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## The challenges facing the First *Aliyah* Sephardic Ottoman colonists

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### ABSTRACT

The case of the tiny Jewish colony of Har-Tuv, which was founded by Ottoman Jews who immigrated to Palestine in 1895 from Bulgaria, sheds light on Ottoman policies vis-à-vis settlement activity by Sephardic Jews in Palestine at a time when there were concerted efforts to limit the Jewish national activity there. The latter was mainly carried out by non-Ottoman Ashkenazi Jews who immigrated to Palestine from eastern Europe. As the only colony established during the First *Aliyah* by Sephardic Jews, and also due to its geographical isolation, Har-Tuv was detached from the processes taking place within the other Jewish colonies and the New Yishuv. At the same time, Har-Tuv's founders had a long tradition of living under Ottoman rule and were on good terms with the local Ottoman authorities in Palestine. This was often useful when the colony had problems with its Arab neighbors, and on several occasions Har-Tuv even served as an intermediary between the Arab rural population and the government.

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### Introduction

The Ottoman Empire overtly opposed Jewish immigration and settlement activity in Palestine at the end of the nineteenth century, fearing the creation of another national problem within the empire's shrinking borders. This policy was codified in numerous ordinances and restrictions aimed at reducing this activity and creating obstacles to its development. It is thus informative to see how the Ottoman authorities dealt with immigration and settlement activity by Ottoman Jews, who did not immigrate to the empire from outside but rather moved within its borders. One such especially interesting case is that of the colony of Har-Tuv which was founded in 1895 west of Jerusalem by immigrants from Bulgaria, the only colony established by Sephardic Jews during the first wave of Zionist immigration to Palestine in 1882–1903 (designated in Zionist historiography as the First *Aliyah*).<sup>1</sup> Since Bulgaria was a territory that de jure remained under Ottoman tutelage from 1878 until 1908 – even though de facto it was largely autonomous and gradually increased its degree of autonomy – the arrival of the Bulgarian Jews who founded Har-Tuv created a dilemma for the Ottoman authorities in Jerusalem. This led to a series of exchanges with Istanbul

to clarify their status according to Ottoman law and the regulations and the restrictions concerning Jewish activity in Palestine. The same was true when it came to registering Har-Tuv's land.

The unique background of Har-Tuv's colonists compared to the other colonies of the First *Aliyah*, which were predominantly established by Ashkenazi Jews from eastern Europe, was reflected in the colony's relationships with the local Ottoman authorities, its Arab neighbors, various segments of the Jewish Yishuv (community) in Palestine, as well as with the Jewish settlement organizations, which were also largely dominated by east European Jews. This article examines key features of the colony of Har-Tuv, focusing on the ways in which the Sephardic background of its residents affected its interactions with all those persons and organizations with whom it was in contact. As will be seen, in certain instances their Sephardic identity constituted an advantage for the colonists, but in other cases also created difficulties.

## Background

It is estimated that during the First *Aliyah* between 30,000 and 50,000 Jews immigrated to Palestine in several waves. By 1904, however, fewer than 30,000 remained in the country. Of those who stayed in Palestine, about 5,500 established some 25 agricultural colonies (*moshavot*), which constituted the backbone of the New Yishuv, the modern, national, Jewish community in Palestine, or *Eretz-Yisrael* as it is known in Jewish sources. There is no doubt that these colonies were the First *Aliyah* immigrants' major contribution to the Jewish national project in Palestine. The other First *Aliyah* immigrants either followed in the footsteps of Jews who had previously immigrated to Palestine and joined the communities of the Old Yishuv, or settled in the coastal towns of Haifa and Jaffa and in a few neighborhoods in Jerusalem outside the old city of Jerusalem, which were all part of the New Yishuv.

The largest colonies, such as Zikhron Ya'akov, Petah Tikva, and Rishon le-Zion, each had a population of around 700–800, while medium-sized colonies such as Rehovot, Metulla and Yesud ha-Ma'ala each had a population of 200–300, and the smallest colonies had as few as 28 residents (Motza), with fewer than 100 in Har-Tuv, and 152 in Hadera.<sup>2</sup> The First *Aliyah* colonies were established on a total area of approximately 250,000 dunams.<sup>3</sup> These were villages based on private farming and organized according to European models of settlement.

Jewish colonization activity during this period, and indeed even many years later, was predominantly concentrated in the coastal plain and the other lowlands of Palestine. Whereas the first colonies were established in a relatively random way in several locations in these regions, subsequent colonies were mostly situated in proximity to the first nuclei, a development that had many advantages from the colonists' point of view. It reinforced their sense of security and strength, enlarged their sociocultural milieu, allowed them greater economic cooperation, and facilitated the provision of better public services, support, and assistance in agricultural training and other matters.<sup>4</sup> By the end of the First *Aliyah*, three blocs of colonies had been formed in this way: around the Hula valley in eastern Upper Galilee, in the coastal plain south of Haifa, and in the coastal plain southeast of Jaffa. A fourth bloc, located in eastern Lower Galilee (southwest of Tiberias), was established in a centralized preplanned way by the Jewish Colonization Association around 1900, and hence differed considerably from the others.<sup>5</sup> By contrast, only a few small colonies were sporadically established in the mountainous areas of Palestine which remained outside the main Jewish

colonization effort. These regions were largely populated by hundreds of Arab villages, and no land suitable for massive modern colonization activity was available there. One of these colonies was Har-Tuv, among the smallest and most isolated First *Aliyah* colonies.

Har-Tuv was located some thirty kilometers southwest of Jerusalem, next to the Jaffa–Jerusalem railroad, and seven kilometers south of the Jaffa–Jerusalem carriageway. This region, where the Judean Mountains descended west and turned into hills, was far beyond the Jewish colonization effort at the time and in years to come, in fact until the State of Israel was established in 1948. The colony was thus not part of any bloc of colonies.<sup>6</sup> Har-Tuv's land covered some 4,500 dunams, which had belonged to the adjacent Arab village of 'Artuf. Most of the latter's land had been confiscated by the government in the 1870s due to tax debt, and the village was left with only a small olive grove and several hundred dunams of arable *waqf* land (endowed land whose income was dedicated to support families or institutions).<sup>7</sup> The confiscated land went through several hands before it was finally bought by Bulgarian Jews in the mid-1890s. Its last owner prior to this transaction was a London-based British missionary society called the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews, which in the mid-1880s had tried to set up an agricultural colony in 'Artuf to convert poor Jewish immigrants from eastern Europe who were wandering the streets of Jerusalem.<sup>8</sup> When this effort failed, the missionary colony gradually became deserted and the villagers from 'Artuf went back to cultivating their former land, until the arrival of the Bulgarian Jews in 1895.<sup>9</sup>

Har-Tuv's population initially consisted of ten families and totaled fewer than a hundred people. They came from the four Bulgarian cities of Sofia, Tatar Pazarjik (today Pazarjik), Plevna (Plevna), and Plovdiv and were members of a proto-Zionist society called Agudat Ahim le-Yishuv Eretz Yisrael (Society of Brethren for the Settlement of Eretz Yisrael).<sup>10</sup> The society aimed to send fifty families to settle the land purchased in 'Artuf, but as a first step it decided to send twelve families – perhaps representing the twelve tribes of Israel – to prepare for the arrival of the others. Eventually, however, only ten families immigrated and the rest remained in Bulgaria, a situation that created extreme difficulties for the colony's future development and led to complications in its land ownership.<sup>11</sup> For a while the society in Bulgaria continued to support the families who had immigrated to Palestine with its modest means but later ceased to play a significant role in the colony's affairs.<sup>12</sup> Its members, however, demanded their share in the colony's land which belonged to all the fifty families of the society. Only at the end of the first decade of the twentieth century were Har-Tuv's colonists able to buy their co-members' share and divide the land among themselves with the help of the Zionist philanthropist from Vilna, Yitzhak Leib Goldberg (known as “the unfamiliar philanthropist”), who in a complicated land transaction bought a third of the colony's land.<sup>13</sup> Until then the families in Har-Tuv had farmed the land of the society's shareholders from their own towns back in Bulgaria.<sup>14</sup>

The reasons behind the immigration of Har-Tuv's colonists to Palestine were similar to those of the ideologically motivated group among the immigrants of the First *Aliyah*. Recent research has shown that most of the First *Aliyah* immigrants were not motivated by ideological considerations, but rather came to Palestine as a result of lack of means or opportunities to move elsewhere, and the unfounded belief that Palestine, the biblical land of milk and honey, would provide them with untapped economic opportunities.<sup>15</sup> Some of the First *Aliyah* immigrants, however, particularly those who established the first colonies, were driven by a combination of religious and proto-nationalist zeal. Unlike Jewish

immigrants to the Holy Land in the past, they were not motivated solely by religious considerations, but also aspired to realize the dream of returning to Zion (*Eretz Yisrael*), which they perceived as the ancient Jewish homeland, and to establish a modern national society there. Nor did they perceive themselves as foreigners settling in a new country in search of better economic opportunities, but rather as a people returning to a land they considered their ancient homeland.

While many of the First *Aliyah* colonists had grown up in traditional religious families in eastern Europe, mainly in the Pale of Settlement and Romania, they had nonetheless been exposed to the secular ideas of the *haskalah*, the “Jewish Enlightenment.” Influenced by the desire to live a productive life, they sought to support themselves through manual labor, preferably in agriculture. They hoped to revive Jewish collective life in the ancient homeland and create a “new type” of Jew, who was self-sufficient and rooted in the land. These goals were perceived as part of the solution to the pressing problem of the persecution of Jews in eastern Europe. Har-Tuv’s colonists differed in this respect because they were Ottomans, spoke Ladino and not Yiddish, and were not part of the sociocultural milieu to which the vast majority of the First *Aliyah* colonists at the time belonged. Moreover, their way of life was traditional and they had only limited exposure to the ideas of the *haskalah*. However, they did not immigrate to Palestine for lack of other options, but out of very strong ideological and religious convictions, similar to the core motivations of other First *Aliyah* colonists.

### The question of Sephardic immigration to Palestine

At the end of the nineteenth century the central Ottoman authorities frequently reiterated in their correspondence with local officials in Palestine and the Levant (Beirut, Damascus) that they were absolutely opposed to Jewish immigration and settlement activity in Palestine.<sup>16</sup> They pointed to numerous Sultanic decisions to that effect and emphasized the need to take concrete measures on the ground to prevent these activities from taking place. They gave a variety of reasons for this policy, claiming, for example, that Jewish immigration would be harmful to the empire’s interests as well as to the local population,<sup>17</sup> that a new political-national problem might be created in Palestine,<sup>18</sup> that there was not enough room for massive Jewish immigration as there was in America,<sup>19</sup> that “Jews create problems everywhere they go,”<sup>20</sup> that “even the ‘enlightened’ European states and Russia have also rejected the Jews,”<sup>21</sup> that a Jewish presence would serve as a pretext for foreign intervention, and even – echoing European anti-Semitic ideas – that Jews were not clean and that they spread disease.<sup>22</sup>

The arrival of the Bulgarian Jews raised a question of principle regarding the right of Ottoman Jews to settle freely in Palestine and purchase land there. According to rights granted to Ottoman minorities in the empire during the Tanzimat (the period of Ottoman reforms in the nineteenth century, between 1839 and 1876), there were no obstacles to their immigration to Palestine or to their establishing colonies on land they had legally purchased there. On the other hand, they came from a territory whose current inclusion in the Ottoman realm was somewhat ambiguous. Moreover, from the Ottoman point of view, it was unthinkable to allow Jews to freely operate in Palestine and to strengthen what the Ottomans perceived as the foundations for a national project that would eventually undermine the empire’s territorial integrity and kindle another national conflict. Hence,

they viewed Jewish immigration and settlement activity in Palestine with suspicion, even when the immigrants were Ottoman Bulgarian Jews such as in the case of Har-Tuv.

Thus, shortly after their arrival in Jerusalem at the end of 1895, the Ottoman authorities discussed whether or not the Bulgarian Jews would be allowed to settle on the land they had just purchased and whether they should be treated as Ottomans at all. The governor of Jerusalem initially ordered the newcomers to evacuate the locality within eight days but they submitted a petition to the office of the acting (*kaymakam*) Chief Rabbi in Istanbul, Moshe Halevi, through Rabbi Ya'akov Sha'ul Eliachar (1817–1906), the Rishon le-Zion Rabbi, and asked for his intervention to prevent their evacuation.<sup>23</sup> They also asked local Sephardic notables from Jerusalem such as Yosef Navon Bey (1858–1934) to help them repeal the order and intervene on their behalf with the local authorities.<sup>24</sup>

The *Mutasarrıf* (governor of province) of Jerusalem was asked by the office of the Grand Vizier (*Sadaret*) in Istanbul to investigate the complaint. Interestingly the telegram from Istanbul to Jerusalem did not refer to the Jews as *Sefaradim* but rather, based on the translation from French to Ottoman of Rabbi Eliachar's telegram, as “non-Polish” (Polish probably signifying Ashkenazi non-Ottoman Jews). The governor of Jerusalem replied to Istanbul's request that he had been instructed not to let any Jews settle, regardless if they were Ottoman or not. He added that the newcomers were Zionist Ottomans whose activity seemed to contradict imperial orders and that they had been informed about the decision of the Administrative Council of the District of Jerusalem.<sup>25</sup> Eventually, after overcoming many obstacles and red tape, the Bulgarian Jews were allowed to stay, having convinced the government that they were Ottomans who were simply moving within the empire's borders and were not violating imperial orders.<sup>26</sup>

A similar problem arose when the colonists of Har-Tuv tried to register their land, given the empire's opposition to Jewish settlement in Palestine and its effort to limit purchase of land by foreign Jews. The purchase was eventually authorized by the government after a long correspondence between ministries to guarantee that foreign Jews would not settle there.<sup>27</sup> The buyers were asked to sign a declaration that they would not violate former imperial decisions restricting Jewish immigration and settlement activity in Palestine and would not settle foreign Jews on this land.<sup>28</sup> The land that had been bought from the mission (simply defined as “Englishmen” by the Ottomans) was registered in the name of five Ottoman Jews, based on a decision by the Sultan.<sup>29</sup> These Jews were members of the society that had founded Har-Tuv, all but one of whom remained in Bulgaria.<sup>30</sup> Apparently bribes were also needed to complete the process of obtaining title deeds for the land.<sup>31</sup>

### The question of Sephardic integration in the activities of the New Yishuv

Due to its geographical isolation, Har-Tuv had only limited contacts with the Jewish colonies on the coast and with the New Yishuv in general. Har-Tuv's proximity to the Jaffa–Jerusalem railroad could have given it the opportunity to establish regular contacts with the Jewish communities on the coast and in Jerusalem, but during the colony's early years its people were in fact too poor to pay the train fare and often had to walk to Jerusalem through the mountains.<sup>32</sup>

Har-Tuv's isolation, however, was far from being only a matter of geography. As the only colony established during the First *Aliyah* by Sephardic Jews – as opposed to the predominantly Ashkenazi population in the other colonies – its colonists felt socially excluded from



the other colonies and neglected by the various Jewish colonization organizations operating in Palestine which were dominated by Ashkenazi Jews.<sup>33</sup> This feeling continued to affect the colonists of Har-Tuv even in the 1930s and 1940s, several decades after its establishment, and can be seen in many of their exchanges with the Yishuv's organizations. As late as 1939 the colonists of Har-Tuv wrote the following complaint to the Jewish Agency, which was the de facto government of the Yishuv at the time:

We too have a burning question for you: why are there always budgets available for others, but not for us – as though we were in-laws while we languish in hardship and poverty. Is it because Har-Tuv is a Sephardic colony, and we bought its land with our own money, and for 45 years we have irrigated its land with our sweat? Is this why we have been abandoned? The Jewish people all over the diaspora donates its money for the national home – without stipulating that Sephardic Jews should not enjoy these donations.<sup>34</sup>

As a result, Har-Tuv was almost completely detached from processes taking place in the other colonies, such as educational, cultural, and linguistic developments, as well as economic ones, and in many ways, despite being a rural First *Aliyah* agricultural village, it resembled the traditional sector within the Sephardic community in Jerusalem.<sup>35</sup> It remained a small colony and did not absorb substantial populations aside from the Bulgarian families who had established it, despite several attempts to do so, perhaps due to the colonists' desire to preserve the unique character of Har-Tuv and to maintain their influence in the plans to expand their colony.<sup>36</sup>

The Sephardic community in Jerusalem sent a *melamed* (religious teacher) to Har-Tuv for a while, who instructed the children in Torah according to Sephardic tradition and concomitantly fulfilled several other religious functions such as leading prayers and serving as a ritual slaughterer.<sup>37</sup> In addition, some Sephardic notables from Jerusalem sporadically intervened in favor of the colony in times of need. Prominent among these was Albert Antébi (1869–1919), a Damascus-born Jew who was the representative of the Jewish Colonization Association and Alliance Israélite Universelle in Jerusalem and was considered by the colonists as their patron and savior.<sup>38</sup> He apparently used his influence to convince an Arab notable from Jerusalem named Musa Kazim al-Husayni (1850–1934), from the famous al-Husayni family, who had an established position among the villagers in the region, to spread the word that they should treat the colony as though it were one of the Arab villages and stop harassing its people.<sup>39</sup> He also helped the colonists to obtain title deeds for their land,<sup>40</sup> and resolve the ownership issue with the members of Agudat Ahim who had stayed in Bulgaria. This allowed Har-Tuv to obtain a loan from the Jewish Colonization Association and finally embark on a new path of development in 1909.<sup>41</sup>

## Relationships with the Ottoman authorities and the Arab rural population

As was the case for virtually all the other Jewish colonies in Palestine, Har-Tuv had various disputes with its Arab neighbors during the early period of settlement. Such disputes usually revolved around the usage of natural resources such as water, grazing grounds, and the borders of plots. In part these disputes were caused by cultural misunderstandings and different perceptions of land ownership, although these alone cannot explain the conflicts between the two sides over such matters, which often continued many years after they had learned to live side by side and were familiar with each other's customs.

Har-Tuv had a longstanding land dispute with the adjacent village of 'Artuf, on whose former land it had been established. As noted above, in the years between the failure of the British mission to establish a colony in 'Artuf and the arrival of the Jewish colonists, the villagers from 'Artuf had returned to cultivate their former land which they still perceived as theirs. When the Bulgarian Jews arrived in 1895, the villagers, who were afraid to lose their main source of livelihood, complained about their arrival to the local Ottoman authorities in Jerusalem.<sup>42</sup>

In addition, a dispute broke out between the two sides over the exact boundaries of the land purchased by the colonists. This quarrel led to the uprooting of 4,000 mulberry trees planted by the colonists to delineate the borders of their fields, and ended only after a long and expensive trial.<sup>43</sup> Similar trials took place on several other occasions later on.<sup>44</sup> Besides land disputes, the colonists frequently complained about extensive theft from their fields and from the colony itself, which also led to a series of expensive property trials.<sup>45</sup>

Such disputes were certainly not unique to Har-Tuv and were also experienced by other Jewish colonies at the time. Nonetheless, Har-Tuv had certain means at its disposal to deal with such sources of contention and conflict which considerably reduced the tension with its neighbors. It needed to develop these tactics because of its small size, isolation, and distance from other Jewish colonies. The Ottoman background of Har-Tuv's colonists apparently helped it eventually to establish relatively good relations with its neighbors, to achieve a certain *détente* with them, and to find peaceful ways to obtain compensation for damages inflicted on the colony.<sup>46</sup> There is even evidence to suggest that friendly relationships, including strong social ties, developed between Har-Tuv's colonists and many of the villagers in its vicinity, something that was not very common in the other Jewish colonies.<sup>47</sup>

Since they were Ottoman subjects who came from Bulgaria, the colonists of Har-Tuv had a long tradition of living under Ottoman rule. Beyond the formality of holding Ottoman citizenship, this had broader cultural and social implications. Ottoman citizens were less likely to be unfamiliar with the culture, habits, norms, and language of Palestine's people. There is ample evidence to suggest that Jews who had grown up in the Ottoman Empire or had lived there for long periods of time found it much easier to bridge the sociocultural differences with both the Arab population and the local Ottoman authorities. As Michelle Campos has observed, "Palestinian Sephardim were largely acculturated and integrated into local society, speaking Arabic, working and living with their neighbors, and accepting their place in the local-imperial system."<sup>48</sup>

The Jewish philosopher Ahad Ha'am, who visited Har-Tuv in 1900, noted the colonists' poverty and the fact that their children did not have a teacher and could not read Hebrew.<sup>49</sup> However, the colonists of Har-Tuv, who knew Bulgarian, Ladino, and Turkish,<sup>50</sup> quickly learned Arabic and adopted many of their neighbors' customs, in part out of necessity, given their poverty and isolation. Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, the Second *Aliyah* leader and later the second president of the State of Israel, who visited the colony in 1915, wrote that the colonists baked bread in the same way as the Arabs, dressed like them, and ate the same food.<sup>51</sup>

The colonists of Har-Tuv may have had no other choice but to cooperate with their neighbors in order to survive, as there were no other Jewish colonies in the area. As early as the first year, the colonists, who had no agricultural knowledge, no tools, and were too few to cultivate by themselves all the land they had bought, reached an agreement with 'Artuf to cultivate the colony's fields together and divide the crops according to an arrangement they reached. This mode of economic cooperation, however, which was relatively common in many Jewish colonies during the early years of settlement, continued in Har-Tuv in an intensive way long after it had ceased in other places.<sup>52</sup> It is not surprising that Ahad Ha'am



wrote in 1900 that a substantial part of Har-Tuv's land was not cultivated by Jews, but rather by Arab villagers who shared the crops with the colonists.<sup>53</sup>

Besides shared cultivation, the colonists of Har-Tuv developed other kinds of economic ties with their Arab neighbors to overcome the disadvantages of their geographical isolation. Several of them established various business initiatives based on trade, exchange, and cooperation with the surrounding Arab villagers. Some of them were based on the employment of Arab day laborers, such as collecting and drying wild flowers for export. A second type was based on the purchase of raw materials, such as olives and milk for the production of olive oil, soap, and cheese. A third kind consisted of provision of various mechanical services to the villagers, such as a mill and an oil press.<sup>54</sup> The level of economic cooperation between Har-Tuv and its neighbors, as well as the extent to which the colony's existence depended on this cooperation, was much higher in Har-Tuv than in the other Jewish colonies, a fact that also influenced their relations with the surrounding Arab villages.

As Ottomans, the colonists were on good terms with the local Ottoman authorities, a fact that helped them in many cases throughout the years when the colony had problems with its neighbors. The most striking example was during World War I, when Har-Tuv obtained a dispensation to exempt its youth from military service despite their being Ottoman subjects. The colonists did not have to pay a fee for military exemptions (*bedl-i askeri*), as was the case in other colonies where some of the colonists were Ottoman subjects. Instead, males eligible for military service in Har-Tuv were able to be registered as holding (often spurious) religious obligations in the colony. For instance, one was the slaughterer (*shohet u-bodek*), another taught the children religious education (*melamed*), yet another was the colony's undertaker, and so forth. Arguably due to its good connections with the local authorities, the colony suffered less than the other colonies during the war.<sup>55</sup> Har-Tuv's good relationship with the Ottoman authorities apparently improved its image in the eyes of its Arab neighbors, and there are even indications that the colony served as an intermediary between the villagers and the government. For instance, Yitzhak Levi, the *mukhtar* of Har-Tuv, who was known for his excellent ties with government officials, was requested several times by heads of the nearby Arab villages to use his contacts to help avoid the sentencing of villagers arrested on various accusations. This earned him the epithet of "the man who takes people down from the scaffold."<sup>56</sup> Levi also mediated in conflicts between villagers in the vicinity of Har-Tuv.<sup>57</sup>

## Conclusion

As this article has shown, Har-Tuv was unique among the First *Aliyah* colonies. In addition to its isolated location, which necessitated the establishment of good relations with its neighbors, the Sephardic background of Har-Tuv colonists also played a role in their contacts with the Ottoman authorities, their Arab neighbors, and the various segments of the Yishuv in Palestine. While being a positive factor in the colony's relations with the former two, their ethnic origin adversely affected their relations with the New Yishuv and its colonization institutions, at least in the eyes of the colonists of Har-Tuv themselves, who felt that they were excluded and neglected due to their Sephardic background.

Har-Tuv was destroyed during the Arab riots in Palestine in 1929 (known in Zionist historiography as *pra'ot tarpat*), at a time when the emerging binational conflict there was becoming too intense to allow the colonists to employ the practices and mechanisms

which for years had enabled their colony to survive as an isolated Jewish locality amidst numerous Arab villages. Har-Tuv's residents were refugees in Jaffa for a year. The colony was repopulated in 1930 by its former inhabitants, only to be abandoned and destroyed during the 1948 Jewish-Arab war, this time for good. Although today, 120 years after its establishment, Har-Tuv's memory in the annals of the Yishuv has been largely forgotten, the case of this exceptional colony adds a new perspective to the history of the First *Aliyah*.

## Notes

1. Of all the immigrants from Europe, only several small groups from Bulgaria and Romania were considered Ottoman citizens, as they came from areas that had previously been under Ottoman rule. Another group of immigrants came from Yemen, but most of them did not settle in the colonies. In several cases Jews from Palestine itself participated in the establishment of the colonies (for instance, some of the founders of Petah Tikva).
2. Ben-Artzi, "Ha-hityashvut ha-yehudit," 346–49.
3. As opposed to a metric dunam which comprises 1,000 square meters, the size of an Ottoman dunam (dönüm), was 0.9193 metric dunams (1/11 hectare, 0.227 acre).
4. Ben-Arieh, "Hebetim ge'ografiyim"; Ben-Artzi, *Early Jewish Settlement Patterns*, 28; Smilansky, *Rehovot*, 18, 35.
5. Some researchers count Petah Tikva and Kfar Saba, to the northeast of Jaffa, as a fifth bloc. See Reichman, *Me-ma'ahaz le-eretz moshav*, 55. The unsuccessful attempts to settle in the Golan/Hawran region were also based on the idea of creating a bloc of settlements. See *ibid*.
6. For Har-Tuv, see Ben-Artzi, "Har-Tuv"; Ben-Artzi, "Har-Tuv: Le-toldoteha"; Ben-Bassat, *Har-Tuv*; for the Arab population in this area, see Khalidi, *All that Remains*, 264–323.
7. Khalidi, *All That Remains*, 268; *Hed ha-Mizrah*, July 9, 1943; July 23, 1943; Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem (hereafter CZA), A-6/144.
8. See a letter from the Ministry of the Interior to the Grand Vizier as part of correspondence between various Ottoman ministries regarding the necessary measures to approve the construction of a building in 'Artuf by three Englishmen, Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi (the central Ottoman archive in Istanbul, hereafter BOA), DH. MKT, 1486/23, 3 Cemaziyülevvel 1305 [January 17, 1888].
9. Ben-Artzi, "Ha-perek ha-notzri"; Perry, *British Mission to the Jews*, 156–65; Kunstel and Albright, *Their Promised Land*, chap. 4; Pileggi, "The Experiment at Artouf."
10. Keshales, *Korot yehudei Bulgariyah*, vol. 2, section 4, chaps. 4–8; see also Keshales, "Dorot ha-rishonim"; Romano, "Ha-yahadut voha-tnu'ah ha-tziyonit."
11. Bakhar, "Le-toldot moshavah sefaradit nishkakat," 81; Ben-Bassat, *Har-Tuv*, 95–96.
12. See a letter written in Ladino in cursive writing from the society of Agudat Ahim to the President of the Society for the Colonization of Eretz Yisrael with a request to support the colonists of Har-Tuv who were faced with an enormous calamity which had led to unexpected expenses (probably referring to the expulsion order they received when they reached Har-Tuv), CZA, F2/23, September 21, 1896.
13. Bakhar, "Le-toldot moshavah sefaradit nishkakat," 81; Ben-Bassat, *Har-Tuv*, 95. For an interesting map of Har-Tuv's land, which was most probably drawn up in preparation for the transaction with Goldberg, see Palestine Jewish Colonization Association (PICA) Archive, Waddesdon Manor, Buckinghamshire, UK, pic. 17/9/16.
14. Bakhar, "Le-toldot moshavah sefaradit nishkakat," 81; during the early years of settlement, before the registration of the land in the name of five people, the colonists cultivated the land collectively. See *Hed ha-Mizrah*, September 3, 1943.
15. Laskov, "Ha-moshavot," 353–55; Shapira, *Land and Power*, 53.
16. For Ottoman policy vis-à-vis the question of Jewish immigration and settlement activity, see Mandel, "Ottoman Policy and Restrictions"; Mandel, "Ottoman Practices"; Kushner, *To Be Governor of Jerusalem*, chaps. 4–5.

17. For instance, see a decision by the Sultan, following an approach to the Grand Vizier regarding Jewish immigration to the Empire, BOA, I. DH., 1237/96881, 17 Zilhicce 1308 [July 24, 1891]. The issue had been discussed but no decision was made. Upon a request by the District of Beirut for instructions it was decided not to let Jews enter the Empire. The decision was general although the question mainly concerned Russian and Greek [*sic*] Jews who immigrated to the region of Jerusalem.
18. For instance, see the Ministry of the Interior to the Grand Vizier about the need to take action against the activities of Rothschild and various Jewish societies that were buying land in Palestine and Syria and whose activities might eventually lead to the creation of a new political problem for the Empire, BOA, DH. MKT., 1890/25, 14 Rebiyülevvel 1309 [November 17, 1891].
19. For instance, see BOA, I. DH., 1237/96881.
20. See, for instance, the order from the Sultan to the Grand Vizier to prepare a decision regarding Jewish immigration from Russia to the Empire as there was still no definitive decision on this matter, BOA, I. DH., 97030, 11 Muharrem 1309 [August 17, 1891].
21. See, for instance, BOA, I. DH., 1237/96881.
22. For instance, see the Ministry of the Interior's clarification of the policy regarding Jewish immigration to the empire in a letter to various bureaus, BOA, DH. MKT., 1981/45, 8 Muharrem 1310 [August 2, 1892]. This letter stated that Jews should not be given permission to enter the empire's territory; that those who had already arrived should be prevented from going to Palestine and could settle only in places where there was already a massive Jewish presence such as Salonika.
23. See a telegram in French from Rabbi Eliachar to the office of the empire's acting chief rabbi in Istanbul, BOA, BEO., 829/62126, August 28 [?], 1896.
24. *Hed ha-Mizrah*, September 3, 1943.
25. See telegram from the *Mutasarrıf* of Jerusalem to the Grand Vizier in Istanbul, BOA, BEO., 829/62126, 13 Ağustos 1312 [August 25, 1896].
26. *Hed ha-Mizrah*, September 3, 1943.
27. BOA, MV., 101/14, 19 Cemaziyülevvel 1318 [September 14, 1900]; see also BOA, BEO, VGG., Kudüs Gelen 316, telegram 32/4, 4 Rabiyyülevvel 1317 [July 13, 1899]; DH. MKT., 2422/22, 17 Teşrinievvel 1316 [October 30, 1900].
28. BOA, DH. MKT., 2422/22.
29. BOA, DH. MKT., 2422/22; MV., 101/14.
30. See their names on a map of the land of Har-Tuv which was prepared in the early 1900s, PICA Archive, pic. 17/9/16. See also *Hed ha-Mizrah*, September 3, 1943.
31. Bakhar, *Zikhronot*, 7.
32. *Hed ha-Mizrah*, July 23, 1943; September 3, 1943.
33. For example, see Bakhar, *Zikhronot*, 5; Bakhar, "Le-toldot moshavah sefaradit nishkahat," 80; Ben-Zvi, *Masa'ot*, 50.
34. The Committee of the Colony of Har-Tuv to the Jewish Agency, Yehuda Ben-Bassat's private collection, May 18, 1939; see also the Committee of the Colony of Har-Tuv to the Presidium of Kofer Hayishuv (a fund for the Yishuv's security needs), CZA, S15/3006, May 1, 1939.
35. Ben-Artzi, "Har-Tuv: Letoldoteha," 354.
36. Yosef Levi in Har-Tuv to Yosef Weitz, the Jewish Agency, Department of Settlement, requesting that settlers of "Balkan origin who have agricultural knowledge" be permitted to live in Har-Tuv with the help of the Tel Aviv-based Company for the Settlement of Balkan Jews, CZA, KKL-5/13447, January 3, 1944.
37. See letters concerning Har-Tuv which appear in the diaries of Yehoshua Eizenstadt, the representative of the Hovevei Zion organization in Jaffa, CZA, A-25/16, A-25/32.
38. See Bakhar, *Zikhronot*, 6; Bakhar, "Le-toldot moshavah sefaradit nishkahat," 80; *Hed ha-Mizrah*, September 3, 1943; September 29, 1943; November 12, 1943; Laskier, "Avraham Albert Antébi."
39. Bakhar, *Zikhronot*, 6.
40. *Ibid.*, 7.

41. Ben-Bassat, *Har-Tuv*, 46.
42. Grazowski, *Al saf me'ah hadashah*, 77–78.
43. *Hed ha-Mizrah*, August 20, 1943.
44. Bakhar, “Le-toldot moshavah sefaradit nishkahat,” 80–81.
45. CZA, A-6/144; Bakhar, *Zikhronot*, 5–6.
46. For example, when one of the colonists was attacked and robbed while walking through the mountains from Jerusalem, the colonists contacted the head of the village where the robbers came from and were able to recover their property and make sure that the offenders were punished. See *Hed ha-Mizrah*, August 20, 1943.
47. Bakhar, *Zikhronot*, 10; Kunstel and Albright, *Their Promised Land*, 3–7; Walid Khalidi claims, somewhat unfoundedly, that the Zionist organizations ignored Har-Tuv due to its “liberal” approach to its Arab neighbors. See Khalidi, *All that Remains*, 268.
48. Campos, “Between ‘Beloved Ottomanian’ and ‘The Land of Israel,’” 462. See also Mandel, *The Arabs and Zionism*, 31.
49. Ahad Ha'am and Zusman, *Divrei ha-bikoret*, 34.
50. Luntz, *Lu'ah Eretz-Yisrael shimushi*, 75.
51. Ben-Zvi, *Masa'ot*, 50.
52. Bakhar, *Zikhronot*, 5; *Hed ha-Mizrah*, August 20, 1943; September 3, 1943.
53. Ahad Ha'am and Zusman, *Divrei ha-bikoret*, 33–34.
54. Bakhar, *Zikhronot*, 8; *Hed ha-Mizrah*, September 29, 1943.
55. *Hed ha-Mizrah*, November 12, 1943; Bakhar, *Zikhronot*, 11–12, 15.
56. Bakhar, *Zikhronot*, 15; *Hed ha-Mizrah*, November 12, 1943; *ibid.*, November 10, 1944.
57. *Hed ha-Mizrah*, November 10, 1944.

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## Notes on contributor

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