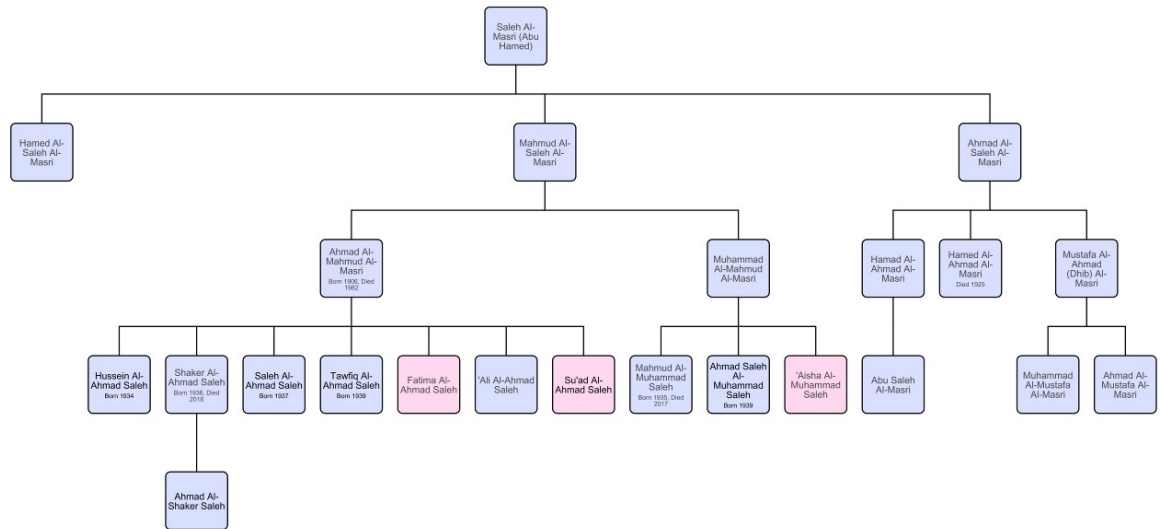


Figure 5. Abu Hamed family tree.

The arrival of the Jews and the loss of Mulabbis

During the 1860s and 1870s, the Palestinian countryside was characterized by the growing interference by European agents in the life of the population under the Capitulation agreements, and Ottoman land reform, which allowed foreign nationals to purchase land for the first time. This period marked the beginning of European colonization endeavors in the country, heralded by foundation of the German Templar colony of Sarona east of Jaffa (1869).⁴⁹ Although historical records show that some members of the Abu Hamed family did sell lands in Mulabbis, their descendants contend that Mulabbis was never sold, but rather that it was taken out of their possession by force and fraud.⁵⁰ They blame the Turks, the British, and hostile Arab collaborators for aiding the Jews become the proprietors of

The Version of Record of this manuscript has been published and is available in the British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies since June 9, 2021 at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13530194.2021.1934817> Mulabbis. According to one version, narrated by Ahmad al-Shaker (b. 1965), Shapira

exploited their distress after the death the of family's mother, and her husband's illness, in order fleece them of land titles in their possession.⁵¹

According to another version, the fall of Mulabbis and the expulsion of its inhabitants was but another stage in an organized Jewish invasion of Palestine:

The Jews started expelling [the Palestinians] from al-Naqura, Ras al-Naqura, and they began to come by sea and approach the Arab villages and shoot at the villages and if there was no reaction, they [e.g. the Jews] stormed every village... I swear by God, they began to progress until they reached us...

[Q: When did they happen?]

It was in the days of the *thawra*,⁵² and when the country calmed down a bit the Turks came and forced the people out. They took our copies of the *kawāshīn*. (We had a copy, and they reserved one in Turkey [too]). The commander of the Haganah, Musa Sharit [Moshe Sharett] – when our people left, he aimed a gun at them and threatened them that they [e.g. the Jews] were coming to kill them, and he [Sharett] took away from them a *kūshān* of 700-600 *dūnam* of land at gunpoint (therefore, we were unable to substantiate our ownership of the land).⁵³

Members of the family say they were on good terms with the Jews of Petah Tikva. As an example, Saleh al-Muhammad told of their fair relations with Ibrahim Mikho. Following Ahmad abu Hamed's death, Mikho's wife raised Ahmad's son Hamed in the opening years of early 20th century.⁵⁴ Mikho tried to protect the family against Zionist or British plots to dispossess them of their land:

Ibrahim Mikho testified in court that the land was ours, and then they said to him, 'Do you testify in favor of an Arab tribe?' They had him imprisoned. They did not want the Abu Hamed to stay, and thus chased them out.⁵⁵ The British, who wanted to justify the Jews, took the [land] contracts and tore them up, and they told the Abu Hameds to 'Get out of here' and expelled them.⁵⁶

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The differing versions for loss of Mulabbis are noteworthy, as they express a disagreement on the role played by individual Jews in their loss of Mulabbis. While Ahmad al-Shaker's version tells of Shapira's negative role in the active removal of the people of Mulabbis from their land, Saleh al-Muhammad's version glorifies Shapira as a champion of truth, who paid a personal price in the service of the Arab cause. The double-sided portrayal of Shapira as a benefactor and opponent of the Abu Hamed family concurs in part with Shapira's own account of his occasionally troubled relationship with members of the Abu Hamed family, and testifies to the patron-client relationships that sometimes developed between the landlord Jewish *ikarim* (farmers) and their Arab agricultural workers (Heb and Ar. *Harathim*).⁵⁷

Some members of the Abu Hamed family lived in al-Shaykh Muwannis until the outbreak of the First World War. In 1917, the warfront between the Allies and the Ottoman Empire approached the Nahr al-'Awja, and hostilities erupted near al-Shaykh Muwannis and Mulabbis.⁵⁸ Like many other civilians seeking shelter far removed from the frontlines, Mahmud and his sons found shelter with the 'Odeh clan in the mountain village of Kufr Thilith (East of Qalqilya), by virtue of their common origin in 'Iraq al-Tafila.⁵⁹ After several years, the outbreak of severe blood feuds in Kufr Thilith made them seek a more stable home.⁶⁰

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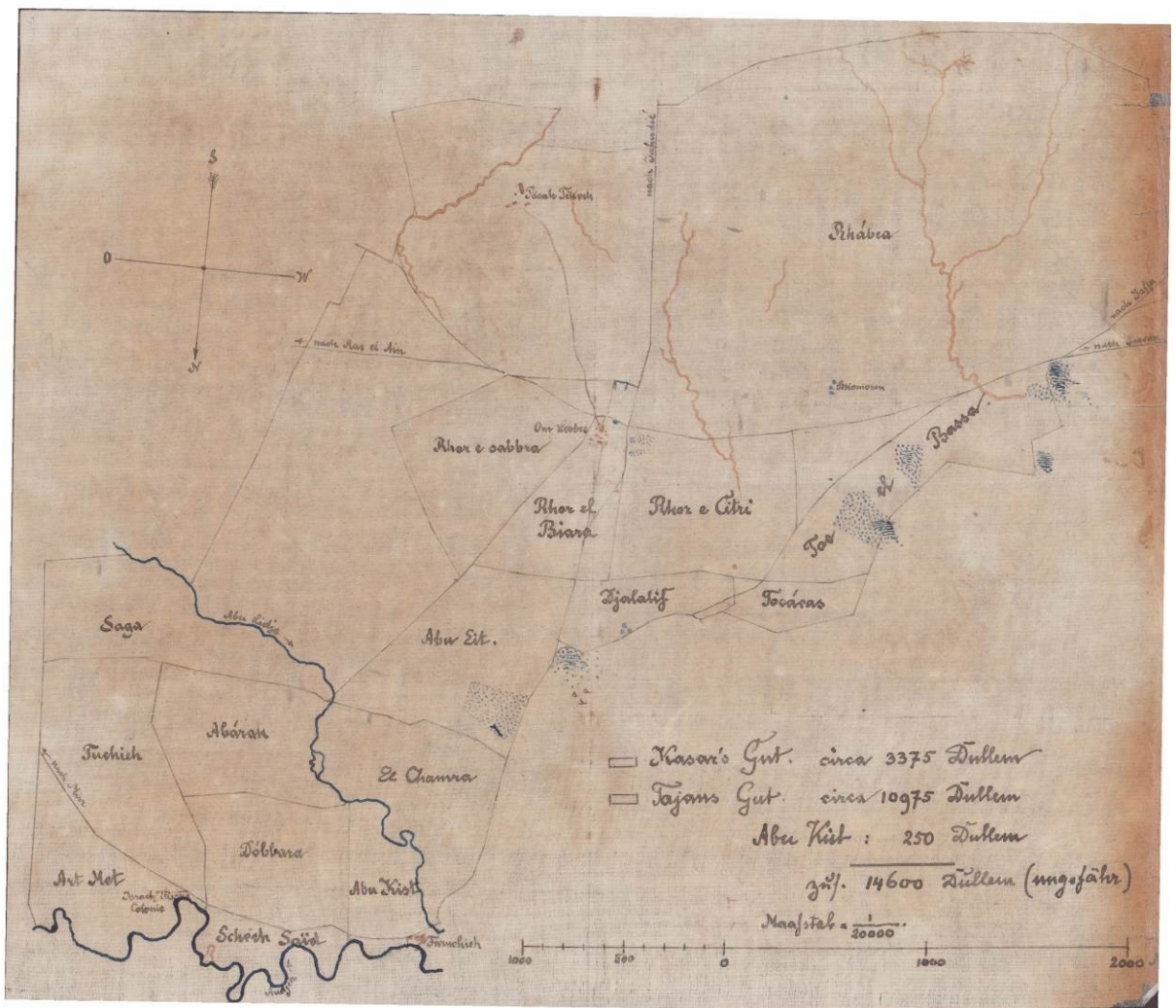


Figure 6. Lands of Mulabbis; map by Theodor Zandel (1878).

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Figure 7. Ahmad b. Mahmud al-Masri (1906-1982)

The hanging of Hamed al-Ahmad and the dispersal of his relatives

Even after their removal from Mulabbis, most members of the Abu Hamed family continued to live near Petah Tikva. The wider dispersal of the family followed the hanging of Hamed al-Ahmad in June 1925, which appears to be related to a wider effort by British Mandatory authorities to crack down on brigandry in the countryside.⁶¹ While the

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circumstances that precipitated the hanging are unclear to living family members, they all agree on the involvement of shaykh Shaker Abu Kishek, the paramount shaykh in the Nahr al-‘Awja basin.⁶² Reportedly, relations between the two families were long sour, due to struggle for land, pastures and power. According to hajj Shaker al-Ahmad (b. 1936), shaykh Abu Kishek called for Hamed al-Ahmad’s assassination, and having failed to kill him in other ways, the shaykh persuaded the British authorities to have Hamed al-Ahmad hanged.⁶³ During Hamed al-Ahmad’s execution, the hangman’s noose supposedly unfastened,⁶⁴ a divine sign for the injustice inflicted upon Hamed:

Do you know Hamed’s story? Hamed, members of the Abu Kishek family plotted against him, but could not stand up to him. [So] they accused him of murder. Britain was here, and they took him to Jerusalem, and sentenced him to death by hanging. They tied the rope around his neck, and when they tightened the rope around his neck and lifted him to hang him, the rope [...] cut off. In that case, they should have pardoned him.

The Abu Kishek family and a group of British and Jews said that if they [e.g. the British] would release Hamed they [e.g. Abu Kishek] would not be able to sleep at night,⁶⁵ and his cousins here [in Jaljuliya] were both humbled and expelled from al-Shaykh Muwannis during the days of Turkey and went to Kiryat Aryeh. Then the Jews and Britain settled here, and told us “Farewell”.’ [The Jews] said that we had the *tābū* [land registers] and *kawāshīn* in Turkey and told them, “People are coming to kill you if you stay here.”⁶⁶

In the aftermath of Hamed al-Ahmad’s execution, his surviving relatives changed their surname to Saleh lest further harm should befall them.⁶⁷ Members of the Abu Hamed family felt compelled to disperse: “...Some of them came to Jaljuliya, while the others returned to Egypt ... east of the [Suez] Canal.”⁶⁸ Hamad al-Ahmad, Hamed’s brother, moved

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to al-Khodayra [Hadera], cutting off all contact with his remaining relatives in Jaljuliya and

Jaffa. In 1948, he was forced to flee to Jordan, and found himself in a refugee camp.⁶⁹

Mahmud and his sons settled in Jaljuliya. Upon their arrival, they purchased a house from Sa'id 'Abdullah al-Jayyusi, one of the notables of the village, where two of the persons interviewed for this paper were born. "We made a living by raising cattle," Saleh al-Muhammad related, "the world was at ease and we were free to graze wherever we wanted. My father drove the cattle westward to the Yarkon Bridge,⁷⁰ where they [the cows] rested, and eastward on the mountain unto Khirbet Khureish." Over the years, Mahmud's sons got married and built homes of their own.⁷¹

Life in the diaspora: displacement and reuniting

The Abu Hamed family suffered the fate of many Palestinian families in the Nakba: displacement from their homes, severance of family ties, and living as refugees in exile (*fil-shitāt*).⁷² Over the years, however, occasional meetings and the continued exchange of information between Palestinian communities in the diaspora enabled them to renew old ties with their lost kin in Jordan, Egypt, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.⁷³

Jaljuliya withstood Israeli assaults during the 1948 war. In accordance with the Rhodes Accords (1949), Jordan 'handed over' Jaljuliya together with the surviving Arab villages in the Triangle Area. The Triangle villages fell under a brutal martial law, which lasted until 1966. Mahmud Abu Hamed's progeny remained in Jaljuliya, but they lost contact with Dhib and his family. After the 1956 Sinai War, when Israeli troops temporarily occupied the Egyptian-held Gaza Strip and Sinai, family members in Jaljuliya learned that Dhib had

The Version of Record of this manuscript has been published and is available in the British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies since June 9, 2021 at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13530194.2021.1934817> been spotted in the Gaza Strip or in Northern Sinai. They went to look for them, and found them in al-‘Arish.⁷⁴

The Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip following the 1967 War enabled refugees to visit their former homes legally for the first time. Alarmed by those visits, residents of Petah Tikva reportedly branded members of the Abu Hamed family as refugees seeking to return to their village. Saleh al-Muhammad says that as children:

“We would go to the market there, go and buy [...] and the Jews used to speak with us normally until 67. But when they started to bring in deportees (*muhājjarīn*) after 1967, they [the Jews of Petah Tikva] became like beasts, because the deportees drove them mad, and they feared that they would be overwhelmed [by their numbers].”⁷⁵

Among the villages of the Israeli Triangle, Jaljuliya stands out for the large number of refugee families living side by side in the narrow and crowded streets of its *shikkūn* (state-funded housing), similar to refugee camps abroad.⁷⁶ Under the auspices of the Israeli-Jordanian Open Bridges policy,⁷⁷ adopted after the 1967 war, by the mid-1970s, the Abu Hameds of Jaljuliya renewed contact with Hamad al-Ahmad’s family after a coincidental visit by one of the residents of the *shikkūn* to a Palestinian refugee camp in Jordan. The following anecdote reflects the themes of identity, displacement and family:

In 1976, we were handed a letter by an elderly woman who visited one of the refugee camps, al-Wehdat, in Jordan. In short, a letter addressed to the Abu Hamed family circulated for a few weeks in the village until it got to us. In the letter, Hamad’s son claimed that he is our relative, and that he has written to inform us that his father had passed away in Jordan. He said that he and his sister live in Jordan. We went back to our grandfather [Ahmad al-Mahmud] and asked him where his cousin lives and he said that when Hamed al-Ahmad was hanged, he [Hamad] disappeared and we know that the Jews or the English murdered him.

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In short, my uncle Hussein went to investigate the matter, and it turned out that the moment

[Hamad's] father was hanged, Hamad fled to Jordan and found a job working as a shepherd for a tribe.

However, on his deathbed, he called for his wife and confessed to her that he did not belong to that tribe

and said, "I am originally from Mulabbis and I belong to the Abu Hamed in Jaljuliya." Hence, his

children sent the letter addressed to his late paternal uncle. They came here and recognized the area

according to their father's stories.⁷⁸

Mulabbis and the burden of remembrance

In contrast to residents of other Palestinian villages depopulated before 1948, the Abu Hamed family remained in close contact with Petah Tikva and its neighboring Arab villagers. The presence of the Abu Hameds offered an uneasy reminder of Petah Tikva's Arab past, as well as a testament to early land sales that facilitated the Zionist colonization of Palestine. Continued social contacts with members of the Abu Hamed family offered others the opportunity to circulate derisive reinterpretations of the history of Mulabbis.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Abu Hamed family's self-perception was marred by the gossip and mockery told about it in Jaljuliya, and by half-truths that they heard from the Jewish elders of Petah Tikva. People in Jaljuliya offended family members by tarnishing the name of their grandfather, accusing him of selling Mulabbis for a *tarbush*. Yosef Rubin, at the age of eighty, reminded them of their former possessions in the north of Petah Tikva. Hajaj Dinovitz, who served in the Palestine Police during the Mandate period, told a family member working in the *moshava*, that his grandfather Mahmud was as white as snow, while mocking his interlocutor for being 'as black as the Yemenites' (who were mostly manual laborers of low social status within the *moshava*).⁷⁹ The interviewee complained to him in sorrow that "I toil in under the sun and not in a box." Afterward, Dinovitz sarcastically

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inquired of the fate of gold Mahmud allegedly received from the founders of Petah Tikva in return for his land.⁸⁰

During my fieldwork in Jaljuliya, elders of the village told made similar statements to those allegedly made by residents of Petah Tikva. According to a prominent local figure (b. 1937), the Abu Hamed family were “the landowners of Mulabbis who had their lands taken from them by deceit. They were made to sign powers of attorney and then sold the lands and were expelled from there.”⁸¹ Another refugee residing in Jaljuliya related to me that Ibrahim Mikho told him that “the Abu Hamed family had sold the land of Bernikia (modern Hagor, Israel) to Jews for 200 pounds of gold. They buried them in the ground and to this day do not know their whereabouts.”⁸² These narrations reflect the social and political tensions that developed under the Israeli rule, particularly the tension between the original residents of Jaljuliya, the Abu Hamed family, and other groups of refugees who settled in the village after the 1948 War.

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Figure 8. Jaljuliya. Home to the Abu Hamed family today (Photo by the user יעקב, Wikipedia, 2008).

Mulabbis and the *longue durée* of Palestinian history

The Jewish version of the story of Petah Tikva has been told, and retold, numerous times. As Smilanski, Yaaari and Shapira's accounts show, the founders of Petah Tikva appropriated the life stories of the residents of Mulabbis, and framed them within their Zionist interpretation of Judeo-biblical themes of the salvation and deliverance. In Zionist historiography, the establishment of Petah Tikva on the lands of Mulabbis is proclaimed as a turning point in Jewish history, an augur for the return of the Jewish people to their ancestral land. The very name of Petah Tikva alludes to a biblical passage attesting to this point: "and

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[I] will make the Valley of Achor a door of hope (*petah tikva*). There she will respond as in the days of her youth, as in the day she came up out of Egypt.” (Hosea, II, 14; New International Version). For Petah Tikva’s residents, Mulabbis and its adjacent wetlands exemplified the troubled Valley of ‘Achor.⁸³ The enduring presence of the Abu Hamed family in Petah Tikva or its neighboring villages served as a living testament to Jewish attainment and Arab failure. Narrating the story of Mulabbis from the perspective of its Arab inhabitants helps restore a sense of agency to their story. Indeed, it was the Abu Hamed family, not the founders of Petah Tikva, which came up out of Egypt, and whose sons first tilled the land of Petah Tikva.

The physical erasure of the remains of Mulabbis, and the lack of parallel narratives from other village families, makes it difficult, if not impossible, to concretely reconstruct the built environment and social fabric of the village. Being excluded from living in Mulabbis, former residents of Mulabbis nonetheless preserved their reminiscences of the village as a socially-constructed place within the realm of memory, thus challenging a maxim commonly attributed to former Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir that their “elders will die, and the young ones forget.” Their memories continued to evolve, independently from the village’s geographical setting, through oral transmission under the shifting power relations in Israel/Palestine. Therefore, while no longer spatially grounded in Mulabbis’s historical geography (something already discussed elsewhere),⁸⁴ these Remembrances can still be discussed as reflecting the developing identities of its residents, as part of the broader Palestinian ethno-genesis. It thus appears more beneficial, in the eyes of the author, to focus on the question ‘what does the village signify for the narrators’? Moreover, ‘what, if any, may be its cultural and political functions’?

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We may begin addressing these questions by observing that the place devoted to Mulabbis itself in the family story is relatively small. Indeed, Mulabbis was but one station in their long route of migration, with most of the narrations relating to the tribulations endured by family members after their removal from the village.⁸⁵ Nonetheless, the importance of Mulabbis (and Petah Tikva) for the construction of their social identity cannot be underestimated. For six generations they have defined their characters, and positioned them vis-a-vis neighboring Arab communities and the increasing Jewish hegemony over Israel/Palestine.

The uprooting of Mulabbis, and the later of expulsion the Arab workers residing in Petah Tikva following the 1921 Disturbances,⁸⁶ contributed to the unraveling of the communal fabric of Palestinian villages in Palestine's coastal region. At first, the Abu Hameds moved to neighboring villages such as Fajja, al-'Abbasiya, Jaljuliya, and cities further afield like Jaffa and Haifa.⁸⁷ However, as the Zionist colonial project expanded, these too came under Jewish control and became mostly, or fully, depopulated in 1948. The reported content of Hamad al-Ahmad's deathbed confession is especially revealing: "I am originally from Mulabbis," Hamad declared, "and I belong to the Abu Hamed family in Jaljuliya." In his last words, Hamad expressed a wish to die as himself, a Palestinian, and not as the Jordanian persona he had adopted, by favoring old bonds of blood and common origin over his later collective affiliations, forged by virtue of refuge, labor and matrimony. Within this imposed context of colonial dispossession and dislocation, Mulabbis served as an agreed-upon geographical point of reference, and a singular point of origin that united long-lost relatives within the ever-broadening horizons of the Palestinian diaspora. This role might not be particular to Mulabbis among the hundreds of depopulated Palestinian villages.⁸⁸

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Similarly, beyond the facts of material dispossession and physical dislocation embedded in the stories they tell, the narrators' inherited association with Mulabbis serves, alongside their common descent, as means to negotiate contemporary questions of collective affiliation. Their narratives are replete with evidence of them being different things to different people and changing over time: Egyptians (*maṣārwa*), Israelis, Palestinians, Arab residents of Mulabbis, members of the Abu Hamed, Hawwa or Saleh clans. Still, as Saleh al-Ahmad's account of his encounters with Petah Tikva's Jewish residents hinted, they vex with the question what, if anything, makes them different from [other] refugees.

In narrating the story of Mulabbis, members of the Abu Hamed family address supposed grievances of the past. For example, they resist the Zionist claim that they sold their village, while refusing to acknowledge ever accepting indemnity for their lands. This narrative echoes an overarching arc of resistance and legal battles waged by Arab tenants against Jewish settlement on land tilled by them. It is not unique to the Abu Hameds, but is to be found in Nimr et al's book about Abu Shusha (al-Ramla sub-district), and in contemporary research into the case of Zionist colonization of Wadi al-Hawarith.⁸⁹ Not surprisingly, Palestinian narratives of resistance are at odds with the prevailing Zionist account. Zionist narrations portray the *fellahin* as passive actors, and stresses Zionists' equity in their dealings with their tenant farmers, by offering them fair compensation and alternative accommodation.⁹⁰

No work has so far been devoted to villages depopulated in the Ottoman period. In this respect, by virtue of its antiquity, the story of Mulabbis as narrated by its former inhabitants may also offer us a glimpse at future trends of cultural recollection of the Nakba.⁹¹ In the coming decades, the Nakba, too, will cease to be recounted as a lived experience. Six

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generations after the loss of their village, Mulabbis is no longer envisaged as a concrete locality (which it indeed was), but rather as idealized lost homeland, and a relational signifier of patrimony for the descendants of its inhabitants.

Notes

¹ Muhammad Majed al-Sayid Salah al-Deen [al-Hazmawi], *Land Property in Palestine 1918-1948* (PhD diss., University of Jordan, 1993), pp. 73-74.

² Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," *Journal of Genocide Research* 8.4 (2006): pp. 387-409 (pp. 388-390); Omar Jabary Salamanca et al., "Past is present: Settler colonialism in Palestine," *Settler Colonial Studies* 2.1 (2012): pp. 1-8; David Lloyd, "Settler colonialism and the state of exception: The example of Palestine/Israel." *Settler Colonial Studies* 2.1 (2012): pp. 59-80.

³ Avraham Ya'ari, ed., *Sefer ha-Yovel li-Mele'ot Hamishim Shana li-Yesod Petah Tikva Tarlah-Tarpah* (Tel Aviv: Va'adat Sefer ha-Yovel she-'al-yad ha-Mo'atza ha-Mekomit), 1929, pp. 13-14; Ya'ari, *Zichronot Eretz Isra'el: Me'a ve-'Esrim Pirkey Zichronot me-Hayey ha-Yeshuv ba-'arets meha-Me'a ha-Shev'a 'Esre ve-'ad Yameynu* (Jerusalem: The Jewish Agency, 1947), I, pp. 243-245.

⁴ Anaheed Al-Hardan, "Decolonizing research on Palestinians: Towards critical epistemologies and research practices," *Qualitative Inquiry* 20.1 (2014): pp. 61-71.

⁵ Mustafa al-Dabbagh, *Biladuna Filistin*, IV, part 2 (*Fi al-diyar al-Yafia, al-Ramla and al-Lidd*), p. 617: <http://www.palestineremembered.com/images/BiladunaFilistein/4-4-2-Jaffa/Page0617.jpg>.

⁶ "Bitah Tikfa (madina)," *Encyclopedia Palestina*: <https://www.palestinapedia.net/%D8%A8%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%AD-%D8%AA%D9%83%D9%81%D8%A7-%D9%85%D8%AF%D9%8A%D9%86%D8%A9/>.

⁷ Walid Khalidi, and Sharif S. Elmusa, *All that Remains: The Palestinian Villages Occupied and Depopulated by Israel in 1948* (Washington: Inst. for Palestine Studies, 1992).

⁸ Beshara Doumani pointed to the need to offer alternative histories of Palestine, as early as 1992: Doumani, "Rediscovering Ottoman Palestine: Writing Palestinians into History," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 21, no. 2 (1992): pp. 5-28.

⁹ Raz Kletter, *Just past? The Making of Israeli Archaeology* (London and Oakville: Equinox, 2006), pp. 1-81; Noga Kadman, *Erased from Space and Consciousness: Israel and the Depopulated Palestinian Villages of 1948* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2015), pp. 8-33; Yaacov Lozowick, *Israel's Chief Archivist's report about the problems of archival disclosure* (Jerusalem: Israel State Archives, 2018): http://www.archives.gov.il/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/state_archivist_report_2018.pdf

¹⁰ Roy Marom, "A Short History of Mulabbis (Petah Tikva, Israel)," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 52, no. 2 (2019): pp. 134-145; Roy Marom, "The Village of Mullabes and Its Residents: Before the Establishment of Petah Tikva," *Cathedra* 176 (2020), pp. 1-28 (in Hebrew).

¹¹ For the centrality of Petah Tikva to Zionist narratives, see *Cathedra's* issues dealing with Petah Tikva's centenary celebrations (1978-1979) and the vast corpus of literature surveyed by Yossef Lang, *For Petah Tikva* (Zichron Ya'akov: Itay Bahur – Publishing, 2012), pp. 247-278.

¹² Rosemary Sayigh, *The Palestinians: From Peasants to Revolutionaries* (London and New York, Zed Books, second edition, 2007); Yezid Sayigh, *Armed Atruggle and the Search for State: The Palestinian National Movement, 1949-1993* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1997); Ahmad H. Sa'di and Lila Abu-Lughod, eds., *Nakba: Palestine, 1948, and the Claims of Memory*, (New York and Chickester, West Sussex, Columbia University Press, 2007); Nur Masalha, *The Palestine Nakba: Decolonising history, Narrating the Subaltern, Reclaiming Memory* (London: Zed Books Ltd., 2012).

¹³ Mark LeVine, *Overthrowing Geography: Jaffa, Tel Aviv, and the Struggle for Palestine 1880-1948* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: Univ. of California Press, 2005).

¹⁴ Yuval Ben-Bassat, "Rural Reactions to Zionist Activity in Palestine before and after the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 as Reflected in Petitions to Istanbul," *Middle Eastern Studies* 49, no. 3 (2013): pp. 349-363.

¹⁵ For the development of Palestinian narratives in exile, see: Diana Allan, *Refugees of the Revolution: Experiences of Palestinian Exile* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 2014), pp. 37-68.

¹⁶ Marom, "A Short History."

¹⁷ Marom, "Short History," p. 143.

¹⁸ Ya'ari, *Sefer*, p. 13; Miriam Hoexter, "The role of the Qays and Yaman factions in local political divisions," *Asian and African Studies* 9, no. 43 (1973): pp. 249-311; Ibrahim al-Fattash, *Ta'rikh qada' Salfit (al-Jamma'iniiyyat)* (missing place of publication, missing publisher, 1990), pp. 17-19.

¹⁹ Yehuda Karmon, "An analysis of Jacotin's map of Palestine," *Israel Exploration Journal* 10, no. 3 (1960): pp. 168-170.

²⁰ Ya'ari, *Sefer*, pp. 12-13; *Zichronot*, I, p. 244.

²¹ El'azar Trupa, *Yesodot le-Toldot Petah Tikva* (Petah Tikva, 1949), p. 6; David Grossman, *Expansion and Desertion: The Arab Village and its Offshoots in Ottoman Palestine* (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1994), p. 156; Gideon M. Kressel and Reuven Aharoni, "Egyptian Immigrants in the Bilad al-Sham," *Jama'aa* 12 (2004): pp. 201-245.

²² CZA, J15\13133; J15\13135; Marom, "The Village of Mullabes," pp. 58-59.

²³ Ya'ari, *Sefer*, pp. 13-14; R. A. M. I. Yizre'el. "On the Historiographical Investigation of the First Years of Petah Tikva," *Cathedra: For the History of Eretz Israel and Its Yishuv* 9 (1978): pp. 95-12; Ibraheem M. Nimet Allah, "Al-Ramla on the Last Ottoman Era (1281-1333)H / (1864-1914)M Through Legal Courts Protocols," (master's thesis, Islamic University-Gaza, 2004), pp. 212-214.

²⁴ Ya'ari, *Sefer*, pp. 15-18; Yossef Lang, *For Petah Tikva*, pp. 76-80.

²⁵ Ya'ari, *Sefer*, pp. 19-80; Yossef Lang, *For Petah Tikva*, pp. 69-99.

²⁶ Ya'ari, *Sefer*, p. 182, Yehuda Idelstein, *Avraham Shapira (sheikh Ibrahim Micha)* (Tel Aviv: "published by friends", 1939), vol. 1, p. 325.

²⁷ Zeev Tzahor, "Farmers and Labourers of the Second Aliya in Petah Tikva," *Cathedra* 10 (1979): pp. 142-150; Uri Sheffer, "The Smallholders Cooperative Settlement in Nahlat-Yehudah (1913)," *Cathedra* 53 (1989): pp. 85-106.

²⁸ Idelstein, *Avraham Shapira*; letter of Salman al-Kuz of Fajja to Ibrahim Nikho (نخو), 1932, assorted Arabic documents, Petah Tikva Municipal Archives.

²⁹ Lang, *Petah Tikva*, pp. 10-51 and pp. 68-99.

³⁰ E. H. Palmer, (transliteration and explanation), *the Survey of Western Palestine: Arabic and English Name Lists - Collected During the Survey by Lieutenants Conder and Kitchener* (London: Palestine Exploration Fund, 1881); J. E. Hanauer, *Folk-lore of the Holy Land: Moslem, Christian and Jewish* (London: Duckworth, 1907); Taufik Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries in Palestine* (London: Luzac and co., 1927); Shukri 'Arraf, *Tabaqat al-'anbiya' wal-'awliya' al-salihin fi al-'Ard al-Muqaddasa* (Tarshikha: Makhkhul bros., 1993); Taher al-Qalyubi, *'A'ilat wa-Shakhsyyat min Yafa wa qada'iha* (Amman: al-Mu'assasa al-'Arabiyya lil-Dirasat wal-Nashr, 2006); Ishaq Al-Hroub, I. *Atlas of Palestinian Rural Heritage*. Kh. Amayreh, (Translation) (Bethlehem: Diyar, 2015); Mustafa Kabha, *Named Landscapes: Palestinian Toponymy in the Western Part of Tulkarm Sub-district in Its Linguistic, Geographical, Historical and Social Contexts* (Nazereth: the Arabic Language Academy, 2017).

³¹ See, for example: 'Aref al-'Aref, *Nakbat Filistin wal-firdaus al-mafqud 1952-1948* (missing place of publication: Dar al-Huda, 1952-1953); Ted Swedenburg, *Memories of Revolt: The 1936-1939 Rebellion and the Palestinian National Past* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1995; Mustafa Kabha and Nimer Serhan, *Lexicon of*

Commanders, Rebellions and Volunteers of Palestinian 1936-1939 Revolt [sic] (Kfar Qarea': Dar al-Huda, 2009); 'Adel Manna, *Nakba and Survival: The Story of the Palestinians Who Remained in Haifa and the Galilee, 1948-1956*, (Jerusalem: Van-Leer, 2017); Samir Abu al-Haija', *Al-luju' al-qusri: Shahadat shafawiyya li-shuhud 'ala al-nakba* (Jerusalem: al-Matba'a al-'Arabiyya al-Haditha, 2017).

³² See, for example: 'Adel Yahya, Mahmud Ibrahim and Thomas Dix, *Man Yasna' al-Ta'rikh: al-Tajruba al-Filistiniyya fi al-ta'rikh al-shafawwi, Dalil lil-baheth wal-mu'allimin wal-talaba* (Ramallah: Mu'assasat Tamer, 1994).

³³ R. Kenneth Kirby, "Phenomenology and the Problems of Oral History," *The Oral History Review* 35 (2008), pp. 22-28; Alistair Thomson, "Memory and Remembering in Oral History," in: In Donald A. Ritchie (ed.), *The Oxford handbook of oral history* (2011): pp. 77-95.

³⁴ L. Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (Routledge, 2016), 18–32 and 54–77; P. Thompson and J. Bornat, *Voice of the Past: Oral History*, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 1–70

³⁵ LeVine, *Overthrowing Geography*.

³⁶ Sharif Kanaana and Lubna 'Abd al-Hadi, *Abu Kishek*, *Silsilat al-qura al-Filistiniyya al-mudammara* 9 (Ramallah: Birzeit University, 1990), pp. 6-20; Sharif Kanaana, *Miska*, *Silsilat al-qura al-Filistiniyya al-mudammara* 10 (Ramallah: Birzeit University, 1991), pp. 8-17; Sharif Kanaana, *Kufr Saba*, *Silsilat al-qura al-Filistiniyya al-mudammara* 11 (Ramallah: Birzeit University, 1991), pp. 6-11; Rochelle Davis, *Palestinian Village Histories: Geographies of the Displaced* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2010), pp. 29-36.

³⁷ Paul Thompson and Johanna Bornat, *Voice of the Past: Oral History*, fourth edition (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 1-70.

³⁸ Jan Assmann and John Czaplicka, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity," *New German Critique* 65 (1995): pp. 125-133.

³⁹ Allan, *Refugees of the Revolution*, p. 22.

⁴⁰ On the history of Jaljuliya, see: Andrew Petersen, "Jaljuliya: a Village on the Cairo-Damascus Road," *Levant* 29, no. 1 (1997): pp. 95-114. For an early sociological overview of the problems afflicting residents of Jaljuliya, see: Adnan Abed Elrazik, Riyad Amin, and Uri Davis, "Problems of Palestinians in Israel: Land, Work, Education," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 7, no. 3 (1978): pp. 31-54.

⁴¹ Saleh Muhammad Mahmud Abu Hamed, interview, Jaljuliya, August 22, 2017. The author personally conducted, and translated, all of the all interviews quoted in this paper. Some names were reserved for ethical reasons. For the importance of female voices for narrating the Palestinian experience, see: Rosemary Sayigh, "Palestinian Camp Women as Tellers of History," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 27.2 (1998): pp. 42-58. Unfortunately, no elder female member was in a clear state of mind by the time the field was conducted, thus living us only with the voices of the elder males of the family.

⁴² Saleh Muhammad, interview, August 22, 2017.

⁴³ Saleh Muhammad, interview, Jaljuliya, April 28, 2018 ;Hajj Shaker Ahmad Mahmud Saleh, interview, Jaljuliya, April 28, 2018.

⁴⁴ Ahmad Shaker Ahmad Saleh, interview, Jaljuliya, April 28, 2018.

⁴⁵ Ahmad Shaker, interview; Saleh Muhammad, interview, Jaljuliya, August 22, 2017.

⁴⁶

⁴⁷ The attested quality of the food and fodder are signs of the host's magnanimous generosity.

⁴⁸ Saleh Muhammad, interview, Jaljuliya, August 22, 2017. The author preferred adopting verbatim translation for all quotations in order to preserve the structure and diction of the spoken text.

⁴⁹ Helmut Glenk, Blaich Horst, and Haering Manfred, *From Desert Sands to Golden Oranges: The history of the German Templer Settlement of Sarona in Palestine 1871-1947* (Canada: Trafford Publishing, 2005).

⁵⁰ For the Jewish version, recoding the details of the land acquisitions, see Ya'ari, *Sefer*, pp. 15-18 and Lang, *Le-Petah Tikva*, pp. 59-99.

⁵¹ Ahmad Shaker Ahmad Saleh, interview, Jaljuliya, April 28, 2018.

⁵² *Thawra* is an Arabic term for “revolt” or “revolution”. The chronological setting of this narration are confused. In this context, *thawra* seems to mean any unsettled period of conflict, which might include early skirmishes between Jews and Arabs, the Arab Revolt during WWI, the 1921 Disturbances, the 1929 Disturbances, the 1936-1939 Great Arab Revolt, and the 1947-1949 War.

⁵³ Saleh Muhammad Mahmud Abu Hamed, interview, Jaljuliya, August 22, 2017. Moshe Sharett (1894-1965) was a prominent Zionist leader, and the second prime minister of the State of Israel (1954-1955), but he never commanded the Hagana.

⁵⁴ Shapira's acknowledge raising Ahmad's sons (Idelstein, *Shapira*, I, p. 121), and he appears in protocols of Petah Tivka's municipal council dating to the years 1913-1915 as the one in charge of their affairs (for example, Petah Tikva Municipal Archives, file 001.001.002-168: 306).

⁵⁵ Saleh Muhammad Mahmud Abu Hamed, interview, Jaljuliya, August 22, 2017.

⁵⁶ Saleh Muhammad Mahmud Abu Hamed, interview, Jaljuliya, April 28, 2018.

⁵⁷ Idelstein, *Shapira*, I, pp. 121-124.

⁵⁸ Saleh Muhammad Mahmud Abu Hamed, interview, Jaljuliya, April 28, 2018. F light was common among residents of the coastal plain. For example, see 'Arar, *Khureish*, pp. 49-51; Yosef Eliyahu Chelouche, *Parashat Hayay 1870-1930* (Tel Aviv: A. Chelouche, 1931), chapters XIX-XXIV: http://benyehuda.org/chelouche/parashat_xayay.html.

⁵⁹ Resident of Kufr Thilith (b. 1951), interview, Kufr Thilith, March 4, 2018; Wajih 'Abd al-Rahman 'Ode (b. 1943, Khirbet Khureish), interview, Jaljuliya, May 3, 2018.

⁶⁰ On the social makeup of the Kufr Thilith, see 'Arar, *Khureish*, pp. 59-71; David Grossman, and Zeev Safrai, “Satellite Settlements in Western Samaria.” *Geographical Review* 70, no. 4 (1980): pp. 446-461; Saleh Muhammad Mahmud Abu Hamed, interview, Jaljuliya, April 28, 2018; Resident of Jaljuliya (b. 1927, Kufr Thilith), interview, Jaljuliya, May 3, 2018.

⁶¹ An official account of the execution is given in *the Palestine Bulletin*, June 16, 1925, 3: “It is officially announced that at 8 a.m. to-day, at the Jerusalem Jail, sentence of death was carried out upon Abu Hamed 9l [=el] Masri, Wasta Valley, near Petah Tivkah, condemned to death by the Court of Criminal Assize at Jaffa on the 9th [of] February, sentence being confirmed by the Supreme Court on the 19th [of] May. The crime for which Named Abu Hamed El Masri has suffered the death penalty was the murder in the act of robbery of Muhammad Sadek Shami on the night of the 9th October, 1924” [mistakes appear in the original report]; “Mitat Beit Din,” *Doar ha-Yom*, p. 3. Shapira's account of Hamed's life and death is given by Idelstein, *Shapira*, I, pp. 121-124.

⁶² Tuvia Ashkenazi, *Ohaley Kedar: lemin ha-Yarkon 'ad ha-Karmel* (Jerusalem: Qedem, 1931), pp. 17-22 and pp. 33-44; Kanaana and 'Abd al-Hadi, *Abu Kishkek*, pp. 5-26. Abu Kishkek appears as the main Arab antagonist in Abu Hamed's narrations.

⁶³ Hajj Shaker Ahmad Mahmud Saleh, interview, Jaljuliya, April 28, 2018

⁶⁴ Ahmad Shaker Ahmad Saleh, interview, Jaljuliya, April 28, 2018.

⁶⁵ This is, perhaps, a reference to Hamed al-Ahmad's reported brigandry. See: Idelstein, *Shapira*, I, pp. 121 and protocols of Petah Tikva's municipal council (Petah Tikva Municipal Archives, file 001.001.002-168: 161 and 306).

⁶⁶ Saleh Muhammad Mahmud Abu Hamed, interview, Jaljuliya, April 28, 2018.

⁶⁷ Ahmad Shaker Ahmad Saleh, interview, Jaljuliya, April 28, 2018. The chronology of this narration is confused. See endnote #45.

⁶⁸ Saleh Muhammad Mahmud Abu Hamed, interview, Jaljuliya, April 28, 2018.

⁶⁹ Saleh Muhammad, interview, April 28, 2018.

⁷⁰ The narrator used the Hebrew name for Nahr al-‘Awja in his narration.

⁷¹ Saleh Muhammad, interview, Jaljuliya, August 22, 2017.

⁷² Compare with Ilan Pappé, *The Forgotten Palestinians: A History of the Palestinians in Israel* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011), pp. 15-93; Allan, *Refugees of the Revolution*, pp. 161-228.

⁷³ Compare with Davis, *Village Histories*, 223-227.

⁷⁴ Ahmad Shaker Ahmad Saleh, interview, Jaljuliya, May 3, 2018. Qalqiliya is a border town in the West Bank, located only four kilometers north of Jaljuliya.

⁷⁵ Saleh Muhammad Mahmud Abu Hamed, interview, Jaljuliya, August 22, 2017.

⁷⁶ About the resettlement of internal Palestinian refugees in Israel, see: Hillel Cohen, *The Present Absentees: The Palestinian Refugees in Israel since 1948* (Jerusalem: The Institute for Israeli Arab Studies, 2000), pp. 91-96; Nadim N. Rouhana, and Areej Sabbagh-Khoury, “the Internally Displaced Palestinians in Israel,” in Rouhana and Sabbagh-Khoury, eds., *The Palestinians in Israel* (Haifa: Mada al-Carmel, Arab center for Applied Social Research, 2011), pp. 38-40. About Jaljuliya's particular case, see: Tilde Rosmer, *Mizrahiut and the Arab-Jewish Divide: Contemporary Challenges to Israel's Ethnic Boundaries* (PhD diss., University of Oslo, 2007), pp. 253-260.

⁷⁷ Salim Tamari, “The Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza: The sociology of dependency,” Khalil Nakhleh and Elia Zureik, eds., *The Sociology of the Palestinians* (London: Croom Helm, 1980): pp. 84-111.

⁷⁸ Ahmad Shaker Ahmad Saleh, interview, Jaljuliya, April 28, 2018. Unfortunately, the letter was lost.

⁷⁹ Bat-Zion Eraqi Klorman, “Ritual slaughter, butchers and Yemenis’ position in the moshavot’s social and economic life,” *Israel* 4 (2003): pp. 109-121; Gershon Shafir, “the Meeting of Eastern Europe and Yemen: ‘Idealistic Workers’ and ‘Natural Workers’ in Early Zionist Settlement in Palestine,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 13, no. 2 (1990): pp. 172-197; Yosef Gorny, “the Strengths and Weaknesses of ‘Constructive Paternalism’: The Second Aliyah Leaders’ Image of Yemenite Jews,” *Cathedra* 108 (2003): pp. 131-162.

⁸⁰ These claims appear, for example, in Idelstein, *Shapira*, I, pp. 43 and Ya‘ari, *Sefer*, 424. The Arab Narrators' identity is reserved per their request.

⁸¹ Resident of Jaljuliya (b. 1937), interview, Jaljuliya, April 8, 2017.

⁸² Resident of Jaljuliya (b. 1940), interview, Jaljuliya, April 25, 2017.

⁸³ Ya‘ari, *Sefer*, pp. 10-14; Lang, *Petah Tivka*, pp. 10-11.

⁸⁴ Marom, “The Village of Mullabes.”

⁸⁵ Alistair Thomson, “Moving Stories: Oral History and Migration Studies,” *Oral history* 27, no. 1 (1999), pp. 24-37.

⁸⁶ Sir Haycraft, S, *Palestine: Disturbances in May, 1921. Reports of the Commission of Inquiry with Correspondence Relating Thereto.* (HM's Stationery Office, 1921); Richard N. Verdery, “Arab ‘disturbances’ and the

Commissions of Inquiry.” *The Transformation of Palestine: Essays on the Origin and Development of the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (1971): pp. 275-303.

⁸⁷ Ahmad Shaker, interview, Jaljuliya, May 3, 2018.

⁸⁸ Davis, *Village Histories*, pp. 209-234; Allan, *Refugees of the Revolution*, pp. 161-190.

⁸⁹ Adler Raya, “The tenants of Wadi Hawarith: another view of the land question in Palestine,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 20, no. 2 (1988): pp. 197-220; Suwaed Muhammad, “The Wadi al-Hawarith affair (Emek Hefer): disputed land and the struggle for ownership: 1929–33,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 52, no. 1 (2016): pp. 135-152.

⁹⁰ Avraham Granovsky, *The Land Regime in Eretz Israel* (Tel- Aviv: Dvir Publications, 1949), pp. 279-318; Stein, Kenneth W., *the Land Question in Palestine, 1917-1939* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press Books, 1984).

⁹¹ Nur Masalha, “Remembering the Palestinian Nakba: Commemoration, Oral History and Narratives of Memory,” *Holy Land Studies* 7, no. 2 (2008): pp. 123-156.