

Lod, Lydda, Diospolis

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Jindās: A history of Lydda's rural hinterland
A cornerstone of the study of the city's rural hinterland (1459 – 1948)

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جنداس: تاريخ ريق مدينة اللد
بين القرن الخامس عشر والقرن العشرين ميلادي

דكتور روعي مروم
قسم تاريخ الشرق الأوسط، جامعة حيفا

ג'נדאס: היסטוריה של המרחב הכפרי של לוד
במאות ה-15 עד ה-20 לספירה

ד"ר רועי מרום
החוג ללימודי המזרח התיכון והאסלאם, אוניברסיטת חיפה



Abstract

Jindās was the nearest village to Lydda (Lod), situated by the town's northern entrance. Although Lydda remained, to a large extent, an agricultural town until 1948, its rural hinterland has received little scholarly attention thus far. In this article, we sought to redress this disparity by reconstructing the history of Jindās, based on native sources such as Ottoman tax records, *waqf* endowment deeds, registers of the Sharia courts and even oral testimonies. Jindās is mentioned in the 15th, 16th and early 17th centuries as a flourishing village whose lands belonged to different religious endowments. In the 18th and 19th centuries the village was abandoned several times. The desertion of Jindās, as well as of its neighbors Sibtāra, Kafr Jinnis, Beit Qūfa, and Shīhā, manifests the unsettled conditions around Lydda resulting from the ongoing migrations of nomadic groups and local manifestations of the Qays and Yaman rivalry.

From a broader historiographical perspective, the article underlines a key point: the abandonment of villages did not necessarily result in an overall demographic decline. Just as the inhabitants of Jindās were scattered throughout Palestine's central hill country, residents of other abandoned villages relocated, for the most part, to other regions, expanding and changing their existing patterns of settlement. In addition, the lands of these villages were not abandoned, but continued to be cultivated by other populations. Thus, the lands of Jindās were cultivated by the inhabitants of Beit Nabālā and Lydda, and while they became the target of early Zionist settlement initiatives starting in the late 19th century, Ottoman reassertion of Jindās' status as a *waqf* estate, forestalled the land acquisition initiatives.

Key words: the Arab village, *waqf*, local history, historical geography, Ottoman period

תקציר:

מלخص

كانت جنداس أقرب قرية إلى اللد، وبوابة المدينة للقادمين إليها من الشمال. أما اللد فطلت مدينة زراعية إلى حد كبير حتى حرب 1948. مع الأسف، لم تنال المناطق الريفية حول المدينة باهتمام بحثي كافٍ بعد. في إطار بحثنا هذا قد طلبنا سد هذه الفجوة في تاريخ ريف اللد بمناقشة تاريخ قرية جنداس. تستند المقالة إلى مجموعة متنوّعة ونوعية من المصادر المحلية الأولية، بما فيها دفاتر الضرائب العثمانية، الوقفيات، سجلات المحاكم الشرعية والرواية الشفوية. ذكرت قرية جنداس في القرون ال-15 - 17 ميلادي كوقف صحيح لمؤسسات دينية وكضيعة زراعية مزدهرة. أما خلال القرنين الثامن عشر والتاسع عشر ميلادي فاندثرت جنداس متكرراً أثناء غزوات بدوية ونزاعات القيس واليمن في البلاد. أدى عدم الاستقرار السكاني في ناحية الرملة إلى خراب قرى مجاورة لجنداس واللد مثل سبتارة وكفر جنس وبيت قوفا وشيخة.

من منظور جغرافي تاريخي أوسع، تؤكد المقالة على نقطة رئيسية: لم يكن من الضروري أن يؤدي اندثار القرى إلى تدهور ديموغرافي شامل. قد أثبتنا أن تشتت سكان جنداس في قرى متعددة في جبال فلسطين. هناك أدلة كثيرة تؤكد انتقال سكان القرى المندثرة إلى مناطق أخرى ونتج عن ذلك تغيير توزيع السكان وتعمير قرى جديدة لهم فيها. كذلك، قد تبين إن أراضي القرى المندثرة لم تبقى غير مفتوحة، بل تم زراعتها من قبل مجموعات من القرى المحيطة بها. مثلاً، تم زراعة أراضي جنداس من قبل فلاحي بيت نبالا واللد، وبينما أصبحت أراضي جنداس هدفاً لمبادرات الاستيطان الصهيونية المبكرة، التي بدأت في أواخر القرن التاسع عشر، تم إعادة تأكيد الدولة العثمانية جنداس أرضاً وبقية فباتت مبادرات الاستحواذ الصهيونية بالفشل.

الكلمات الدالة: القرية العربية، وقف، تاريخ محلي، جغرافية تاريخية، الفترة العثمانية

הכפר ג'נדאס, היה הכפר הקרוב ביותר ללוד, והיווה שער לעיר לבאים אליה מצפון. עד לשנת 1948 נותרה העיר לוד חקלאית ברובה. המרחב הכפרי של העיר, המהווה את העורף החקלאי שלה, טרם זכה לתשומת לב מחקרית מספקת. ביקשנו לגשר על הפער הזה בבחינת תולדות הכפר. המאמר מתבסס על מגוון רחב של מקורות מקומיים, כגון: מרשמי מס, כתבי הקדשות, פרוטוקולים של בתי הדין השרעיים ואף עדויות בעל-פה. הכפר ג'נדאס נזכר במאות ה-15, ה-16 וגם בראשית ה-17 כהקדש דתי וכמקום יישוב פורח. במאות ה-18 וה-19 ניטש הכפר פעמים אחדות. חורבנו החוזר של הכפר, כמו גם סופו, מבטאים את חוסר היציבות היישובית באזור לוד, עקב חדירת נוודים וסכסוכי הקיס והימן, עליהם יסופר להלן, ובגינם נעזבו גם הכפרים השכנים: סבטארה, כפר ג'נס, בית קופא ושיחא.

עם זאת, המאמר מדגים כי אין בעצם נטישת כפרים להעיד בהכרח על דעיכה דמוגרפית כוללת. תושבי הכפר ג'נדאס ובני הכפרים השכנים התפזרו במרחב הכפרי של הרי יהודה ושומרון. אוכלוסייתם של הכפרים שניטשו לא נעלמה, אלא עברה להתגורר, על פי רוב, במרחבים גיאוגרפיים אחרים, בהרחיבה ובעבותה את המערך ההתיישבותי בהם. כמו כן אדמות הכפרים המשיכו להיות מעובדות בידי אוכלוסיות אחרות. בנסיבות אלה הכפר ג'נדאס הפך לנחלה חקלאית, בעיבודם של תושבי בית נבאלא ולוד, והכפר אף נקשר ביוזמות מוקדמות להתיישבות ציונית בעמק לוד, יוזמות שסוכלו, בין היתר, עקב היות אדמותיו בבעלות הווקף.

מילות מפתח: הכפר הערבי, וקף, היסטוריה מקומית, גיאוגרפיה היסטורית, התקופה העות'מאנית

Introduction

In recent years, the study of all periods and aspects of the city of Lydda (Lod) has been revitalized. The annual “Lod Conference” and the accompanying volume of proceedings, *Lod, “Diospolis: City of God,”* receive much attention from the scholarly community and a wider public of guides, teachers, hikers, residents of Lod and local history enthusiasts. Archaeologists, architects, urban planners, historians, geographers, cultural researchers and conservationists, participate side by side in the research discourse, and the fruits of their studies are published in Hebrew, English and Arabic (for example: Abu Layl undated; Al-Far 2009; Bīzū 1990; Gofna and Beit-Arieh 1997; Da’adli 2015; Munayyir 1997; ‘Abbās 1996). An examination of recent scholarship shows that most studies have so far focused on the city itself, but no city exists without an established hinterland (Grossman 1983; Grossman 1994: 154–156). In the previous issue of *Lod, “Diospolis: City of God,”* Gat and Czitron dedicated articles to the Jindās Bridge. Those articles examined the Bridge’s location in the Mamluk road system in Bilād al-Shām, and the architectural features, while the village itself was not discussed at all (Gat 2020; Czitron 2020).

Jindās was the village closest to Lydda, and it was the gateway to the city for those coming from the north. The village is mentioned in local sources, from the 15th, 16th and early 17th centuries, as the property of religious endowments and as a flourishing settlement. In the 18th and 19th centuries the village was abandoned several times and its inhabitants moved to other villages in Palestine’s hill country. Jindās became an agricultural estate, and it was linked to early initiatives of Jewish settlement in the Lod Valley. The extensive remains of the village in the fields of Moshav Ginaton, which include a mosque named after Sheikh Umar, residential buildings, pools, a well and orchards, provide silent evidence of its importance in days gone by.

The aim of the present study is to shed light on Lydda’s hinterland through a discussion of the history of Jindās, as a social space and as a key site near Lydda, from its first appearance in the Mamluk sources (1459) to the establishment of the State of Israel. The article uses geographical analysis to examine the factors of location and placement of the village of Jindās, the residential layout and the land uses in its area. The geographical insights were supplemented by written and oral sources relating to the influence of human factors on settlement on the site (on the methodology of using oral documentation in this context, see Sasson and Marom 2020: 52–53).

The article answers a series of guiding questions: How did settlement in the village of Jindās develop between the Mamluk period and that of the British Mandate? Does the history of the site reflect broader developments in the distribution of settlements and the intensity of settlement in the Lod area, and if so, to what extent? Is it possible to trace the fate of families who left Jindās? If so, what characterized the ways they were absorbed in their new villages? What are the patterns of use of the village estate after its abandonment? Did these patterns affect Jewish attempts to settle in the area, and if so, how? At the same time, the article will deal with Jindās’ connections to the city of Lydda and its surroundings, the role of the waqf authorities in the development of settlement patterns and the patterns of human activity in the area, from the village’s abandonment until the establishment of the State of Israel.

Jindās village in the Middle Ages

The Jindās archeological site is located at the top of a hill 53 m above sea level in the fields of Moshav Ginaton (Israel Grid 19125/65282), south of the Lod interchange and east of the railway and Ayalon River, c. 550 m east of the historic Jindās Bridge (Gofna and Beit Arieh 1997: 73). The site is located in the heart of the floodplain of the Ayalon River, and is surrounded by fertile alluvial soils, suitable for field crops and orchards. In the Byzantine period, the site was part of the hinterland of Lydda-Diospolis. An archeological dig conducted on the site in 2014 uncovered the remains of a garbage pit, containing potsherds from the

Byzantine period and the Early Islamic period, a cemetery dating to the Mamluk period and the remains of a settlement dating to the Ottoman period (Toueg, Krispin and Eshed 2019).

The village of Jindās is first mentioned in a Crusader document from 1129 as an estate called Casal Gendas within the boundaries of Lydda (Clermont-Ganneau 1896: 117). Some believe that the Crusader name preserves an earlier name, Gennadios, from the Byzantine period (Czitrion 2020: 26). In 1273, the Mamluk Sultan al-Zāhir Baybars erected a bridge over the Ayalon River (Wādī Jindās), as part of the development project of the Mamluk postal route, which was the main communication artery in the kingdom (Gat 2020). The bridge was built of stones taken from St. George’s Church in the city after its demolition by the Mamluks. Evidence for this are the many building blocks that bear Crusader masons’ marks (Abu Leil undated: 19–20; Gat 2020: 16; Clermont-Ganneau 1896: 117–118; Czitrion 2020; letter from the Chief Supervisor of Antiquities to Uri, 8.2. 1935, Archives of the Mandatory Department of Antiquities, ATQ_502, Jisr Jendas). Jindās’ proximity to the main road and to the towns of Lydda and Ramla undoubtedly contributed to the economic importance of the village.

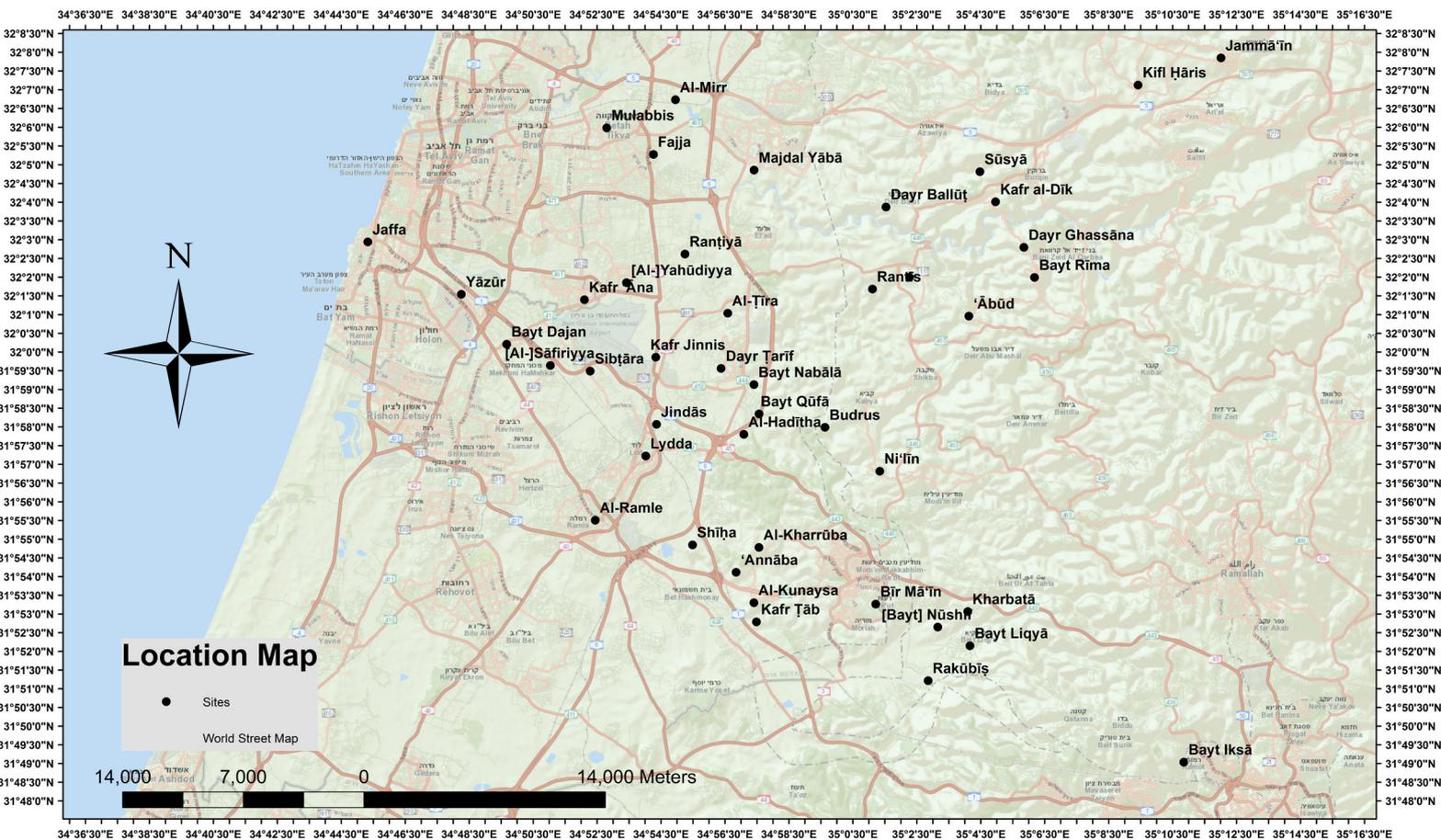


Fig. 1: General locating map (drawn by the author)

Jindās is mentioned in an endowment certificate from the days of the Mamluk Sultan Īnāl (1453–1461). A man named ‘Alī b. al-Abūghā b. ‘Abdallah purchased from the State Treasury, in 863 AH/1459, four carats (Arabic: *qirāt*)² from the village of Jindās and eight carats from Mazra‘at al-Ṭīra (a *mazra‘a* is an uninhabited plot of land, today: Tirat Yehuda). In 867 AH/1463, ‘Alī dedicated the property “for himself and after him for his sister Sitt al-Mulūk and for his wife Sunniyya and their children and their descendants and the fruit of their loins, if they had any, and after the extinction of the dynasty – for al-Ḥaram al-Nabawī al-Sharīf (in the city of Medina in the Hijaz) and Ḥaram Sayyiduna al-Khalīl (the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron), and will expend 2,000 dirhams for them each year for acts of kindness, as detailed in the endowment certificate.” The income from the part of the endowment in Jindās was estimated at 1,222 coins and that from the part in al-Ṭīra, at 267 coins (Ṣāliḥiyya 1999: 348). The Lydda region at that time was part of the Ramla *nāḥiya* (sub-district), which was subordinate to Gaza.



Fig. 2: Jindās Bridge, historic photograph (Wikipedia)

1. The Muslim calendar is called *hijrī* in Arabic, referring to the Prophet Muḥammad’s flight (Ar.: *hijra*) in 622 from Mecca to Medina. The Muslim year is lunar and thus shorter than the Gregorian solar year, thus it is not sufficient to add 622 to the *hijrī* date to reach the CE year. In this article, *hijrī* years will be indicated by the abbreviation AH.
2. A *qirāt* (or carat) is a unit of measurement indicating a fraction of a whole that is equal to 24 carats.

The history of the village of Jindās in the late Mamluk and early Ottoman periods is intertwined with the history of the Banī Jumāq family, a lineage of non-Arab descent, who lived in Ramla and exemplified the ethnic diversity of the country's inhabitants at that time.³ The Banī Jumāq belonged to the urban elite who accumulated wealth through their work as officials, the provision of religious or commercial services, and the acquisition of rural estates that they endowed to themselves as a family waqf. On 13 Shawwāl 868 AH/approx. 19 June 1464, the children of Nāṣir al-Dīn b. Jumāq endowed their descendants, and after the extinction of the dynasty, the Ḥaramayn al-Sharīfayn (the two noble sanctuaries of Mecca and Medina), with their rights in the following villages:

- The income from three carats of the village of al-Sāqiya (today the Ramat Pinchas neighborhood in Or Yehuda);
- The income from seven carats of the village of Budrus (east of Lydda);
- The income from five carats of the village of Jindās (Ṣāliḥiyya 1999: 350).
- The income of the Banī Jumāq waqf in Budrus was granted to the waqf of Muḥammad Aḥmad al-Miṣrī as early as the first Ottoman census of 1526/7 (Singer 1990: 71, n68), while its share in Jindās is mentioned by name in a document from the Mandate period, probably after the extinction of the family (see below: HOUSING: ARMY HIRING [S] NO. 1705 / S OLIVE GROVE - JINDAS; State Archives from 17/1795).

Archaeological finds shed further light on the material culture at the site in the Mamluk period. Salvage excavations conducted along the route of the national gas pipeline, on the western side of the site, revealed about 90 graves on three burial levels, which form part of a cemetery that exceeds the boundaries of the excavation (Toueg, Krispin and Eshed 2019, and see articles in this volume). The tombs are pit tombs, some of which were lined and covered with stones or clay jars. Hives were also found, indicating the raising of honey-bees and Antillean jars that were used for Antillean wells in or around the village. A notable phenomenon is the burial of infants in jars, known from other sites of the period in the Yarkon Basin (Gorzalczany 2009). The deceased were placed in an east-west direction with their heads facing the direction of prayer, towards Mecca. Objects were found in many tombs, such as “jewelry, including glass and bronze bracelets, glass pendants and colored stone beads, strings made of coins [...] earrings and rings.” (Toueg, Krispin and Eshed 2019: 3). The practice of leaving objects in graves is contrary to Islamic law. The physical examination of the bones testified, according to the researchers, to high child mortality and their large share in the population. Only six coins, out of 17 identified, have been dated to the Mamluk period, and there is no reason to suppose that the cemetery ceased to be used during the Ottoman period.

Jindās village at the beginning of the Ottoman period

The history of Jindās in the early Ottoman period is largely an economic one, based on data from surviving tax documents and religious endowments. These sources are laconic and concise in nature, and as bureaucratic documents they do not express the lived experience of the villagers. Although the documentation is incomplete, echoes of the changes in the patterns of settlement, about which there are no other sources, can be found in it.

In 1517, the forces of the Ottoman Sultan Selim I conquered the Mamluk Empire. In the following years, the Ottoman authorities conducted a detailed survey of the agrarian, fiscal and demographic potential of

3. The name Jumāq is of non-Arabic origin. ‘Uthmān al-Ṭabbā’ believes that the family is of Turcoman or Circassian origin (al-Ṭabbā’ 1999, 3: 82), and a Google search revealed a parallel Kurdish name, Çomak. The non-Arab element is prominent in the nomadic population and in cities such as Gaza, Hebron and Safed, in which there were special quarters for Turcomans and Kurds (Hütteroth and Abdulfattah 1977).

their new lands, some of which were allocated to the use of military commanders, to fund their military service.⁴ The new government initially maintained the existing administrative divisions. In a census conducted in 932 AH, *Nāḥiyat Lidd* was subordinate to Gaza. But later, it was merged with *Nāḥiyat al-Ramla*, whose northern border was the Yarkon River (Nahr al-‘Aujā), and stretched as far as the Ābūd-Sīra line and Nahal Sorek (Wādī al-Ṣarār) line in the south (Singer 1990: 52, 56). Ottoman surveys indicate local growth in the Lydda area during the 16th century (ibid.).

In *deftar-i tahrir* No. 131, from 932-938 AH / 1525-1532, Jindās was assigned to a military commander named Ja‘far Bey (al-Sawāriyya 2008: 131). In 1552, Hurrem Haseki Sultan, one of the wives of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent (r. 1520-1566), founded the al-‘Imāra al-‘Āmira charity in Jerusalem (al-Muhtadī 2005: 325–353). To fund the soup kitchens of the ‘Imāra, soap factories from the Syrian city of Tripoli were endowed for the benefit of the new institution, but their remoteness and maintenance problems made it difficult for the ‘Imāra’s overseers to collect their income effectively. Therefore, it was decided to replace these endowments with the disposable income from 20 villages and *mazāri‘* in the vicinity of Jerusalem, including from Jindās and its environs (Heyd 1960: 143–144; Singer 1990: 72; Singer 2002: 50–52; Ṣaliḥiyya 2002: 76–78). The endowment deed testifies to the dense settlement in the Lydda region in the middle of the 16th century, as well as to the arrangements for the cultivation of uninhabited lands by other villages:

- The village of Lidd [Lydda] belonging to *nāḥiyat Ramla* that is subordinate to Gaza
- The village of Bayt [I]ksā, one of the villages of Bayt al-Maqdis [Jerusalem], and its rights in Mazra‘at al-Kharrūba [which remained in the hands of the villagers until 1948]
- 18 carats of the village of Kafr Jinnis belonging to *nāḥiyat Ramla* that is subordinate to Gaza [east of Route 40, adjacent to Ben-Gurion Airport]
- The village of Kafr ‘Āna with Mazra‘at Kafr Ṭāb belonging to *nāḥiyat Ramla* of the District of Gaza
- The village of Bayt Liqyā with Mazra‘at Nūshif [Khirbat Bayt Nūshif north-east of Bayt Liqyā] and Mazra‘at Rakūbīṣ [Khirbat Rakovitz, east of Bayt Nūbā, in the lands of Bayt Liqyā]
- The village of al-Kunaysa, one of the villages of Ramla [Khirbat Nekhes, in the Pe‘atei Modiin Industrial Zone]
- The village of Bir Mā‘īn, one of the villages of Ramla [in the area of Re‘ut within Modiin’s city limits]
- 12 carats of the village of Saṭṭāra [Subṭāra, today Giv‘at Danny in Sdot Yagel; Lazar 1999], one of the villages of Ramla
- The village of ‘Annāba of Ramla [west of Modiin]
- 21 carats of the village of [al-] Sāfirīyya [today Kfar Chabad] in *nāḥiyat Ramla*
- The village of Kharbatā [apparently Kharbathā Banī Ḥārith, east of Modiin] in *nāḥiyat Ramla*
- 7 carats of the village of Jindās in *nāḥiyat Ramla*
- The village of Yāzūr [today Azor] in *nāḥiyat Ramla*
- The village of [al-]Yahūdiyya [today Yehud] in *nāḥiyat Ramla*
- 18 carats and a third of a carat of the village of Bayt Dajan [today Beit Dagon] of Ramla
- The village of Bayt Shannā in *nāḥiyat Ramla*
- The village of Rantayā [Today Rinatya and Bareket] in *nāḥiyat Ramla*
- 18 carats of the village of Ni‘līn in *nāḥiyat Ramla* [Qaṭanānī 2017:84-85; al-Muhtadī 2005: 329-330]

4. The surveys were conducted in 932 AH/1525-6, 945 AH/1538-9, 955 AH/1548-9, 964 AH/1557, and 1005 AH/1596-7. To date, only the data of the 1525-6 and 1596-7 surveys have been published (Hütteroth and Abdalefāttah 1977; Singer 1990: 53; al-Sawāriyya 2008).

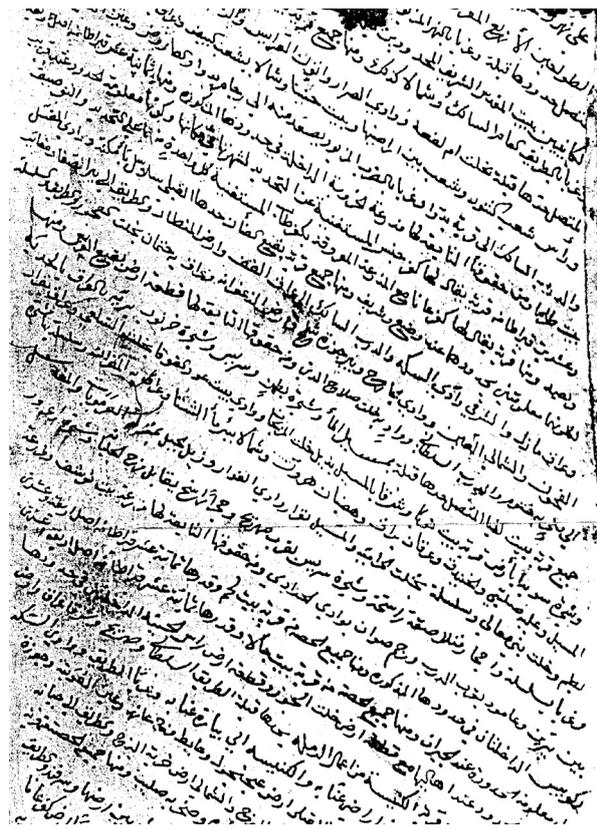


Fig. 3: The *waqfiyya* of Haseki Sultan (after al-Muhtadī 2009: 327)

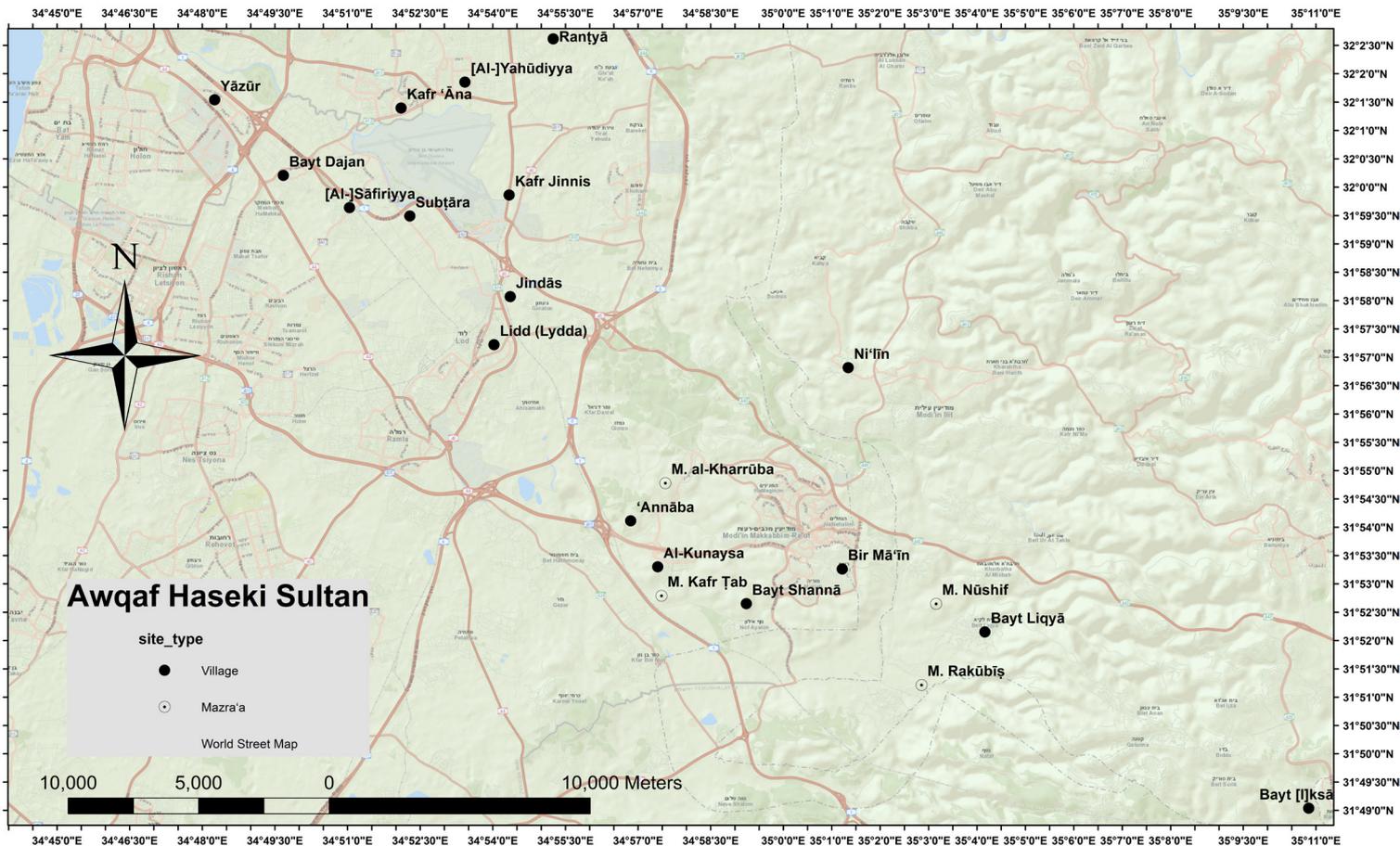


Fig. 4: The villages and *mazra'āt* connected to Haseki Sultan in the vicinity of Jindās (drawing by the author)

Half a century later, the *defter-i mufassil* of 1005 AH/1596-7 mentions the villages of Bayt Nabālā, Bayt Qūfā, Jindās, Dayr ʿArīf, [al-]Yahūdiyya, Kafr Jinnis, Kafr ʿĀna, Lidd [Lydda], [al-]Sāfirīyya and Sītān [a corruption of Sabtāra]. The data show exceptional social, administrative and economic uniformity: the residents of the villages in the Lydda region were Muslims. The vast majority of the villages were defined as *zeʿāmet* settlements, meaning settlements controlled by military personnel, despite the fact that in practice their income was donated to religious endowments (except for the neighboring villages of Bayt Nabālā and Dayr ʿArīf), and their residents enjoyed preferential status, all additional taxes being effectively waived (Singer 2002: 50). The tax rate in the villages ranges from a quarter to a third of the crop, and most income was derived from agricultural crops, such as wheat and barley, summer crops, sesame, orchards, olives and other fruit trees, goats and beehives. The only village where an oil-press was mentioned was Bayt Nabālā, which was also a village directly owned by the sultan, and apparently taxes were not collected from the other oil-presses that operated in the area. In these villages no taxes were levied on cotton, almonds, orchards, grape honey and carob honey (*dibs*), rice, water buffalo, flour mills and pastures.

The number of residents living in Lydda was the largest in the area (close to 500 men liable for taxes), and the city's major activity was in the fields of agriculture and trade. Lydda was a famous market town, where the "Two Continents" cattle market (*Sūq al-Barrayn*) operated, and its inhabitants engaged in light crafts, such as the production of *dawālīb* (a concept whose essence is unclear; Singer 1990: 69). Also, unlike the surrounding villages, Lydda was a mixed town, whose Christian population grew steadily during the 16th century, in part due to the emigration of Christians from Bayt Rīma (Singer 1990: 64-66).

Table 1: Tax data from the 1005 AH/1596-7 *defter-i mufassil* in akçe⁵ (after Hütteroth and Abdelfattah 1977)

	Muslims - khāna	Adult men - total	Percent- age of tax	Wheat	Barley	Summer crops and fruit trees ⁶	Sesame	Marriage tax and occasional income	Goats and beehives	Total income, excluding <i>waqf</i>
Lydda	241	498	33.33%	8,000	4,050	20,080	1,610	3,000	3,040	45,000
Yahūdiyya	126	125	33.33%	6,000	4,050	1,500	405	545	500	13,000
Sītān (Sabtāra)	123	123	33.33%	7,050	4,050	5,045	405	1,200	950	19,100
Dayr ʿArīf	49	69	25%	2,500	840	4,500	420	240	500	9,000
Bayt Nabālā	54	54	33.33%	2,500	2,700	2,500	-	388	566	8,688
[al-] Sāfirīyya	53	53	33.33%	500	4,050	3,903	1,620	270	500	18,800
Jindās	35	35	25%	2,000	270	2,487	405	-	123	5,372
Kafr Jinnis	18	18	25%	2,500	2,430	3,070	-	300	300	8,600
Bayt Qūfā	16	16	25%	1,000	810	1,690	-	250	250	4,000
Kafr ʿĀna	11	11	25%	10,000	8,100	5,000	2,430	300	970	26,800

How is Jindās rated in relation to its neighbors? Economic activity in the village was relatively mediocre, and the volume of crops was also low, possibly related to the village's small territory. The village is ranked seventh out of ten in terms of population. In terms of tax burden, Jindās belonged to the lower tax bracket (a quarter), and was in the ninth, penultimate place, with regard to the total taxes collected from its residents. The individual tax assessment on the crops expresses these economic data: wheat (eighth place); barley (tenth and last); summer crops, orchards and fruit trees (eighth); sesame (seventh and last place, together

5. A small Ottoman coin, that formed the basic coin in the Ottoman economy. The city of Lydda is not mentioned in the 1596 list.

6. Vineyards, olive trees and trees.

with al-Yahūdiyya and Sabṭāra); and raising goats and beehives (tenth and last place). Jindās was also the only village to be exempt from marriage tax and occasional income.

The ownership of the lands of the village of Jindās was divided between different endowments. Alongside the waqfs of the children of ‘Alī Abūghā, of Banī Jumāq and Haseki Sultan, already mentioned, eight carats of Jindās’ income were endowed to the Cave of the Patriarchs Mosque (waqf Khalīl al-Raḥmān), one of the three great religious endowments in Palestine (Abū Bakr undated: 444-446; al-Khaṭīb 2007: 285; al-Madanī 1996: 284).⁷ It appears that this division of the waqf lands lasted for about 350 years, since in 1942 the District Land Settlement Officer reported that the lands of Jindās were registered in the name of the following owners:

- Waqf Banī ‘Alī Abūghā 4/24
- Waqf Muḥammad Aḥmad al-Miṣrī 5/24
- Waqf al-‘Imāra al-‘Āmira 7/24
- Waqf Khalīl al-Raḥmān 8/24

(HOUSING: ARMY HIRING [S] NO. 1705 / S OLIVE GROVE - JINDAS; State Archives from 17/1795)

The fiscal documents themselves do not provide much information about the world of Jindās’ residents. A case of a missing beast of burden provides us with a rare glimpse into everyday life in Jindās. In 1012 AH/1603/4 an animal jointly owned by two residents of Jindās named Khalaf b. Ibrāhīm and Muḥammad b. Yūsuf was “lost” (*tasarrabat*) in broad daylight. The beast, probably a donkey or a mule, was an important and expensive tool, and therefore its owners invested much effort in searching for it. Indeed, three years later, the stray animal was found in the possession of Sālim b. Ghunaym from the village of Dayr al-Sinna in the Kidron Valley, a day’s walk from Jindās. Khalaf went to the Sharia court in Jerusalem, and with the animal present in the courtroom, a thorough investigation was conducted into the matter of ownership. Sālim testified that he had purchased the beast innocently, for seven *kurush*, from a Bedouin named Sha‘ala of ‘Arab al-Ta‘āmira, a nomadic group from the vicinity of Jerusalem. Khalaf called to the witness stand the *sayyids* (descendants of the Prophet Muḥammad) Aḥmad b. Muḥammad and Khalīl b. ‘Alī, residents of Jindās, who swore that the animal remained the legal property of Khalaf and his partner. The qadi received their testimony and ordered the return of the animal to the plaintiff, in the presence of three distinguished sheikhs who served as witnesses (Jerusalem *sijill* 86: 681; courtesy of Mr. Daoud Oweisat).⁸

As mentioned, the Banī Jumāq family was prominent in the economic and social life of the area of Ramla and Lydda, and some of them, such as Salāḥ al-Dīn b. Jumāq,⁹ engaged in moneylending and trade (in 936-937 AH/1530: Jerusalem *sijill* 1; al-Muhtadī 2013: A, 339 and B, 80). When Ottoman authorities recorded private property and endowments in 964 AH/ 1557, Sidi ‘Alī b. Jumāq’s claim to ownership of four vegetable gardens and two orchards in the outskirts of Ramla was recognized (Şāliḥiyya 1999: 367, 378, 390). His cousins, descendants of Nāṣir al-Dīn b. Jumāq, validated their ownership of five carats of the lands of Jindās (Şāliḥiyya 1999: 350; Jerusalem *sijill* 87:27).

The allocation of crop revenues in Jindās led to a legal dispute between the various endowments. At the end of the month of Sha‘ban 1015 AH/late December 1606, members of the Jumāq family sued four Jindās residents who grew cotton, demanding their share of the crop.¹⁰ The Banī Jumāq stated that they owned the village lands in partnership with Waqf Khalīl al-Raḥmān and Waqf al-‘Imāra. From the prosecution notice it appears that in the same year, the supervisor of Waqf al-‘Imāra ordered the residents of Jindās to

7. The others being the al-Aqsa Mosque endowment and the Haseki Sultan endowment. The endowment of the Mosque of the Cave of the Patriarchs also includes all the tax revenues of the villages of al-Laṭrūn, al-Qabāb and Mimiyya, Kafr Tā, Bayt Qūfā adjacent to Bayt Nabālā, a quarter of the revenues of Bayt Nabālā and Bayt Nūnā together with the “sword’s tithes” (*‘ushr al-sayf*, a term of unknown meaning), a sixth of the revenues of Sākiya (al-Sāqiya), a third of the income from Jindās, and one-sixteenth of the tax revenues of Lydda and Ramla.

8. Jerusalem *sijill* – the records (*sijill*) of the Sharia court in Jerusalem, Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turāth archives, Abu Dis.

9. In these documents, the form “b. Jumāq” can indicate a surname, and not necessarily refer to Şālāḥ al-Dīn’s father’s name.

10. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥājī Ibrāhīm; al-Sayyid ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Sayyid Mūsā; Şāliḥ b. Sufyān and Maḥmūd b. Muḥammad.

sow cotton, but he refrained from handing over the share of 12.5 *qintārs* out of 60 due to the Banī Jumāq.¹¹ The members of the Jumāq family presented as evidence the endowment document from 964 AH, and their testimony was confirmed by the people of Jindās, who noted that the yield was greater and reached 70 *qintārs* of cotton. Accordingly, the judge ordered the Banī Jumāq to be paid the portion of the crop due to them (Jerusalem *sijill* 84:27; courtesy of Mr. Daoud Oweisat). In comparison to the *defter-i mufasssil*, cotton cultivation indicates the diversification of agricultural activity, trade and manufacture around Lydda, since cotton was processed into textiles, or exported abroad.

The people of Jindās found themselves an active party to the legal conflict between their landlords. Although the landowners dictated the types of crops and cultivation, they were able to play an influential role in court. It is worth noting that the records of the case does not mention the Waqf of Banī Abūghā (although its rights to the land were later re-confirmed by the Ottoman Ministry of Endowments). The documents attest, therefore, to the decline in the importance of private endowments, and perhaps to the difficulties encountered by their supervisors in collecting the revenue due to them in relation to the great state endowments.

Although we no longer hear about the Banī Jumāq in Ramla, it is known that in the 17th century a branch of the family lived in the district capital, Gaza. Sheikh Muḥammad b. Sāliḥ b. Jumāq donated to charitable causes, such as the digging of a public Antillean well, *al-sāqiya al-jumāqiyya*, for the benefit of Gaza’s inhabitants. After his death, he was given a honorable burial at the al-Ghazālī Mosque in the city. The well served as Gaza’s main water source for centuries, and it’s ownership was transferred to the possession of al-Ḥaramayn al-Sharīfayn, after the extinction of the dynasty (Ibrāhīm 2003; al-Khaṭīb 2007: 125; al-Tabbā’ 1999: b: 363, c: 82–83). Similarly, the transfer of the lands of Waqf Banī Jumāq in Jindās to Waqf Aḥmad al-Miṣrī may reflect the Banī Jumāq’s leaving of Ramla.

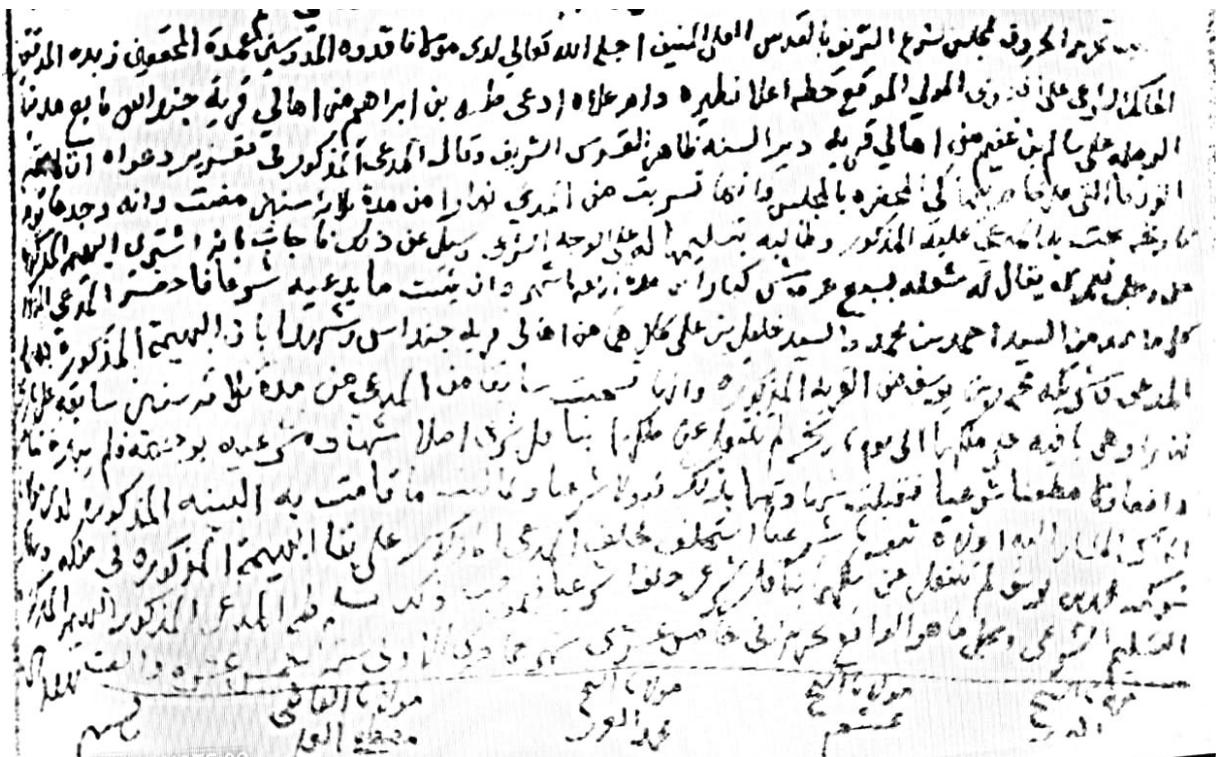


Fig. 5: The affair of the animal. Sharia court document, 1603/4

11. A *qintār* is a solid measure, equivalent to approximately 360 kg, thus the village’s cotton crop was between 21,600 kg and 25,200 kg.

Settlement in the Lydda region in the 17th and 18th centuries: nomadic penetration, the Qays-Yaman rivalry, and the destruction of settlements

During the 17th century, the Ottoman Empire switched from a direct taxation system (the *timār* estates) to an indirect taxation method (*iltizām*), in which the collection of taxes was leased to local power loci, in exchange for a fixed payment in advance. The *iltizām* system contributed to the growth of a new elite – the families of the rural sheikhs who headed villages-clusters, and the urban notables, who both wielded a great deal of economic and political power. The struggles between the families for power and tax farming intertwined with the Qays and Yaman rivalry, in which sedentary populations and nomads alike took part.

In his study of the rural settlement between the Yarkon and the Ayalon from the 16th to the 20th century, Grossman noted that the considerable stability in the number of settlements and their location “does not exclude the possibility that the penetration of Bedouins or other foreign elements damaged this stability here and there and caused the destruction of villages [...] in the area of the Lydda, which was perhaps an important corridor in the path of the Bedouin penetration” (Grossman 1983: 99). In the absence of appropriate data on the identity of these “Bedouin,” Grossman proposed that these were migrations from southern Palestine towards the Sharon.

Nomadic penetration and the Qays and Yemen rivalry occurred in the Ramla and Lydda area as early as the end of the 15th century. However, the beginning of Ottoman rule in the region was characterized by local stability, thanks to a strong administration and the absence of Bedouins (Singer 1990). In the 17th century, however, tribes from the Hijaz and Transjordan began to cross the Jordan River, undermining the settlement and social system west of the river. At the beginning of the 18th century, the Arabs of al-Masā‘īd pushed the tribes of al-Jarāmina (Banī Jaram) from the Jordan Valley towards the coastal plain. Al-Masā‘īd arrived as far as Kafr al-Dīk, and in 1730/1 they defeated al-Ijlaqq, the previous ruler of the village (al-Dabbāgh 1991: 2: 3: 550; alnssabon website 2010). The Arabs of al-Jarāmina settled in the basins of the Ayalon and Yarkon Rivers, and pitched their tents on the lands of Kasfā west of Dayr Ballūt, al-Muwayliḥ (near Neve Yarak), and in the village groupings of Banī Himār and Banī ‘Umayr in the vicinity of Modiin (Abu Zirr 2009; Von Oppenheim 2004: 96–101). Alongside these tribes, came also the Abū Kishk, al-Wuḥaydāt, al-Zubaydāt and al-Sawārika from the deserts of Transjordan, southern Israel and Sinai, and followed by sedentary groups, such as peasants from Egypt (Marom 2017: 436–444; Sharon 1970: 3-5).

In the first phase, the process of the nomadic penetration in the vicinity of Lydda resembled the traditional model of the “battle of the steppe and the sown”: The nomads collected protection money from the villagers, looted settlements that opposed them and stole their flocks, and damaged the crops on which the peasants depended for their sustenance and from which they paid taxes (see, for example, the stories about Abū Kishk in Kanā‘na and ‘Abd al-Hādī 1990: 29–31). Faced with constant pressure from the nomads, the inhabitants of sparsely populated villages left their homes in search of refuge in larger localities, and even made ad hoc alliances with local powers, which could guarantee their safety. Some of the nomads, conversely, began to engage in agriculture, settled permanently and became involved in the social, economic and political divisions of the local fabric of life. Both processes changed the composition of the rural population and its distribution in the area.

In 1051 AH/1641/2, the Bedouin tribe of al-Sawālīma from around Jaffa attacked the villages of Sabṭāra, Bayt Dajan, al-Sāfirīya, Jindās, Lydda and Yāzūr belonging to Waqf Haseki Sultan (Abū Farda 2020). Four of the ten villages, which were listed around Jindās and Lydda in 1596, were subsequently abandoned and it is not clear whether this was due to attacks by ‘Arab al-Sawālīma or for some other reason. Three of the four villages belong to the lower median in terms of the number of their inhabitants (Bayt Qūfā, Kafr Jinnis and Jindās). The most notable exceptions to this trend are the large village of Sabṭāra, which was abandoned despite having about 123 taxpayers, and the hamlet of Kafr ‘Āna, which survived despite being the smallest

settlement, with only 11 taxpayers. This anomaly is the result of the relocation of residents from Sabṭāra to Kafr ‘Āna (al-Dabbāgh 1991: 2: 3: 329). Sabṭāra was apparently abandoned due to the frequent Bedouin attacks, as shown, for example in a 1122 AH/1709 report by the traveler Muṣṭafā al-Bakrī al-Siddīqī, who visited “Sabṭāra, who nomads attack its surroundings (*allātī tashunn al-‘arab ḥawlahā al-ghāra*).” Sabṭāra was still inhabited during As‘ad al-Luqaymī’s journey in 1143 AH/1731, and may have been marked as an unnamed village on Jacotin’s map (1799). Yet by the first third of the 19th century it was already abandoned (Robinson and Smith 1841: 121; al-Dabbāgh 1991: 2: 3: 321).

The village of Bayt Qūfā was also abandoned due to the deteriorating security situation, and its residents were scattered between Bayt Nabālā and the villages of ‘Ajjūl and ‘Arūra near Ramallah (Ḥusayn 1998: 66–67; interview with Ibrāhīm Aḥmad [b. Bayt Nabālā, 1928], 16 July 2020). A third village that was abandoned by its residents is Shīḥa, a seasonal cave settlement of families from Bayt ‘Ūr al-Taḥṭā, Bayt Liqyā and Kharbathā al-Miṣbāḥ, at the site of the modern Neshet Quarries. According to Grossman, Shīḥa was destroyed due to Bedouin raids, and its inhabitants returned to their villages of origin (Grossman 1983: 95–96). The circumstances of the abandonment of Kafr Jinnis and the fate of its inhabitants, however, remain unknown.

Bayt Nabālā was a major hub for the Qays and Yaman conflicts in the area. The original inhabitants of the village were called *al-Sharāqa* and belonged to the Qays camp. Local tradition holds that a Yaman immigrant from the Khuzā‘a tribe, named Salām b. Ḥarfūsh, came to the vicinity of Bayt Nabālā and camped in the caves near the village and Bayt Qūfā. When a conflict broke out between Bayt Nabālā and al-Ḥadītha, Salām took advantage of the plight of the residents of Bayt Nabālā to gain control over them, and his three “sons” – Zayd, Nakhla and Ṣāfī – settled in the village. Relations between the clans were strained, and riots broke out between them. A Qaysī leader, named ‘Ābid, from the old al-Sharāqa clan, led his forces and allies, from Jayyūs and Dayr Abū Mash‘al, against the supporters of the Yaman in Qibyā and Dayr Ṭarīf. With the support of the powerful and influential Yamanī families – al-Khawāja from Ni‘līn¹² and the Abu Ghosh family – Ṣāfī succeeded in persuading the authorities to arrest ‘Ābid and eliminate him. Ṣāfī then extended his control over Dayr Ṭarīf, al-Ṭīra, Qūla, Fajja and Mulabbis. Quṭayfān and ‘Allūsh report that at that time, the inhabitants of Jindās left their village, under the pressure of the attacks of Qaysī clans from Lydda, and the descendants of Zayd, Nakhla and Ṣāfī took this opportunity to take over their lands (Quṭayfān and ‘Allūsh 1994: 35–33; Ḥusayn 1998: 139).

The date of Jindās’ desertion is unknown. The village may have been abandoned as early as the 17th century. The village is not figure in the 18th-century travelogues of al-Bakrī al-Siddīqī and al-Luqaymī. Its location and name are absent from the Jacotin map, which was drawn in 1826 on the basis of measurements taken during Napoleon’s expedition in 1799. The map marks three villages north of Lydda, which can be identified by their relative location with al-Sāffiriya, Sabṭāra and Dayr Ṭarīf. The location of the village of Ono, marked east of Lydda, apparently reflects al-Ḥadītha, whereas its name indicates Kafr ‘Āna, which was located on the plain, northwest of Lydda. Such mix-ups are a hallmark of the Jacotin map (Karmon 1960: 171–172). The villages of Shīḥa, Sabṭāra, Jinnis, and Jindās were all mentioned as deserted places on the 1835 Robinson List (Robinson and Smith 1841: 121).

Settlement in Jindās during the 19th century

On 26 January 1811, the Bayyārat¹³ Jindās was listed as desolate property of the Waqf Haseki Sultan, which was proposed for restoration in accordance with the *al-khalū* procedure. *Al-khalū* is a legal practice in

12. In the 19th century, the al-Khawāja family was considered the leader of the Yamanī faction in the Banī Ḥimār villages, and their rule extended over the villages of Ni‘līn and al-Midyā and the estates of Zakariyyā, Dayr Abū Salāma and Khirbat al-Zāhiriyya (today within the bounds of Ben Shemen Forest).

13. The Arabic word *bayyāra* is used today to refer to orchards, but its original meaning was a flowing well.

Islamic law, by which a person offers to rehabilitate at his own expense an asset that the waqf is unable to rehabilitate by its own means. After the qadi's approval and with the consent of the waqf supervisor, the rehabilitator becomes a protected tenant in the asset, subject to the payment of key money (al-Madanī 1996: 184-183). This record perhaps reflects the restoration of the village, and the *bayyāra* is the structure whose remains are visible in aerial photographs of the center of the village (see Fig. 9). In addition to Robinson and Smith listing Jindās as a deserted village in 1835, it is absent from the memoirs of James Finn, who toured the area in 1849 (Finn 1877), Carl Van De Velde, who toured the area in 1852 (Van de Velde 1854; 1858), and Victor Guérin, who toured the area in 1870 (Guérin 1875).

At one point, Jindās was resettled, probably by immigrants from Egypt. In a census conducted in 1288 AH/1871, Jindās is listed as one of the villages of *nāḥiyat Lidd* with 20 taxpayers (Hartman 1883: 139-138; Grossman 1983: 94; Grossman 2004: 241). In the memoirs of the *Survey of Western Palestine*, based on a survey conducted by the British Foundation for the Study of Palestine in the 1870s, Jindās was described as “a very small hamlet of mud” (Conder and Kitchener 1882: 251). In 1874, the French explorer Clermont-Ganneau described it as a hamlet near the Jindās Bridge. Clermont-Ganneau heard from the residents of Jindās a tradition that dates the founding of the village back to the date of the construction of the bridge, something that can perhaps be explained as due to the bridge being the oldest and most prominent monument in the village.¹⁴

In 1858, the Ottoman Empire enacted a land law, which for the first time gave Ottoman subjects permanent rights in state lands (*miri*), making them available for sale and inheritance, similar to full private ownership (*mulk*). Ottoman authorities conducted a cadastral survey, following which lands were sold to those who cultivated them. If the cultivators could not pay the requested fees, the land would be auctioned off (Schechter 1988). In 1878, Yechiel Michael Pines, the local agent of the Moshe Montefiore Memorial Foundation, reported that Greek Orthodox Christians and Muslims took over the land of Jindās, contrary to the government's wishes. The government filed a lawsuit against the trespassers, and Pines conjectured that after the lawsuit was completed, the village would be put up for auction (Ilan 1982: 151). Apparently, Pines was referring to the Christian merchant Anṭūn Ayyūb of Jerusalem, the owner of the lands of Jindās, who died leaving behind many debts. Later documents show that the lands of Jindās were declared *mahlūl*, that is, fallow land that returned to the state (CZA L18\5552). On 4 June 1885, the *Ḥavatzelet* newspaper informed its readers that the lands of Jindās were for sale, to pay Ayyūb's debts to the government and his other creditors. “Many merchants are negotiating,” the newspaper added, “and from today, this valley can be bought for fifteen hundred Turkish liras by one of the wealthy men of Ramla, and anyone who wishes to add to this, may do so for the next thirty days.” On 11 June 1885, the paper informed its readers that “during the week its price rose by another five hundred pounds, and now it will be sold for three thousand pounds.”

Khirbet Jindās: from an inhabited village to an agricultural estate (1882-1948)

The sale of the village in 1885 was preceded by the declaration of its lands as *mahlūl*, which was possible under Ottoman law only three years after the cessation of cultivation by the last of its inhabitants (around 1882). The village's abandonment is reflected in the records of the Sharia court in Jaffa, in which the village was referred to as Khirbat Jindās in 1894 (Ni'mat Allah 2004: 182; see also Quṭayfān and 'Allūsh 1994: 7). The endowment of the revenues of Jindās in the old endowment records was interpreted as a grant of real ownership, and thus its lands were registered in the name the waqf authorities (al-Muhtadī 2005: 350). The waqf authorities leased the land to farmers. The cultivators of the land planted, with the waqf's approval,

14. Clermont-Ganneau tried to reconcile the contradiction between the date in the foundation inscription of the bridge and the mention of the village in Crusader sources. According to his proposal, there existed an earlier bridge (Clermont-Ganneau 1896: 117–118; this opinion is currently accepted by the research, see Czitron 2020)

ירושלים

על שערי בית מועצות עירנו דבועה הודיעה
המודיעה כי העסק יגוראם עומד להמכר כמטעם
הממשלה לכל המרבה במחירו, העסק הזה יבול, ארבעת
אלפים מאתים וארבע וחמשים דונאם שדה זרע, בחר,
העסק ובמשיך; ארבעה עשר דונאם גדרות צאן, בתום
עתיקים ובורות; שלשים דונאם כרם ובארות מפכים
מים; ומאתים וארבעים ושמה דונאם כרמים נטיעים
עצים רבים. סוחרים רבים עומדים על המקל, וכיום הזה
יתן בעד העסק הזה מאה עשרי ראמה אלפים
והמשטח מאת לרא מורקי, ואשר יאבה להוסיף על המקל
יבול וצא והוסיף עד משך שלשים יום.
העסק הזה הוא אחות אחד מבני הנוצרים נודע
בשם אנמאן אייוב, אשר מת וישאר אחריו הונות רבים,
וגם הממשלה ירשה בו כסף רב, ולטען שלם נשיו
תמבור הממשלה אחוזו זאת.
אנהנו בקדנו לפני שנים אחרות את הכד הארץ שמה
ואת העסק אשר הוא על הדרך המוכרת מלוד לשכם.
מהדרך המשה עשר מינופין יפרידו בני ובין הכפר יהודיה
(מקום המושב להקאהוגיא פתח תקוה) ועשרים מינופין
בני ובין לוד, גם מהכפר גמזי (היה ב' בית יח) לא ירחק
רק סז מינופין, בעין יעד צומח עצי פרו ימצא שמה ודובס
עצי זית, גם האור לא רע הוא שמה. ולבבנו ישמח
מאד אם תקום הארמה הזאת לאחזה לאחבי.

Fig. 6: The announcement that Jindās is for sale
(*Havatzet*, 4 June 1884)

800 dunams of orchards, and used the rest for field crops, in exchange for annual lease fees. The inhabitants of Bayt Nabālā turned Khirbat Jindās into an *‘izba*, a temporary dwelling place where the ploughers and reapers rested from toiling in the fields.

Eventually, the Ayyūb family appealed the expropriation of the land, and for a decade conducted expensive legal proceedings with no real results. The family’s attorney, Adv. Antebi of Jerusalem, approached the Ministry of Endowments in Istanbul around 1907 with a proposal for a compromise settlement, in which the lands of Jindās would be returned to the Ayyūb family, in exchange for paying their value (in expectation of paying a price less than their actual worth). According to a report of the Geula Company, the Ministry of Endowments agreed to the proposal, but the *mutaşarrif* (governor) of Jerusalem, ‘Alī Akram Pasha, submitted a negative opinion to the Sublime Porte, which torpedoed the emerging settlement. After ‘Alī Akram left office, the Ayyūb family resubmitted its proposal to the Ministry of Endowments, which turned to the “local Palestinian authorities” for their opinion (Letter from the Zionist Center in Israel to Berlin, 24.2.1909, CZA L18\5552). We do not know how the contacts between the Ayyūb family and the waqf authorities ended. However, Jindās is known to have remained uninhabited, and so it was described in 1911 in a toponymic-geographical by Eliyahu Sapir, as “a deserted village near Lod. An estate of land at Hadid [al-Haditha], in the district of Jaffa” (Sapir 1901: 30).

The occupation of Palestine by the Allies led to significant changes in the regime, the administration, the economy, the demographics and the legal system. Shortly after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, in November 1918, a dispute broke out between the people of Bayt Nabālā, who cultivated the lands of Jindās, and the people of Lydda who required them in order to expand the city’s orchards. Rising demand had raised rental prices. On 19 November 1918, H. Freeman of Ben Shemen reported to Mr. Volkansky that

“the land of Jindās remains the property of the waqf, as it was, and is being leased to whoever will pay more rent. Yesterday, the Arabs of Bayt Nabālā competed with the Arabs of Lydda, who raised the price

of the lease. Hitherto they have paid 16,000 Egyptian kurush, which is equivalent to 160 Turkish pounds, and now they are already giving 92,800 Egyptian kurush, which is about 928 Turkish pounds and only in three days will they know to whom it will belong. The total of about 6,000 dunams is not worth the above amount but the people of Lydda want to take over it.”

On the same day, Freeman reported that the court in Jaffa was deciding “a dispute between the Arabs of Bayt Nabālā and the Arabs of the waqf regarding the land of Jindās. The Arabs of Bayt Nabālā used to cultivate this land, and now they wish to own part of it” (CZA L18 \ 5552).

The village of Jindās is absent from the British censuses conducted in 1922 and 1931 (Baron 1923; Mills 1933), while in the village surveys published in 1938 and 1945 it is mentioned as an uninhabited estate (*Village Statistics* 1938: 58; *Village Statistics* 1945: 29). However, the inhabitants of Bayt Nabālā continued to till the lands of the waqf of Jindās throughout the Mandate period (Ḥusayn 1998: 24, 26; Quṭayfān and ‘Allūsh 1994: 11). They planted grains, vegetables and even started planting olive trees. Later, some villagers attempted to plant orchards, but the attempt failed, after brackish water was found in the wells they dug (interview with Ibrāhīm Aḥmad [b. Bayt Nabālā, 1928], 16 July 2020). In some of the lands near Lydda, however, the Hassūna family of Lydda managed to find fresh water and planted orchards there (Al-Fār 2009: 50; Ḥusayn 1998: 79; Sasson 2019; interview with Ḥājj Ibrāhīm Maḥmūd Ḥamd [b. Lydda, 1937], 14 March 2019).

In October 1942, the British army sought to lease an olive grove within the boundaries of ‘Jindās al-Lidd’ (plot 14 in block No. 4108), for the construction of housing for soldiers, between the road ascending from Lydda to the north and the nucleus of Jindās village. The Tel Aviv District Land Settlement Officer reported that the land was fully registered in the name of religious endowments (HOUSING: ARMY HIRING [S] NO. 1705 / S OLIVE GROVE - JINDAS; State Archives from 17/1795).

The lands of Jindās passed into Jewish hands together with Lydda and Ramla during Operation Dani in July 1948.

The diaspora of Jindās residents

With respect every deserted village, the question naturally arises: Where did its inhabitants go? The main source that allows us to discuss this question is the origin stories of families who claim to originate from Jindās. Unfortunately, oral documentation is non temporal – that is, it describes actions or events without placing them in a given chronological setting. As a result, the following traditions cannot be discussed as an integral part of the historical discussion of specific periods in the history of the village (although external sources do confirm that these families were present in their new villages before the final abandonment of Jindās in 1882). Despite the fact that the traditions themselves cannot be independently confirmed from external sources, the general picture that emerges from them is consistent with the local instability that plagued the country during the Bedouin migrations described above and the Qays-Yaman rivalry (Hoexter 1973; Marom 2020: 56-57).

Case 1: Kifl Ḥāris village

In the 18th and 19th centuries, the highlands north of Dayr Ghassāna and south of the present Trans-Samaria Road, and between the villages of Jammā‘īn, Mardā and Kifl Ḥāris in the east (near Ariel) and the village of Majdal Yābā (Migdal Tzedek) in the west, formed the region known as Jūrat ‘Amra or Bilād Jammā‘īn (al-Fattāsh 1990). This area served as a buffer zone between the political-economic-social units of the Jerusalem and the Nablus regions. On the political level, it suffered from instability due to the migration of the Bedouin tribes and the constant competition among local clans for the right to collect taxes on behalf of the Ottoman authorities. Every ruling clan had its own “village seat” (*qaryat kursī*): Jammā‘īn (al-

Jammā‘īnī family), Dayr Ghassāna (al-Barghūthī family), Rantīs (Khalaf family), Kafr al-Dīk (belonging to al-Ijlaqq) and Majdal Yābā (the Riyān al-Jammā‘īnī family), from whence they ruled nearby villages.

The Ḥammūda clan, living in Kifl Ḥāris, attributes its origins to an abandoned village near Lydda, called by its members Ḥindās, Khindās, Dindīs or Dindās. All of these names are clearly distortions referring to Jindās (al-Dabbāgh 1991: 3: 2: 533; Bīzū 1990: 18), whose precise name – though not its location – has become blurred in the family’s cognizance over the years. The circumstances that led the clan’s arrival in Kifl Ḥāris, as well as its exact, are unknown, but it clearly preceded the final abandonment of Jindās, as evidenced by a deed of title from 1277 AH/1860/1. The Ḥammūda clan settled in the western neighborhood of the village, and over the years it split into different families, such as: Ṣalāḥ, Ḥamāda, Shuqayr (Shaqūr) and al-Naḥla. The members of the clan figured prominent in the religious and administrative life of the village. Thus, Aḥmad al-Shaqūr, born in the 1870s, was the first resident to complete his education at al-Azhar University in Cairo. ‘Abd al-Jalīl al-Ṣallāḥ served as the village’s mukhtar for nearly 40 years.

Reportedly, the Ḥammūda clan has “relatives” in the village of Birqīn, near Jenin, while the Shuqayr faction attributes its origins to the Banī Ṣakhr tribes of Transjordan, or to a Syrian Christian convert to Islam, adding that they have relatives in al-Salt, Mādaba, al-Zarqā and al-Karak in Jordan. Other members of the clan attribute their origins to the village of ‘Ayn Sīniyā near Ramallah (Odeh 2013: 310–317). These complimentary, and possible conflicting, affiliations are possible evidence of families joining the nuclear clan, whose ancestors emigrated from Jindās.

Case 2: The city of Lydda

Mr. Nimr ‘Abbās, a researcher of Palestinian rural heritage, told the author of this article that while writing his book on the city of Lydda (‘Abbās 1996), he met in Lod two families – Samḥa and Shqūqānī – who identified themselves as originating in Jindās (*jindāsiyya*). According to them, during a revolt against Egyptian rule and the Egyptian ruler Ibrāhīm Pasha, they were expelled from the village and the lands of Jindās were given to villagers who supported Egyptian rule. The families preferred to settle in Lydda, rather than returning to Jindās. During the British Mandate, the two families cultivated many lands in Jindās, leasing them from the waqf (interview with Nimr ‘Abbās, 29 November 2020). Unfortunately, I am unable to verify this tradition, but it may reflect the aftermath of the Peasants’ Revolt (1834), and the arrival of immigrants from Egypt at that time (Kressel and Aharoni 2004). The relocation of displaced persons from Jindās to Lydda makes sense, as being the closest settlement to the village, as well as a developing town that offered diverse employment opportunities. It is possible that the destruction of the village, if it occurred, is related to the following two test cases, in which populations of Egyptian descent are involved.

Case 3: The villages of al-Lubbān al-Gharbī and Dayr Ballūt

At an unspecified time, displaced people from Jindās settled in the villages of al-Lubbān al-Gharbī and Dayr Ballūt. Their arrival is recounted today in the traditions narrated by the elders of these villages. Common to these traditions is a description of the precarious security situation, in which families from the region of Egypt and Gaza migrated north through Jindās and continued on, penetrating the western edge of the mountain ridge, and settling in existing villages in the area. Their integration into the local power structures led to friction with the local population.

Muṣṭafā al-Dabbāgh states in his encyclopedia *Bilādunā Filasṭīn* that the residents of al-Lubbān al-Gharbī arrived there “after the destruction of the village of Jindās near Lydda,” noting that “among these displaced persons there are people of Egyptian descent” (al-Dabbāgh 1991: 2: 3: 556). What is the source on which al-Dabbāgh relied? As director of the Arab Department of Education during the Mandate, al-Dabbāgh used to apply to school principals for information about their villages. Indeed, the residents of al-Lubbān al-Gharbī have a long and detailed tradition, already discussed in short in Grossman’s article on the Arab settlement in the Lod Valley (Grossman 1983: 95). Due to its importance for our argument,

we hereby bring a more detailed and complete version of the tradition, as recounted by one of the village elders on January 15, 2020: In Jindās, “one of the *khirbas* of Lod,” there lived an Egyptian man with four sons. His eldest son, al-‘Āṣī, settled in the village of al-Mirr on the Yarkon River (near the Baptist Village), while his other three sons – Rāḏī, Riḏwān and Sālim – stayed with their father in Jindās. In those days, two rival clans resided in al-Lubbān al-Gharbī: Dār Zaytūn and Dār Nāṣir. The Nāṣirs was the larger and more powerful clan, and its members used to abuse the Zaytūns. In their distress, members of the Zaytūn clan turned to their allies, members of the Muslim Bilāṣī clan of neighboring ‘Abbūd, but those were unable to aid them. Instead, they referred the Zaytūns to the Egyptian man who lived in Jindās.

A man from the Zaytūn family went to Jindās to ask for the help of the Egyptian, whose sons were known as highwaymen and scoundrels. That night the three called on their brother from al-Mirr. The group reached the outskirts of al-Lubbān and waited for darkness to fall. The Zaytūns and the men of Jindās attacked the Nāṣirs, putting them all – the elderly, women, and children – to the sword. Legend has it that under thanks to Divine Providence, a Gazan woman, married to the Nāṣirs, found refuge with her son among her relatives. In return for their services, the four brothers were married to daughters of the Zaytūn clan, and in the absence of equal opposition to their rule, they took over 80 per cent of the land, and eventually even expelled the Zaytūns from al-Lubbān. Members of the Zaytūn clan remained in nearby Rantīs, for six or seven years, until their daughters married to the men from Jindās persuaded their husbands to allow their relatives to return to the village. Similarly, when the Gazan woman’s son grew up, his mother was able to bring him back to the village through mediators who guaranteed his safety, after giving up the blood feud in the name of his Nāṣirī relatives.

This tradition purports to explain how the people of Jindās came to take over al-Lubbān al-Gharbī and turned the remains of the original two families into their clients. From al-Dabbāgh’s version, it can be understood that the people of Jindās belonged to a number of independent families, who were not necessarily close to each other in blood ties, nor were their origins necessarily the same. The tendency to attribute a common origin to clans that are connected in a political affiliation and by a common geographical origin (in this case – the village of Jindās), is well known. Indeed, the tradition itself recognizes that the father of the al-‘Āṣī family comes from the village of al-Mirr, while also attributing all these families with a common Egyptian descent. The marital ties between residents in the area and residents of the Gaza area are prominent in other traditions, attributing the destruction of the village of Sūsyā, whose remains lay about five kilometers northeast of al-Lubbān, by the Gazan al-Shawwā clan. Some of residents of Sūsyā resettled in the neighboring village of Rāfāt (al-Dabbāgh 1991: 2: 3: 560 and interviews), adjacent to the village of Dayr Ballūt, where the ‘Abdila clan, who also attribute its origin to Jindās, live (see location map).

According to the elders of Dayr Ballūt, the ‘Abdila clan originated from al-Qarāra, next to Khān Yūnis. From there various members set out north, in search of their livelihood, until they reached Jindās. Due to the poverty and conditions of insecurity that prevailed in Jindās, the ‘Abdilas left it soon after, and its members settled in Dayr Ballūt. The relationship between Dayr Ballūt’s original residents, from the Khayr clan, and the ‘Abdilas was characterized by severe conflict. In the absence of an effective government to protect it, the ‘Abdilas were forced to enter into a marriage pact with the powerful Masā‘īd tribe, whose members resided in the nearby Kafr al-Dīk. Their father-in-law, Mūsā al-Mas‘ūdī and his four sons – Muḥammad, Ismā‘īl, Qāsim and Qar‘ūsh – settled in Dayr Ballūt and became the patrons of the ‘Abdilas in exchange for a large portion of their land (Khayr 2014; interview with Ismā‘īl Ḥusayn Āl Mūsā [b. Dayr Ballūt, 1931], 28 January 2020).¹⁵

The similarity in the social and security situations cited in the traditions of al-Lubbān al-Gharbī and in Dayr Ballūt, as well as the great geographical proximity between these villages, may indicate that they refer to a single wave of settlement, in which refugees from Jindās were scattered throughout the same geographical space. It seems reasonable to attribute this wave of migration to the period of Egyptian rule

15. Interview with Ismā‘īl Ḥusayn Āl Mūsā [b. Dayr Ballūt, 1931], 28 January 2020

or to its aftermath. However, at this stage, based on the evidence available to us, we are unable to delimit this time period with certainty. Rather, what can be said, is that the settlement of people from Jindās in Dayr Ballūṭ did not precede the arrival of the Masāʿīds in Kafr al-Dīk, in 1730/1. Furthermore, the arrival of people from Jindās in al-Lubbān al-Gharbī likely preceded 1874, contrary to Grossman’s assessment that they abandoned Jindās around the beginning of the 20th century (Grossman 1983: 95). Support for this claim is found in the name of the cave Maghārāt al-Janādīs, between the villages of ‘Abbūd and al-Lubbān, documented by members of the PEF (today, on the eastern slope of Beit Aryeh). The root *j-n-d-s* is very rare in Palestinian Arabic toponymy, and already the British philologist Palmer interpreted the toponym as referring to the “cave of the people of Jindās” (Palmer 1881: 240). The temporary settlement of displaced persons in caves, near their eventual place of residence, is a familiar motif in similar traditions throughout the country (for example: Bayt Nabālā: Husayn 1998: 141; al-Mizra‘a al-Qibliyya and Kafr Jamāl: interviews). The fact of Jindās was inhabited at the time the toponym already existed allows us to rule out the connection that Grossman proposed between the settlement of people from Jindās in al-Lubbān and the final abandonment of Jindās, which occurred later (Grossman 1983: 95-96).

Case 4: Kafr Lām and Haifa

The fourth case concerns the family of “al-Ḥājj Aḥmad al-Jindāsī from Kafr Lām [now Moshav Habonim - R.M.], [who] came to Haifa and lived there for some time during the Ottoman period” (Catriel to Michal, 12.2.41 [list of families of notables in Haifa], p. 5, ATH, 105/224). This report, written by a Haifa notable for the Hagana’s Intelligence Service, identifies al-Jindāsī with the father of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ḥājj (1870-1946), who served as Mayor of Haifa between 1920 and 1927 (Goren 2008: 40; Haifa Municipality 1988). The al-Ḥājj family prospered in Haifa. It integrated into the social fabric of the city, married its sons to most influential families and adopted the manners of urban culture. The patriarchs of the family provided their sons with higher education, developed their trading business and became large landowners in the Kafr Lām, Ṭirat Ḥaifā and other villages in the area.

In interviews with brothers Dr. Mājid and Māzin Khamra, members of the al-Ḥājj family, we sought to ascertain their family’s possible connections to Jindās. The brothers confirm the general description that appears in the intelligence report, except for the key details: The correct name of the family’s founder is not “al-Ḥājj Aḥmad al-Jindāsī,” but ‘Abdullah, the son of Muḥammad al-Faraj who migrated to Palestine from Egypt with Ibrāhīm Pasha’s expedition. Critically, the family do not know where their ancestors lived before arriving in Kafr Lām. The brothers state that they have heard the epithet “Jindāsī,” by chance, and they think it refers to another family that lived in Kafr Lām (interview with Mājid Khamra, 22 November 2020). In general, the epithet “Jindāsī” is very rare, and it is currently limited to members of a small family of refugees in Jordan and the village of Sīlat al-Zahr, between Nablus and Jenin. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that this epithet was indeed ascribed to the ancestors of the al-Ḥājj family. One way or another, we have evidence for another family, apparently of Egyptian descent, who lived in Jindās for some time before leaving for Kafr Lām.



Fig. 7: ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ḥājj, Mayor of Haifa in 1920.

The geography and topography of Jindās village

The functioning of the village's lands as an economic unit can be gleaned from surveys of the land uses in the village, conducted by the Ottoman authorities (1885), by members of the Geula Company (1909 – reports and copy of a map held at CZA J15M \ 727, hereafter “JCA map”) and by the British Mandate authorities as part of the “Village Surveys” (*Village Statistics* 1938 and 1945).

As will be recalled, the lands of Jindās village constituted a waqf estate (*waqf Jindās*). They bordered Bayt Nabālā to the northeast, al-Hadītha to the east, Jimzū and Bayt ‘Arīf (Ben Shemen) to the south, and Lydda to the south and west. In 1885, the land of Jindās was estimated at 4,546 Turkish dunams (a Turkish dunam is equivalent to 919.3 square meters, hence the area is 4,179.14 metric dunams) (*Havatzelet*, 4 June 1885). In the 1909 JCA map, the village's lands were estimated at 4,557 Turkish dunams (4,189.25 metric dunams). During the Mandate, the area of the endowment was estimated at 4,448 metric dunams (*Village Statistics* 1938: 58 and 1945: 29). The Jindās estate was not an “empty space,” and the data at our disposal allow us to discuss the changing village landscapes of the late 19th century and first half of the 20th.

The layout of the built-up area in Jindās

Like most villages in Palestine during the Ottoman period, Jindās had a nucleated core, devoid of a defined geometric shape, with an area of 14 Turkish dunams, composed of “sheep fences, ancient houses and [water] cisterns” (*Havatzelet*, 4 June 1885). In the center of the village were a well and a pool of water, next to which were the mosque and houses, and on its fringes were threshing floors, sheep pens and a cemetery. Its cemetery and mosque marked its status as an independent village, despite its great proximity to Lydda. Around the built-up area stretched a belt of vegetable gardens (*hawākīr*), orchards and vineyards (*kurūm*) in an area of “thirty dunams [...] with wells flowing with water” (*Havatzelet*, 4 June 1885). In the JCA map, the built-up area in the village was estimated at about four Turkish dunams (CZA J15M \ 727). In the 1970s, Zvi Ilan noticed relict jujube, fig, pomegranate and olive trees, and grape vines (Ilan 1982: 152). North of the village was a seasonal pool, of the type common near villages of the coastal plain, for watering herds and preparing adobe bricks for construction (Ramla map (B3), 1: 40,000, temporary first edition, 7 August 1918; Marom 2021: 65, 72).

The core of the village was built of vaulted stone structures (Arabic: *buyūt ‘aqqād*). The lower courses were built of large masonry in secondary use, most likely brought from Lod. In the 1970s, Ilan documented about five or six buildings on the site, along with the ruins of other buildings that had long been demolished (Ilan 1982: 152). Most of the buildings visible in the 1917 German aerial photograph are still identifiable on the site today, except for a ruined structure or a large pool in the center of the site (see Fig. 8) and south of it – another structure adjoined by a wall and a thick hedge of prickly pears, delimiting the village from the south. Apparently, residents constructed temporary abode dwellings around the stone structures, and the remains of three buildings, including wall foundations and crushed limestone floors, were uncovered in excavations conducted at the edge of the site (Toueg, Krispin and Eshed 2019).

At the northeastern end of the village is a large building, which was identified in the archeological survey as the remains of a tower (Gofna and Beit-Arieh 1997: 73). In fact, it is a Sufi prayer house, or mosque, named after Sheikh Umar. The prayer house was mentioned in writing as “*zāwiyyat al-shaykh ‘Umar* ... in Khirbat Jindās” in 1312 AH / 1894 (Nī‘mat Allah 2004: 182), and it appears consistently in later maps as al-Sheikh ‘Umar. It is a wide hall with a prayer niche (*mihrāb*) in the southern wall) and stucco decorations on the ceiling. On both sides of the prayer hall were annexes, whose ceilings long collapsed (Ilan 1982: 152). As was customary in other villages, this structure could have also been used as a guesthouse (*maḍāfa*) or a school (*kuttāb*) for the children of the village. A number of phases of construction can be discerned in the prayer halls, including the erection of supporting arches across the building on both sides of the *mihrāb*, concealing some of its original decorations. Apparently, the building retained its religious importance and continuing use by the inhabitants of Bayt Nabālā, who cultivated the endowment lands after the abandonment of the village (Jāmi‘at al-Najāh, undated).



1. Seasonal pond



2. Christ's thorn jujube



3.



4. Zāwiyat al-Shaykh 'Umar



5. Reservoir



6.



7.



8. Ruined structure



9. Cactus hedge

Fig. 8: Jindās – the built-up area. Comparison of the remains today (2020) with the German aerial photograph (1917).

Adjacent to the southern wall of the mosque is a plastered water pool with repairs in concrete. A well, Biyyārat Jindās, is mentioned as in ruined condition in a legal instrument from 1811 (al-Madanī 1996: 183). Apparently, the well was restored and provided water for irrigating fields and orchards in the area, during the Mandate period. Also noteworthy is the fact that no remains of an oil-press or soap factory were identified within the village, and therefore the olives grown on its lands were necessarily transported to nearby Lydda.

Land uses in the estate of Jindās

Most of the land of Jindās was devoted to field crops, which were the basis of the autarkic agrarian economy in the Ottoman period. To a lesser extent, the residents relied for their livelihoods on tree crops and livestock. In 1596/7 the inhabitants paid tax on wheat, barley, sesame, summer crops, fruit trees, goats and beehives (Hütteroth and Abdulfattah 1977: 155). The records of the Sharia court in Jaffa show that in the late 19th and early 20th centuries olives, wheat, barley, lentils, broad beans and *kirsanna* (vetch) were grown in the lands of Jindās (Ni‘mat Allah 2004: 245–246, 250).

A quantitative breakdown of the land uses in the village estate is available only from the end of the Ottoman period. On 4 June 1885, the *Havatzet* newspaper reported that Jindās “Contains 4,254 dunams of sown fields, in the mountain, valley and plain ... thirty dunams of orchards and wells flowing with water and 248 dunams of orchards planted with many trees [the data is in Turkish dunams – R.M.]” Sheep pens were also mentioned. This description testifies to the existence of a diverse agriculture, based on both field and orchard crops, alongside irrigated crops and the rearing of livestock. In the JCA map, the area of sown fields was estimated at 3,833 Turkish dunams (3,523 metric dunams) (CZA J15M \ 727).

The area of the orchards in the village lands gradually increased. The PEF map indicates that in the 1870s the orchard belt of the city of Lydda was limited to the areas to the north, west and south of the city. Within the lands of Jindās area, there were orchards in the low-lying al-‘Awayna hills east of the village. Between Jindās village and the lands of Lydda, individual fruit trees were documented – part of the modest *kurūm* around the village coup. The orchards, described in the al-‘Awayna hills on the PEF map, are missing from later maps, and appear to have been uprooted. After the land was expropriated from the Ayyūb family, the waqf authorities leased 800 dunams of Jindās’ land to residents of Lydda for the planting of fruit trees (CZA L18 / 5552). Cartographic and visual sources show that by 1918, these orchards had more or less reached their recognized borders from the Mandate period (Ramla map (B3), 1: 40,000, temporary first edition, 7 August 1918; Lod map, 1: 20,000, 1942; JCA map).¹⁶

Changes also took place in the village’s road system. The PEF map described a road that connected Jindās directly to the nearby economic center in Lydda, another section of the road crossed the village lands, and secondary roads led to Bayt Nabālā and Dayr Ṭarīf. This set of roads presents Jindās as a satellite settlement of Lydda, a role that would be fulfilled, at the beginning of the 20th century, also by the *saknāt* (residential neighborhoods) established on the city’s outskirts (Sasson and Marom 2020).¹⁷ A secondary road can be seen in the JCA map and the British map from 1918, connecting the village nucleus to the main road rising from Lod northwards. The total area of roads within the village at the time was estimated at 57 Turkish dunams (52.4 metric dunams). In the topo-cadastral maps from the British mandate period (a scale of 1 : 20,000), additional dirt roads connect Jindās with the road that ascends north to Bayt Nabālā and Dayr Ṭarīf, for the use by the residents of Bayt Nabālā who cultivated the Jindās estate. During World War I, a railway connecting Tulkarm and Lydda was laid. Later on, the railway network was expanded by the British and additional railways were established, connecting Lydda to al-Lubbān al-Gharbī and Bayt Nabālā (Sasson 2012; Sasson 2014).

16. The JCA map described 513 Turkish dunams (471.60 metric dunams) as an “old orchard” and 149 Turkish dunams (137 metric dunams) as a “new orchard.”

17. Such as Saknat Sitt Ikhwātihā (Hassūna), Saknat al-Maghāra and Saknat Badr.

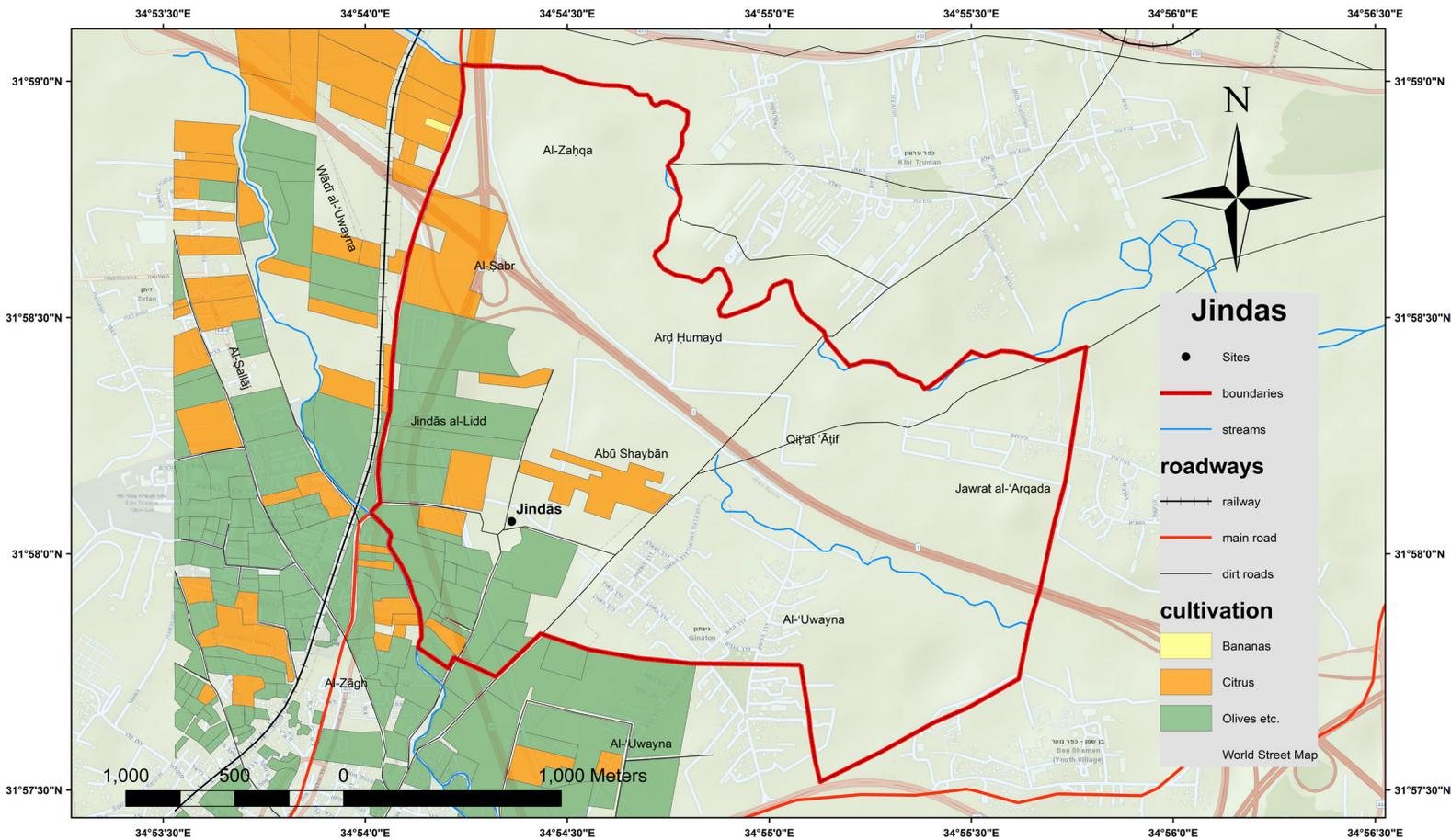


Fig. 9: Land uses in the estate of Jindās, 1942

British authorities published, in 1938 and in 1945, assessment of land use and ownership between Palestine’s ethnic communities, based on rural property tax data in the various villages.

Table 2: Land use in various villages (after Village Statistics, 1938)

	Citrus	Bananas	Built-up area	Orchards ¹⁸	Grains ¹⁹	Uncultivable land ²⁰	Total
Jindās	-	-	-	639	3,662	147	4,448
Al-Ḥadītha	-	-	18	303	4,440	2,352	7,113
Bayt Nabālā	30	-	63	2,803	8,957	3,214	15,057
Ben Shemen	6	-	22	607	973	568	2,176
Lydda	2671	-	1,256	9,766	8,584	1,443	23,720

18. This category comprises all fruit trees except for citrus and bananas.

19. Sum of the taxable and non-taxable grains.

20. Land unsuitable for agricultural work, roads, railways and streams.

Table 3: Land use in various villages (after Village Statistics, 1945)

	Citrus	Bananas	Built-up area	Orchards	Grains ²¹	Uncultivable land	Total	Total tax (Palestine Pound) ²²
Jindās	290	-	-	540	3,457	161	4,448	86
Al-Ḥadītha	10	-	16	246	4,523 ²³	2,315	7,110	74
Bayt Nabālā	226	-	124	1,733	10,199	2,769	15,051	235
Ben Shemen	5	1	22	607	947	594	2,176	38
Lydda ²⁴	3,217	3	3,855 ²⁵	7,956	7,711	981	23,721	3,103 – the city proper 402 – rural area

From the data, the economic gap between Lydda and its surrounding agricultural hinterland is striking in Lydda's greater jurisdiction, in its built-up area, in the scope of taxation, and in the larger areas devoted to orchards, vineyards and citrus groves. Bayt Nabālā was the richest and largest village in the area after Lydda, but the total taxes collected from its inhabitants were less than a tenth of those collected from the inhabitants of Lydda. Jindās was considered a separate unit for tax purposes, and as an endowment, its boundaries remained stable throughout this period. It is important to remember that land use data in the various villages were collected for tax purposes, so the ancient buildings in the village nucleus were not considered a built-up area, because they were not permanently inhabited.

**Fig. 10:** An ancient jujube tree in the ruins of Jindās (author's photograph, 2019)

21. Combination of tax categories 9-13 and 14-15.

22. Not including tax on citrus (due to the waiver given during World War II).

23. Including 102 dunams owned by Jews.

24. The data regarding cultivated land are connected to rural Lydda.

25. The urban area.

Most of the arable land in Jindās was devoted to field crops. Although the lands of al-Ḥadītha were more extensive (7,110 dunams versus 4,448 dunams), less tax was paid for them, compared to Jindās (74 Palestine Pounds versus 86 Palestine Pounds), due to their rugged nature. A certain increase in the area of orchards within the boundaries of Jindās did occur: In 1938 only 14.36% of the estate was planted, (in areas close to Lod), while in 1945 the planted area increased to 18.66% of the estate. Here the late growth of citrus cultivation (290 dunams) stands out, with orchards being uprooted and replaced by orange groves, especially in the areas north of the village. Citrus cultivation continued to expand even during the decade-long crisis that befell the citrus fruit trade during the Arab Revolt and World War II (1936-1945). A similar trend is evident in the areas of Bayt Nabālā and in Lydda itself. Citrus growing remained undeveloped in Ben Shemen, with the youth village specializing in orchards and field crops.

Finally, in Jindās there were about 147 dunams of uncultivable land, mainly due to wadis and publicly owned roads (109 dunams). The uncultivable land increased to 161 dunams in 1945, after the establishment of new transport infrastructure for British army camps. The data reflect a similar phenomenon in Lydda, where railway infrastructure, roads and wadis accounted for two-thirds (67.58%, 663 dunams) of the uncultivable area.

Jewish attempts to acquire the lands of Jindās

Jews had been eyeing the lands of Jindās since the beginning of the renewed Jewish settlement in Palestine, due to their proximity to the roads that pass through Lydda and Ramla and to existing Jewish settlements. Although these initiatives were ultimately unsuccessful, they are indicative of the strategy that guided the settlers who founded the Jewish settlements in the Lod lowlands. Negotiations regarding Jindās and other estates that were abandoned or sparsely populated (such as: Kafruriya - Kfar Uriah; Mulabbis - Petach Tikva; Dīrān - Rehovot and ‘Uyūn Qārā - Rishon LeZion) show that these areas were a convenient launching pad for early land purchase initiatives which shaped the pattern of Jewish settlement until the beginning of the British Mandate (Marom 2020).

On 9 December 1878, during the time that the first colony, Petach Tikva, was founded, Pines, the emissary of the Moses Montefiore Memorial Foundation in London, proposed to his colleague Lewis Emanuel that Jindās was a suitable place to establish a Jewish colony. Due to the village's close proximity to Lydda, the Foundation would not be required to build houses for the colonists, who would be able to rent apartments in Lydda at a low cost. Pines expected the Ottoman government to put the land up for sale for up to 2,000 pounds sterling, “and this place is worth giving that price for it” (as quoted in Ilan 1982: 151). On the occasion of the auction of Jindās' lands in June 1885, the *Havatzelet* newspaper reported on the interest shown by Jews in the purchase of the village's lands. It listed the place's advantages for Jewish settlement: its location on the main road leading from Lydda to Nablus, and its proximity to the Jewish colony in Yehud, the city of Lydda and the village of Jimzū in an environment rich in olive trees (*Havatzelet*, 4 November 1885). Managers of *kollels* and Jewish associations in Jerusalem called on “those who cherish the idea of establishing colonies in the Land of Israel [...] to come to their aid, so that they can buy this valley for our poor brothers who will decide to cultivate it and slowly pay its price when are satisfied by its goodness” (*Havatzelet*, 4 November 1885).

According to Ilan, “between 1903 and 1909, Jews made repeated attempts to acquire the place, out of great appreciation for the quality of its lands, its proximity to Lydda and its railway junction, and as a continuation of Ben Shemen land. Germans, who already had a settlement in the area, Wilhelma [present-day Bnei Atarot – R.M.], competed with the Jews for these lands. Lewontin, Meir Dizengoff, Zeev Gloskin, Aaron Eisenberg and David Yellin participated in the negotiations, on behalf of the Geula Company and the Anglo-Palestine Bank” (Ilan 1982: 152).

The Geula Company sought to purchase land that would help expand the colonies in Judea, and unite separate colonies and territories into Jewish-owned territorial blocs. The lands of Jindās were needed to

expand the border of the estate of Bayt ‘Arīf.²⁶ Bayt ‘Arīf was purchased in 1904, and served to established the Bezalel artists’ colony (1910), a predecessor to the Ben Shemen youth village (Katz 1987: 151).

In 1907 Lewontin described Jindās as “a large and beautiful estate of five thousand dunams, on the edge of the estate of Bayt ‘Arīf near Lydda, which we began to negotiate to buy, because it is very good and necessary for expanding the ‘Ayn ‘Arīf estate [sic, ...] and increase the settlement there” (Lewontin 1924, 2: 210). After officials in Moscow and the JNF expressed initial interest in purchasing the land, the Jewish engineer Ephraim Krause was sent to map the lands of Jindās, and the map he drew apparently survived in a late JCA copy, preserved today in the Central Zionist Archive (CZA, J15M \ 727). In the minutes of a meeting of the board of the Geula Company, held in May 1909, it was reported that the lands of Jindās were suitable for mixed farming. “The soil is very good for olives and since the soil is very good there is always the possibility of sowing between the trees. Indeed, the soil is good for sowing vegetables without water and since the farm is very close to the station, it is possible to make all kinds of intensive crops and also use it for dairy farming” (“On Jindās,” 27 February 1904, CZA L18\5552).

Tawfīq Ayyūb offered to sell 4,500 dunams to the Geula Company at a price of 45 or 50 francs per Turkish dunam. He did so despite the fact that the land had already passed into the ownership of the Ministry of Waqf office and the use of the farmers of Bayt Nabālā. Representatives of the Geula Company demanded that Ayyūb commit to the removal of the peasants of Bayt Nabālā. Privately, however, they recognized that the Arabs of Bayt Nabālā would not vacate the land voluntarily, and those who planted fruit trees on it – private property – could not be forcibly removed at all, in accordance with Ottoman law (letter from the Zionist Center in Palestine to Berlin, 24 February 1909, CZA L18\5552). The real estate deal was highly precarious, due to its dependence on the success of the legal proceedings conducted by Ayyūb against the waqf authorities, aiming to return the land to his possession, as well as on the ability of the Ayyūb family and the Geula Company to pay for the multiple expenses involved in completing the purchase. People from Bayt Nabālā and Lydda took root in Jindās, literally, and their trees thwarted the sale of the land to Jews.

Katz (1897) concludes that the initiative to purchase the Jindās estate failed due to legal disputes over ownership with the waqf, lack of funding and a price that was perceived as excessive in the face of Geula’s harsh conditions of the removal of those using the land and the provision of guarantees by the seller to settle their future claims (Doukhan-Landau 1980: 37). These factors also thwarted Geula’s attempts to acquire other lands in the area, such as al-Sidra (an endowment where the Arabs of al-Sūṭariyya later settled; now Moshav Sitria) and al-Mukhayzin (an area where ‘Arab al-Wuḥaydāt camped, now in the area of Yad Binyamin, Beit Hilkiah and Hafetz Hayyim (Katz 1987: 95, 120, 189). As a result, the area of Ramla and Lydda remained relatively sparse of Jewish settlement until 1948.

Summary

Until 1948, the city of Lydda remained largely an agricultural city, relying for its livelihood on diverse agricultural crops. Despite this, most of the studies published in recent years have dealt with the archeological and historical aspects of the urban space of Lydda, ignoring its rural hinterland. The present article sought to address this research gap, by tracing the history of the village of Jindās. Simultaneously, the article illustrates the importance of the intensive and integrative use of Ottoman sources to complete the meager picture obtained from the writings of foreign travelers and the silent findings of archeological excavations.

The history of Jindās, both as a settlement and as an agricultural estate, is closely connected with the waqf institution. The first mention of Jindās in Arab-Muslim sources is found in the private endowment certificates of the Banī Abūghā and the Banī Jumāq, dating to 867-8 AH / 1463-1464. Dedication of agricultural lands as a family waqf was one of the strategies used by wealthy locals and dignitaries to

26. An Arab village that was abandoned during the 16th century, as opposed to the village of Dayr Ṭarīf, on which the moshav Beit Arif was founded after the establishment of the State of Israel (Singer 1990: 59).

enshrine capital in family hands. Throughout the 16th century, tax revenues from the village were dedicated to the benefit of state religious endowments, such as Haseki Sultan's al-‘Imāra al-‘Āmira and the Cave of the Patriarchs Mosque. This had long-term consequences, as 300 years later it contributed to the preservation of the village as an independent fiscal unit even after its abandonment, and helped prevent its territorial annexation by nearby Bayt Nabālā and Lydda. The waqf's ownership of the lands of Jindās was also a major factor in the failure of Geula's initiatives to purchase the lands for Jews, an aspiration that was the pursuit of many in the founding days of the first colonies in Palestine.

Historical sources testify to the continuous existence of the village of Jindās in the 16th century and in the first half of the 17th. During this period Jindās was an agricultural hamlet, whose inhabitants made a living from growing grain, sesame, olives and fruit trees, summer crops, cattle and honeybees. The village was abandoned at an unknown stage, apparently due to pressure from nomads and the Qays-Yaman rivalry. The village was only restored in the early 19th century, or after Ibrāhīm Pasha's expedition. The origin legends of former inhabitants of Jindās, imply that the village was re-settled by immigrants from Egypt and the south of the country. In doing so, Jindās belongs to a long line of villages, such as Mulabbis, Fajja, Biyār ‘Adas and the Yarkon villages, which were re-established at that time by immigrants from Egypt. Other immigrants from Egypt bolstered the existing settlement in Ramla, Lydda and the surrounding villages (Grossman 1983; Grossman 1994; Marom 2020: 58-60).

In the 1870s, Jindās became an estate village owned by the Christian Ayyūb family from Jerusalem. However, around 1882 the cultivation of the village lands ceased, apparently due to the Ayyūb family's economic troubles and the abandonment of the village by its inhabitants. The lands were put up for auction, and eventually they were registered in the name of the religious endowments to which the village's income was originally dedicated in the 15th and 16th centuries. The waqf officials leased the bulk of the land of Khibbat Jindās, as the abandoned village was called at the time, for cultivation by the people of Bayt Nabālā. Other areas were handed over for cultivation by the residents of Lydda, who planted them with olive groves and orchards. In this way, the western and southern areas of the Jindās estate, including the nucleus of the abandoned village, became an integral part of the economic-agricultural system of the city of Lydda. At the beginning of the 20th century, these plantations functioned as a “security zone,” which forestalled the sale of Jindās to the Zionists in general, or expand the nearby Ben Shemen settlement in particular.

The destruction of the village of Jindās demonstrates the frequent instability of settlement in the Lydda area during the Ottoman period, due to which other nearby settlements were also abandoned: Saṭṭāra, Kafr Jinnis, Bayt Qūfā and Shīḥa. However, our broad examination has shown, that there the abandonment of villages does not necessarily indicate an overall demographic decline. The history of the hinterland of Lydda in the period in question is closely linked to broader changes in the history of Palestine. This is evidenced by the fate of the inhabitants of the abandoned villages in general, and the diaspora of former inhabitants of Jindās in particular (in Kifl Ḥāris, Lydda, Dayr Ballūt, al-Lubbān al-Gharbī and Kafr Lām, and possibly Birqīn and Sīlat al-Ẓahr in the Jenin area). Thus, the population of abandoned villages did not disappear or become extinct, but moved –for the most part – to live in other geographical areas, expanding the settlements there and thickening them. The lands of these villages were not abandoned, but continued to be cultivated by other populations. The exposure of these connections, between different regions of the country, naturally requires an in-depth acquaintance with the demographic landscape of the rural area, from the various historical sources, including those in Ottoman Turkish and Arabic. This acquaintance opens new horizons for the study of the rural area in Palestine during the Ottoman period, of the cities and provincial towns, and even of the renewed Jewish settlement, which took form alongside them.

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