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AN EXAMPLE OF EFFORTS TO INCREASE AGRICULTURAL OUTPUT IN THE OTTOMAN MIDDLE-EAST: THE IRRIGATION PROJECT OF THE JAFFA VALLEY (1890-1894)

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Introduction

Jaffa has been an important Palestinian city from the ancient period on; however, at times it was inactive due to the policies introduced by the State administration. From the second half of the 19th century until the establishment of the Haifa port Jaffa maintained its importance.¹ Jaffa, the first stop on the road that went to Jerusalem, a center for Christian pilgrimage, had a port that was buffeted by winds and storms; due to the fact that it was rocky and shallow the dock was not well developed.² After the 1880s, when export activities increased, a modern dock was established in the city; however, although many projects directed towards improving the dock area were brought onto the agenda, none were realized.³

In the 16th century Jaffa was a village that was affiliated with the Ramla District of the Gaza County in the Damascus Province;⁴ in the 1800s Jaffa became a borough associated with the Jerusalem County in the Damascus Province.⁵ In 1874, the independent Jerusalem *mutasarrıflık* (province) separated from the Damascus Province and became a borough.⁶ In the region dry agriculture was carried out and a large

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¹ E. Honigman, "Yafa", *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, Vol. 13, Milli Eğitim Basımevi, İstanbul 1986, pp. 330-332.

² F. Buhl, "Yafa", *The Encyclopedia of Islam (New Edition)*, Vol. XI, Brill, Leiden 2001, p.235 ; Ebru Altan, "Yafa", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi (TDVİA)*, Vol. 43, Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayını, İstanbul 2013, p.172.

³ Mark LeVine, *Overthrowing Geography, Re-Imagining Identities: A History of Jaffa and Tel Aviv, 1880 to the Present*, Unpublished PhD dissertation, New York University, New York 1999, p.55.

⁴ Bernard Lewis, "Jaffa in the 16th Century, According to the Ottoman Tahrir Registers", *Necatî Liğal Armağanı*, TTK Press, Ankara 1968, p. 435.

⁵ Sabahattin Samur, *Suriye Vilayeti'nin İdari ve Sosyal Yapısı (1840-1908)*, Unpublished PhD dissertation, Ankara University, Ankara 1988, p. 55.

⁶ Mustafa Öztürk, "Arap Ülkelerinde Osmanlı İdaresi", *History Studies, Orta Doğu Özel Sayısı*, (2010), p. 337.

amount of the land was treasury land.⁷ In particular, in the Syrian and Palestinian region, treasury land was exploited in the form of collective shares that were *musha'a* tenure.⁸ In this system, land was worked by one or more residents of the village, but the division of shares per household differed from region to region. What remained the same in the system was that the households within the borders of the *musha'a* tenure land did not claim any right to the land as individuals.⁹ With the 1858 Land Law, the *miri* tenure land was transformed into property and the State took on a new land policy; this led to changes, particularly in agricultural activities.¹⁰ Because independent ownership was adopted instead of the new system and joint ownership.

Throughout the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, the dry agriculture that was carried out in the interior regions of Jaffa consisted mostly of wheat, barley and oats.¹¹ The State, which was trying to encourage the people to take up new modes of production, made it possible for them to add distant fields, thus creating new residential areas as well as increasing the income the State took from taxes. Efforts to increase agricultural production in the Syrian-Palestinian region and to create an important commodity trade encountered problems due to a lack of manpower.¹²

⁷ *Miri* tenure land was land that belonged to the State, that is the treasury. This type of land, in which property rights belonged to the State, could be used by citizens according to certain conditions. For more detailed information on *miri* tenure land, see: Macit Kenanoğlu, "Miri Arazi", *TDVİA*, Vol. 30, Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayını, İstanbul 2005, pp. 157-160.

⁸ Celal Tevfik Karasapan, *Filistin ve Şark-ül-Ürdün*, Vol II, Ahmed İhsan Press, İstanbul 1942, p.91 ; 1858 The Land Law accepted that *musha'a* tenure was common property when it was shared. This situation meant that there were problems in the sharing out of the land. Some implementations that were introduced in Jordan indicate that after 1858 some lands, registered as property, were worked as *musha'a* tenure for a period of 50 years. In Palestine, there was an increase in the number of property lands, and the practice of *musha'a* was almost completely abandoned. See: Donald Quataert, "Tarım", *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarihi*, Vol. 2, in Halil İnalçık and Donald Quataert (eds.), Eren Publications, İstanbul 2004, pp. 983-984.

⁹ Raphael Patai, "Musha'a Tenure and Co-Operation in Palestine", *American Anthropologist (New Edition)*, Vol. 51/ No. 3 (1949), pp. 438-440.

¹⁰ Until the 1858 Land Law was accepted, there was no one type of implementation in the *miri* land law; every state introduced different laws. The 1858 law introduced new principles for the assignation, collateral and deeds, as well as transference of *miri* tenure land. In the law, it can be seen that the giving of the property rights for a *miri* tenure land to just one person was forbidden. However, as no limit was introduced about the amount of land that one person could own, there was a loophole in the system. See: Kenanoğlu, op.cit., p. 159.

¹¹ The agricultural products that were produced in Jaffa were barley, wheat, sesame, cotton and garden vegetables. Of these products, barley, wheat and cotton could find buyers in both local markets as well as in nearby provinces and town, however, the garden products were produced to sell only in the local market. See: Lewis, op.cit., pp.437-439. This structure, based on single-type production that was seen in the 16th century would not change until the 1800s.

¹² Roger Owen states that there were many similarities in the economic history of Syria and Palestine. In reality, there are similarities from the aspect of activities for developing agricultural production and basic production material. In addition to this, the settlement policies that the State imposed for both regions was

The new agricultural areas that were introduced to make use of the desert shore were not only the commodity areas of the Bedouin tribes; thus, trying to prevent conflict between the settled residents and the Bedouins was a serious problem. Attempts were made to encourage Bedouin tribes, who posed the greatest threat to local security, to transfer to a settled lifestyle, thus preventing conflict and eliminating deficiencies in manpower.¹³ In addition to this, particularly after the Crimean War, the large number of Caucasian immigrants who came to these regions were directed towards the Syrian Palestinian region and settled in the agricultural land on the edges of the desert.¹⁴ In this way these immigrants were settled and new activity in agriculture was introduced.

In contrast to the dry agriculture that was carried out in the interior regions, in regions close to the shore a Mediterranean type of garden agriculture was carried out. Garden agriculture added fruit and vegetables to the basic export product, cereals.¹⁵ In the gardens, in particular olives, grapes, citrus fruit (orange, lemon and grapefruit) and melon-watermelon were grown. Sesame, which needed relatively less water than these crops, was an important agricultural product grown along the shore. In the 1850s, with an increase in demand for cotton products, cotton also became an important agricultural product that was grown on an increasing scale in the Palestinian region.¹⁶ The trade potential of cotton export in the city of Jaffa increased, and a second gate was opened; a customs building and light house were constructed in the port. In addition, a telegraph line was established, making communication between Istanbul and Europe easier.¹⁷

One of the most important effects that increased trade potential in Jaffa was the invention of the steam ship and the fact that this vessel began to be widely used

the same. See: Roger Owen, *The Middle East in the World Economy 1800-1914*, I.B. Tauris, London 1981, p.173.

¹³ Linda Schilcher, "Geç Osmanlı Suriye'sinde Tahıl Ekonomisi ve Büyük Ölçekli Ticarileşme Sorunu", *Osmanlı Toprak Mülkiyeti ve Ticari Taram*, Çağlar Keyder and Faruk Tabak (eds.), Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, İstanbul 1998), p. 193 ; The most striking example of the struggle between the Bedouins and the settled residents was that between the Abu Gosh and Lahom tribes in close regions to Jerusalem. During the fighting that broke out between these two tribes many olive trees were cut down and much livestock was stolen. See: Owen, op.cit., p. 173.

¹⁴ Throughout the 19th century 30,000 emigrants from the Caucasus were settled in Syria, Palestine and Jordan. See: A. Ruppin, "Migration from and to Syria 1860-1914", *The Economic History of the Middle East 1800-1914*, Charles Issawi (ed.), The University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1966, p. 270.

¹⁵ Faruk Tabak, "Bereketli Hilal'in Batısında Tarımsal Dalgalanmalar ve Emeğin Kontrolü 1700-1850", *Osmanlı Toprak Mülkiyeti ve Ticari Taram*, Çağlar Keyder and Faruk Tabak (eds.), Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, İstanbul 1998, p. 147.

¹⁶ The Crimean War and the American Civil War were both effective in raising the value of the cotton market. In this process the fact that cotton growing, particularly in American rural areas, was affected led to the search for different sources. See: Owen, op.cit., p. 178.

¹⁷ A. L. Tibawi, *British Interests In Palestine 1800-1901*, Oxford University Press, London 1961, p. 144.

from the 1840s on. Steam ships flying British and French flags started to come to the port every twenty days or once a month. This meant on the one hand that Palestine was coming closer to the world market, while on the other hand Jaffa was directly, or indirectly, through Alexandria or Izmir, connected to important port cities like Marseille or Trieste, allowing it to be integrated with the European markets.¹⁸ The developing ship trade network between Cairo or Mansura in Egypt and Istanbul in Asia Minor now added Jaffa to its commercial areas.¹⁹ This ensured that the agricultural produce, both crude and semi-processed, that was grown in Palestine and particularly in Jaffa, was recognized and in demand on the international markets.

Commercial Agriculture in Productive Land: Agricultural Activities in Jaffa

Jaffa's Arab farmers used traditional methods of planting, gardening and husbandry, based on water or waterless agriculture.²⁰ For the most part in field production based on waterless agriculture cereals were produced, while in water agriculture, sesame and cotton were grown. In the fields where waterless agriculture was carried out, grape vines and olive trees, which need less water, were planted, while in the water agriculture fields, fruit like citrus fruit and melons were grown; however these were only sufficient to meet the needs of the domestic market.

The cereals produced in the interior regions, as they were superfluous to the local needs, were considered to be export products. In particular fields that produced wheat and barley were found in very close regions. After the cereals, one of the greatest export crops from Jaffa was sesame. After 1860 cotton prices started to rapidly fall; farmers started to plant sesame instead of cotton. With the increase in the amount of sesame planted, a crop that had a long history in the region, the share in sesame export grew.²¹ Demands for tahini, made by grinding sesame, came particularly from Egypt, Syria and Anatolia. In this context, a great deal of sesame was exported to Anatolia, Egypt and Syria.

Olive trees, as they require relatively less water than citrus trees, were the tree planted in regions where there were fewer water resources. Not only were Pales-

¹⁸ S. Avitsur, "The Influence of Western Technology on the Economy of Palestine During Nineteenth Century", *Studies on Palestine During the Ottoman Period*, Moshe Ma'oz (ed.), The Magnes Press, Jerusalem 1975, p. 487.

¹⁹ Mahmoud Yazbak, "19th Century Palestinian Commercial Networks: The Oranges of Jaffa", *Perspectives on Ottoman Studies / Papers from 18th Symposium of the International Comitee of Pre-Ottoman and Ottoman Studies* Ekrem Causevic and others (eds.), Lit Verlag, Berlin 2010, p. 584.

²⁰ Yosi Ben-Artzi, "Changes in the Agricultural Sector of the Moshavot 1882-1914", *Ottoman Palestine 1800-1914 / Studies in Economic and Social History*, Gad G. Gilbar (ed.), E.J. Brill, Leiden 1990, p.138.

²¹ Gad G. Gilbar, "The Growing Economic Involvement of Palestine with the West 1865-1914", *Palestine in the Late Ottoman Period, Political, Social and Economic Transformation*, David Kushner (ed.), E.J. Brill, Leiden 1986, pp. 196-197.

tinian olives used as a food source, but the crops from Jaffa and Nablus were used to make olive oil. Olive oil was used mostly in the production of soap, with a small portion being sent to France. Soap production in Jaffa, Nablus, Ramla and Jerusalem was widespread, and much of the soap produced was exported. The demand for soap produced in the workshops, known as *masbana*, increased significantly after the 1860s.²² As a result, the price of olive oil, the basic ingredient of soap, increased.²³ In addition, olive oil was used as a fuel for lamps. The invention of kerosene, which was cheaper and lasted longer, meant that people stopped using olive oil for lighting. Kerosene first came to the region over the Atlantic, but later stated to come via the Middle East through Batum port.²⁴ This resulted in a reduction in the use of olive oil as a means of lighting and an excess of the produced oil on the domestic market, therefore production costs in the soap sector began to decrease.

The production of grapes, something not preferred by Arab farmers, began with the establishment of the Wrüttemberg Protestant German Templar Colony; this colony was established in Wilhelma and Saron, to the north of Jaffa, in 1870-1871.²⁵ Even though this group, the first generation of which was referred to as the Templars, grew citrus fruit, grapes and olives, as they did not use modern methods, the trees, which they were unable to protect from invasive pests, were lost. As a result, the colony turned instead to commerce, freight trade and the hospitality sector.²⁶ This resulted in a reduction in the use of olive oil as a means of lighting and an excess of the produced oil on the domestic market, therefore production costs in the soap sector began to decrease.

Citrus trees, which had existed in the Palestinian area from ancient times, only came to the fore as a commercial commodity in the 19th century, thus bringing fame to Jaffa's name. In the 1750s, the citrus production in the gardens of the local Muslim elite – in particular oranges – was directed towards the local market. In cities like Nablus and Jerusalem, this group of old Muslim merchant families on the whole carried out agriculture using traditional means. Although the orange groves stretched as far as Ramla, the families preferred to live within the city walls of Jaffa. These families, who used traditional methods of agriculture, did not market the goods themselves, but rather sold most of them to orange merchants.²⁷

²² Charles Wilkins, "Aspects of the Social and Economic Structure of Early Nineteenth Century Jaffa", *Al-Manarah*, Vol. 1/1, (1996), p. 86 ; 70% of the soap from Jaffa and Nablus were sold to Egypt, Yemen and the Hejaz. See: Ruppin, op.cit., p. 281.

²³ Owen, op.cit., p. 177.

²⁴ Avitsur, op.cit., p. 490.

²⁵ F. Buhl, op.cit., p. 235.

²⁶ Ben-Artzi, op. Cit., pp. 139-140.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 580, 583-584.

The first major producer in the Jaffa region was Osman Agha,²⁸ who planted orange saplings in his groves in a field close to the Al-Auja River; he was able to water the groves from this river. In this region, where there were Bedouin tribes, Osman Agha attempted to make a type of treaty with the Bedouins in order to protect himself against attacks and prevent any problems. Osman Agha, who carried his orange crops to the port on Bedouin camels, also employed Bedouin tribesmen to protect his orange groves.²⁹

Due to the thick peel of the Jaffa orange, it could be transported long distances. For this reason it was in demand in the European trade. In addition, the aroma and the fact that it was seedless and juicy made this orange a preferred product. The Jaffa orange, known as *shamuti*,³⁰ found a market in Egypt and Anatolia in the 1850s and from here was transported to Europe.³¹ Being transported by steamships, the Jaffa orange could be easily transported without losing its juice, and quickly became popular with Europeans. At this relatively early date the Dutch researcher and naval officer C.W.M. Van de Velde visited Palestine; when he mapped the country he indicated the region in which Jaffa oranges were grown.³²

The increase in foreign demand led to an increase in orange production for the domestic market. Particularly the implementation of the Land Law of 1858 led to most of the lands that had been transformed from having a *miri* status to property status being used as orange orchards. The investors, who were the property owners, aimed to increase the quality and amount of products that were attained from these types of properties, which were larger than they used to be.³³ Orange trees had to be watered for seven months, and for this reason water was essential for growing oranges.³⁴ Thus, orange growers had to invest a rather large investment in watering systems as opposed to olive growers.

²⁸ Osman Agha was the liberated slave of the famous administrator of the Palestinian region, Governor Muhammad Abu Nabbut.

²⁹ Yazbak, op. cit., p. 579.

³⁰ The Jaffa orange (*shamuti*), which had a thick skin and was oval in shape, was grown in groves known as *bayyara*; flowers would open in March or April, and the fruit would be ripe in the months of October or November. The citrus fruit exported from Palestine mostly consisted of *shamuti*. See: Nahum Karlinsky, *California Dreaming – Ideology, Society and Technology in the Citrus Industry of Palestine 1890-1938*, New York State University Press, New York 2005, p. 16 ; Owen, op.cit., p. 178 ; Ben-Artzi, op.cit., p. 139.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 579.

³² Karlinsky, op. cit, pp. 50-51.

³³ It was only possible to farm citrus fruit with a high profit if new saplings were planted. An orange sapling produces fruit in six years, but it takes ten years for a tree to be fully mature. Op. cit., p.13, 90, 584.

³⁴ Yazbak, op.cit., 581; In order to attain an exportable product from a new garden the location of the garden had to be selected well, needed to have a watermill or a watering system, the land had to be ready for planting, the distance of planting and the market for the good were all matters that had to be taken into account. See: Karlinsky, op.cit., pp. 91-93.

In the period between 1850 and 1880, the citrus production that was under the control of the Arab growers rapidly developed, and the number of *bayyara* (citrus gardens) in Jaffa during these years quadrupled.³⁵ It is known that throughout the harvest season of 1870 in Jaffa, 5,000 workers picked oranges and packed them.³⁶ According to the 1873 trade report, the estimated annual orange harvest was worth 25,000 pounds sterling. According to the same report, it is stated that there were 420 orange orchards in Jaffa. In these gardens there were trees that produced fruit and new trees were also being planted.³⁷ In addition to these developments, there were developments in the transportation of oranges. First the oranges that were to be sent to Egypt, Lebanon and Anatolia were wrapped one by one in paper and shipped in closed chests.³⁸ At the same time the transportation of oranges in chests led to the creation of a chest-production sector in Jaffa.

In 1878 a small Jewish group that came to Petah Tikva went into action to raise oranges and get into the fruit export market.³⁹ Jewish immigrants, who came one after the other in 1880, opened the way to the establishment of Jewish colonies in the Palestinian region.⁴⁰ The Jewish immigrants set up working as individuals, cooperatives and agricultural colonies; they quickly purchased large tracts of land and started growing citrus fruit.⁴¹ These individual colonies, known as *Moshavot*, used the Arab workforce for production.⁴² The cooperatives, which were supported by the Jewish National Capital, employed Jewish work force and the profit attained belonged to the cooperative. The agricultural colonies were worked cooperatively and the profit was shared between the producers.

The Zionist colonization was first affected in the Palestinian region by the European colony, which provided economic and social development. The European colony used the natives in the underdeveloped areas and thus was able to conquer these regions. In this context, some Jewish groups worked for the European colonists as laborers and learned the basic agricultural infrastructure here. After unsuccessful agricultural implementation by the first generation Templar colony, between 1902 and 1907 the second generation Templars can be seen to have established three colonies. The modern agricultural methods that the new colony used were examples for the Jewish colonies as well.⁴³ Over time, the Jewish citrus growers were now involved

³⁵ Yazbak, op.cit., p. 581.

³⁶ op.cit., p. 583.

³⁷ Owen, op.cit., p. 178.

³⁸ Avitsur, op.cit., p. 489.

³⁹ Owen, op.cit.p., pp. 175-176.

⁴⁰ Between 1880 and 1914 the Jewish population in Palestine reached approximately 90,000. See: Ruppin, op. cit., p. 270.

⁴¹ Karasapan, op.cit., pp. 60-61.

⁴² Karlinsky, op.cit., p. 1.

⁴³ Ben-Artzi, op.cit., p. 141.

in capitalist activities aimed to attain maximum profit with private investment and hired laborers. ⁴⁴ In the 1850s citrus growing was in Muslim Arab hands, but by the 1890s a commercial competition area appeared in which they were in direct competition with the Jewish investors. ⁴⁵ The success that the Jewish immigrants achieved in this short a period was due to their owning the land, employing people of their own community and their on-hands management.

In 1905, when comparing the economic value of two farms, one belonging to a Palestinian Arab the other to Jews, Charles Issawi gave a value of 14,324 francs to the Arab farm, where there was dry agriculture and husbandry; the Jewish farm, with gardens, vineyards and orange groves, had a total value of 73,425 francs. ⁴⁶ As we can understand from this determination, Arab farming had almost disappeared, while the Jewish farmers can be understood to have been developing with every passing day. The greatest difference between these two groups that carried out production was that the Jewish farmers used all technological developments, particularly in the production of citrus fruit, seeing it as an area that could form capital accumulation.

Bureaucracy and Power: Bids for Watering Concessions in the Jaffa Valley

As citrus trees began to be grown more in Jaffa a significant increase in the irrigation problem appeared. Most of the orange groves were watered with subterranean water; by using traditional methods water could be brought to the surface from no more than eight to twelve meters. Pumps, operated by mules or camels would bring the water to the ground. The water that was brought up was transported to water reservoirs, and from here the water would be shared out among the orange groves. Steam motors, which began to be used in Palestine in 1860, became more widespread over time. With these motors drilling could be made to twenty to thirty meters and five to eight cubic meters water could be brought to the surface. With this amount of water farmers could irrigate twenty-seven acres of land in an hour. ⁴⁷ With the invention of the internal combustion motor, the extraction of subterranean water became even easier. These motors, which worked with petrol or diesel, were first sold by the German company Wagner Brothers; after this, British motors began to be sold. ⁴⁸

The rapid increase in the cultivation of citrus fruit and the expansion of the groves meant that irrigation with subterranean water proved insufficient. In this

⁴⁴ Karlinsky, op.cit., p. 7, 12-13.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 44-45.

⁴⁶ Charles Issawi, *The Fertile Crescent 1800-1914, A Documentary Economic History*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1988, pp. 315-318.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 98 ; Avitsur, op.cit., p. 493.

⁴⁸ Ruppung, op.cit., p. 285 ; Karlinsky, op.cit., p. 99.

context, particularly to the north of Jaffa, in the regions that are today known as Tel Aviv-Jaffa, and Petah Tikva, the matter of bringing water from canals leading from the Al-Auja River, which runs east to west, came onto the agenda. A petition dated November 1890 provides us with information about the concession; Philip Melhame⁴⁹ and one other person applied for the concession for irrigation in the Jaffa region. Philip Melhame says that his competitor was a “*tebaa-i ecnebiyyeden hāricde bulunan bir zāl*” (an individual who is a foreigner), and claims this person was represented by four different people; however this individual did not have legal representative rights, and after investigations were carried out the first three people withdrew from representing this individual. It could not be discovered who the last representative was, and for this reason Philip Melhame wrote a petition, requesting that this person’s application be considered invalid.⁵⁰ During this process Philip Melhame prepared a draft contract and in addition a map which showed irrigation plans, sending it to the *Meclis-i Nafīā* (Public Works Council).⁵¹ Later, it can be seen that two more competitors to Philip Melhame appeared; in two petitions Melhame’s unease is expressed; this foreigner, whose real identity could not be discovered, had requested the same concession. Monsieur Alexander de Jerarden, the owner of the coal gas concessions in Beirut, applied for the bids for water irrigation rights in the Jaffa Valley.⁵² Monsieur Jerarden’s application was made by the representatives he had appointed: J. Lombardo and Krespi Oduvar. According to a decision taken by the *Meclis-i Vükelā* (Council of Representatives) after carrying out investigations, Monsieur Jerarden’s request was refused; the reasons for this were not fully disclosed, but the rights were granted to Philip Melhame.⁵³ In the mandate that gave Melhame these rights the

⁴⁹ The Melhames were a Lebanese Maronite family who had influence in the bureaucracy during the reign of Abdülhamid II. There were four brothers, Selim, Necip, Philip and Habip; Selim Melhame was a pasha, as well as the minister for Forestry and Mines. Necip Melhame was a pasha and the head detective of the Detective Organization, Philip and Habip Melhame ran a company that had many concessions, particularly the trams, electricity, telegraph and railway particularly in the Middle East region. It is known that Selim Pasha in particular had a close personal relationship with Sultan Abdülhamid, and Selim Pasha and Necip Pasha had relationships with leading statesmen in Istanbul and had influence. The fact that the company belonging to Philip and Habip Melhame could easily attain concessions should be evaluated from the aspect that they had brothers in high-level posts in the administration and in particular that they had direct relations with the sultan. See: Engin D. Akarlı, “Abdülhamid’s Islamic Policy in the Arab Provinces”, *Türk-Arap İlişkileri: Geçmişle, Bugün ve Gelecekte – I. Uluslararası Konferans Bildirileri*, Hacettepe University Publications, Ankara 1979, p. 53 ; Jess Hanssen, *Fin de Siècle Beirut: The Making of an Ottoman Provincial Capital*, Oxford University Press, New York 2005, pp. 99-100.

⁵⁰ Prime Ministerial Ottoman Archive (PMOA.), *Yıldız Münevvisi Ma’rûzât Evrâkı (YMTV)*, 46/62, 21 Teşrîn-i Evvel 1306, p. 2 ; Philip Melhame presented a second petition related to the same subject in the month of January 1891. See: PMOA., *Şivâ-yı Devlet Evrâkı (ŞD)*, 2957/40, 21 Kânûn-i Evvel 1306, p. 2.

⁵¹ PMOA., *ŞD*, 1190/38, 17 Teşrîn-i Sâni 1306, p. 2-3, 12, 14 ; Moreover, for the plan that Philip Melhame prepared for the Jaffa Valley, see: Appendix-I.

⁵² Same document, P. 19-22 ; PMOA., *Meclis-i Vükelâ Mazbataları (MV)*, 62/25, 24 Cumadülülâ 1308 ; PMOA., *Hariciye Nezâretü Tercüme Odası Evrâkı (HR.TO)*, 535/28, 14 February 1306, p. 3.

⁵³ PMOA., *MV*, 67/74, 10 Safer 1309.

basic articles of the contract that was to be made between Philip Melhame and the government are mentioned. According to this, 10% of the crops that would be gained from irrigation would belong to the State, while the cost of bridges over the Al-Auja River and any canals opened would be met by Philip Melhame.⁵⁴ However, after being granted the concession, as Philip Melhame did not deliver the relevant documents in time to the Ministry of Commerce and Public Works, and as there were new applications during this time period for the concession, the *Meclis-i Nafîa* decided that another bid would be opened.⁵⁵

The second bid was brought onto the agenda with a contract that consisted of three sections and eleven articles; this was prepared by the State Council in January 1891. This contract presented information about the canals that were to be opened from the Al-Auja River and the how those who were applying for the concessions would bring water to those lands in Jaffa that could not easily be watered with subterranean water. In the first section, articles concerned with the mapping and measurement of the region to be watered, as well as the determination of the canals to be opened were included; the second section included articles concerned with the costs that would be incurred in the process of construction, the responsibilities of the legal owners of the concessions for the temporary malfunctioning of the canals, the material to be used and the problem of excavation. In the third section there were articles concerning the basic conditions of the contract to be drawn up between the concession owner and the State.⁵⁶

Philip Melhame, the representative for Yosef Navon Efendi⁵⁷, Simonaki Efendi, Monsieur Alexander de Jerarden and the construction contractor Hüseyin Edhem Efendi all applied for the new bid. The contract report for every applicant was delivered to the ministry and was taken under consideration.⁵⁸ After a very short decision period the concession was granted to Edhem Efendi and it was requested that the contract report be prepared in keeping with the earlier stipulations.⁵⁹ Edhem

⁵⁴ Same document ; Philip Melhame also states that he would sign the contract with a French merchant, the name of whom he did not give. That is, there would be a partner in operating the concession. See: PMOA., *YMTV*, 56/27, 9 Rabiülâhîr 1309.

⁵⁵ PMOA., *ŞD*, 1190/38, 10 Kânûn-i Sâni 1306, p. 1.

⁵⁶ PMOA., *ŞD*, 1201/5, 2 Cumadlâhire 1308, p. 1-3.

⁵⁷ Joseph Navon was a member of the Amzalak and Navon families, two of Jerusalem's leading Sephardi elite. In 1888, Joseph Navon was granted the permit that had been in great demand by both English and French companies for many years to construct the Jerusalem-Jaffa railway due to his Ottoman citizenship. However, because he was unable to source the capital to continue, he was forced to transfer the permit to another company in 1890. For more detailed information, see: Yasemin Avcı, *Değişim Sürecinde Bir Osmanlı Kenti: Kudüs (1890-1914)*, Ankara: Phoenix Publishing, 2004, p.188-189 ; Also see: Joseph Glass, "The Biography in Historical-Geographical Research: Joseph Navon Bey, A Case Study", *The Land that Became Israel: Studies in the Historical Geography*, Ed. Ruth Kark, Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1990, pp.77-89.

⁵⁸ PMOA., *ŞD*, 1201/5, 2 Cumadlâhire 1308, p. 1-3.

⁵⁹ Same document, p. 10.

Efendi prepared the contract and stipulation memoranda and delivered these to the Ministry of Commerce and Public Works; he now had to wait for the approval of the documents and the granting of a *Fermān-ı Âlî* stating that he had been given the concession. Within this time, a request by the ministry was made for changes to the articles in the stipulations, and it was requested that Edhem Efendi amend the stipulation draft accordingly. This matter, which remained in abeyance for close to a year, resulted in the cancellation of the concession that had been given to Edhem Efendi; this was in keeping with a decision by the *Meclis-i Vükelâ* in May, 1892.⁶⁰ In the same decision it was resolved that one of the people who had applied for the concession before, that is Philip Melhame, Yosef Navon Efendi or Monsieur Jerarden, would be chosen.⁶¹ Two new articles were added to the bidding conditions; the final decision was to be made out in 1894. According to this, those who had requested the concession had to deposit 1,000 Ottoman gold coins; if they were not granted the concessions, this amount would be paid back; in addition forty-five days later one of the applicants would be selected and the concessions would be given to them. The others would not have any rights.⁶² The State thus tried to prevent the objections of those who were applying for the bid.

The public was informed about the bidding for the concession via the newspaper. The advertisement in the *Saadet* newspaper, dated 26 February 1894 called for applicants to the concession bid for irrigation with water from the Al-Auja River. According to the advertisement those who applied for the concessions should put a deposit of 1,000 Ottoman gold coins in the Ottoman Bank before the conditions and contract drafts were presented to the *Meclis-i Nafîâ* and a receipt proving that they had invested this money should be attached to their application. The deposit given by the applicant, if the applicant was accepted, but if the applicant failed to apply to the

⁶⁰ Edhem Efendi applied a number of times to both the Ministry of Commerce and Public Works as well as to the the Şura-yı Devlet about the cancellation of the concession. See: PMOA., *ŞD*, 1197/9, 5 Teşrîn-i Evvel 1308, p. 1, 3; PMOA., *ŞD*, 2957/5, 8 Teşrîn-i Evvel 1308; PMOA., *Bab-ı Âli Evrak Odası Evrakı (BEO)*, 326/24414, 2 Cumadelülâ 1311, p. 2; PMOA., *BEO*, 308/23081, 28 Cumadelâhire 1311; Edhem Efendi requested information about why his concession had been cancelled, and sent a number of petitions. As a result, the answer that came to him from the Meclis-i Vükelâ statements such as: “requests had been made to him for some modifications to the contract, however, the modified articles would not have been acceptable; moreover, there were other applicants to the advertisement and it was decided to hold a bid between these applicants” were included. See: PMOA., *MV*, 77/74, 21 Teşrîn-i Sâni 1309; In the petition that Edhem Efendi made for the new bid he wrote “the aforementioned people (he is speaking about Philip Melhame and Yosef Navon Efendi) who have requested the concession have tried to eliminate competition with help from high places; if they do not forego their requests for the concessions, the concessions will not be given to him (Edhem Efendi)”. See: PMOA., *ŞD*, 2957/12, 26 Teşrîn-i Evvel 1308; Finally, in the copy of the regulation that was written by the Meclis-i Mahsusa of the Sublime Porte, the thousand Ottoman gold coins that Edhem Efendi had put into the Ottoman Bank as security, as he did not comply with the contract, should be transferred to the treasury. See: PMOA., *BEO*, 358/26786, 4 Şaban 1311, p. 1.

⁶¹ PMOA., *MV*, 69/50, 15 May 1308.

⁶² PMOA., *MV*, 78/69, 23 Kânun-i Sâni 1309.

Ministry of Commerce and Public Works for a *Fermân-ı Âlî* (Imperial Order) and sign a stipulation agreement, would be turned over to the treasury. The application period was forty-five days, and those applicants whose offers were not accepted would have their deposits returned.⁶³

Of the existing three candidates Monsieur Jerarden did not join in the bid again, while the other two candidates prepared stipulation and contract drafts from March 1894 on, sending these to the ministry.⁶⁴ Those applications that had been received were evaluated between August and September 1894.⁶⁵ During this time period it can be seen that both Philip Melhame and Yosef Navon Efendi established direct contact with the palace, trying to win the bid. Yosef Navon Efendi, through his representative Monsier Oribar wrote a letter to Abdülhamid's adjutant, Direyse Pasha, stating that they would like for the bid to remain with them.⁶⁶ The adjutant Direyse Pasha stated that Oribar's memorandum would be presented to the sultan.⁶⁷ Philip Melhame, with the aid of his older brother, the minister of forestry and mining, Selim Melhame Pasha, is known to have established close ties with the members of the State Council.⁶⁸

⁶³ "Yafa havâlisinin iskâsı zmnında üası mutasavver olan imtiyaz için işbu ilannâme tarihinden itibaren kırk beş gün zarfında şerâit-i atıyye ile taleb kabul olunacaktır. Şöyle ki o lâ-teşebbüs-i mezkûre taleb olanlar evvel be evvel Osmanlı Bankası'na muvakkaten bin Osmanlı altını tevdi eylediklerini mübeyyin ve numünesine muvâfık olmak üzere Ticâret ve Nafiâ Nezâret-i Celîlesine mezkûr bankanın bir kuta ilmuhaberini takdim edeceklerdir. Saniyen bu iş için derühde edecekleri şerâiti kapalı bir zarf derûnunda olarak Meclis-i Nafiâ'ya vereceklerdir. Sâlisen teklifâtı şâyân-ı kabul görülen tâlibler, imtiyazın uhdelerine ihâlesi halinde ol bâbdaki fermân-ı âlinin isdârı resmen kendilerine tebliğ olunduğu tarihten itibaren bir mah zarfında mezkûr bin altını mukâvelânesinde muharrer bulunacak kefalet akçası mikdârına ıblâğ etmedikleri ve fermân-ı âlayi almak ve mukâvele ve şartnâmenin teâtisini icra ettirmek üzere nezâret-i müşârinileyte müracaat eylemedikleri taklirde hükümet-i seniyyenin meriyülzîkr bin altını zabt etmeğe salâhiyetdar bulunduğuna dâir numünesi mücibince bir beyannâme imzâ ve îta eyleyeceklerdir. Lahika: Talebler meriyülzîkr kırk beş gün zarfında nezârete müracaatla zîkr olunan teşebbüs hakkındaki mukâvele ve şartnâme lâyihâlarının ve sâir icâb eden evrâkan muhteviyâtına kesb-i vukuf edebileceklerdir. Teklifâtı nezâretçe şâyân-ı kabul görülemeyen talebler mevzû' olan akçelerini istirdâd edebilirler." Saadet, No: 2889, (20 Şaban 1311), p.1.

⁶⁴ PMOA., *BEO.*, 391/29308, 15 Şevval 1311, P. 1-3. For Philip Melhame's new offer, See: PMOA., *İrade Dahiliye* (İ.DH.), 01252/98222, 1 Teşrin-i Sâni 1308 ; PMOA., *ŞD.*, 1201/5, 1 Kânün-i Sâni 1309, p. 26 ; Moreover, a map is included in the offer. See: same document. Also see: Appendix-II; Yosef Navon Efendi's new offer is presented with a note that includes articles that were not included in any other text. According to this; a donation of 1,100 lira would be made to the *Darülaceze* during the formation of the Ottoman Company that was necessary for the concessions, 16% of the profit would be given to the State and in addition to this every year an extra 1,000 would be paid, and for every cubic meter of water and for every cubic meter of water 5 *para* would be given without any reduction. See: PMOA., *ŞD.*, 2963/14, 11 Kânün-i Evvel 1893.

⁶⁵ PMOA., *BEO.*, 470/35181, 30 July 1310 and 23 August 1310, p. 1-2.

⁶⁶ PMOA., *Yıldız Perakende Evrakı Tahrîrât-ı Echebiyye ve Mabeyn Mütercimliği* (Y.PRK.TKM.), 32/12, 16 July 1894, p. 1.

⁶⁷ Same document, p. 2.

⁶⁸ Between February 1893 and August 1908 Selim Melhame Pasha acted as minister of Forestry and Mines. See: Sinan Kunalalp, *Son Dönem Osmanlı Erkan ve Ricalı (1839-1922)*, Isis Press, İstanbul 1999, p. 9

The struggle to win this bid between Yosef Navon Efendi and Philip Melhame ended with the awarding of the concessions to Philip Efendi. A forty-five day application process began after Yosef Navon Efendi had announced his offer and as the documents were late in being submitted this offer was rejected.⁶⁹ Philip Melhame had to pay 16% of the profit to the Ministry of Commerce and Public Works, and had to invest 1,000 Ottoman gold coins to the City Council Department, as well as signing the stipulation agreement that had been determined by the Council of State. Thus Philip Melhame was granted the water concessions for the Al-Auja River and the Musaddara Stream for a period of 35 years.⁷⁰ Yosef Navon Efendi's security deposit of 1,000 Ottoman gold coins was returned to him upon his request.⁷¹

Conclusion

In the principle need of using the rivers and streams in addition to the underground water sources for agricultural production on the Jaffa Valley, the development of garden agriculture and in particular citrus production is of prime importance. Indeed, garden agriculture which generates a substantially higher income compared with dry farming and stockbreeding is also suitable in production intended for export. In particular the migrations of Jews which occurred in the region led to new spaces being opened for agriculture and modernization initiatives in agricultural production. In these terms, it would be correct to say that the Jews prevailed in the campaign between the Arab producers in Palestine and the Jewish investors. Indeed, the Jewish entrepreneurs, who aimed to secure high profits from production, were the group which acquired the largest profits from the expansion of irrigated farming in the region.

In contrast with the agricultural and trade activities, the controversy which occurred regarding the project to irrigate the Jaffa Valley using water from the Al-Auja River and the Musaddara Creek, a source of the river, and during the process of obtaining the permit for this project indicates that the Arabs were extremely influential in bureaucracy during the period of Abdülhamid II. In these terms, it would be correct to say that the party closer to the palace emerged triumphant in the dispute between the Melhame family and the Navons, a deep rooted family of the Jaffa-Jerusalem region. In regards to the irrigation project, garden agriculture increased

; For the Melhame's influence in administrative areas, see: Hanssen, op.cit., pp.99-100 ; Philip Melhame's close relationship with the Şürâ-yı Devlet would continue until 7 September 1899 when he became a member of the Şürâ-yı Devlet himself. Bkz. PMOA., *Dâhiliye Nezâreti Mektûbî Kalemi Evrakı (DH.MKT)*, 2244/50, 26 August 1315.

⁶⁹ PMOA., *BEO*, 449/33633, 21 Muharrem 1312, p. 1 ; PMOA., *BEO*, 560/41963, 25 Receb 1312 ve 29 Receb 1312 , p. 1-2.

⁷⁰ Same document, P. 1. PMOA., *MK*, 90/76, 22 Kânûn-i Evvel 1312, PMOA., *BEO*, 1186/88910, 1 August 1314, p. 1.

⁷¹ PMOA., *MK*, 90/76, 22 Kânûn-i Evvel 1312, PMOA., *BEO*, 1186/88910, 1 August 1314, p. 1.

fourfold in Jaffa during the period 1894-1914, and the volume of exports multiplied by eight.

Although the Arabs were the ones who materialized the irrigation project, they failed to turn the production into a profitable business as they conducted garden agriculture in limited spaces using only underground water sources, and avoided converting to the technology of commercial agriculture. Whereas contrary to the Arabs, the Jewish immigrants took advantage of irrigated farming and began urban farming on fertile soil not irrigated by underground water sources, and also obtained high production rates by using modern agriculture techniques. Due to this, the difference in the income rates acquired from agriculture by the Jewish farmers and that of the Arab farmers ranged between 4 and 4.5 times more.

The high profits acquired from garden farming as a result of the materialization of the project and the expansion of irrigated farming, made the Jews economically stronger, not the Arabs. In fact, after the Ottoman sovereignty ended in the region, for many years during both the British mandate period and the period after the establishment of the Israeli State, the export share of the garden agriculture produce was certainly nothing to be underestimated.

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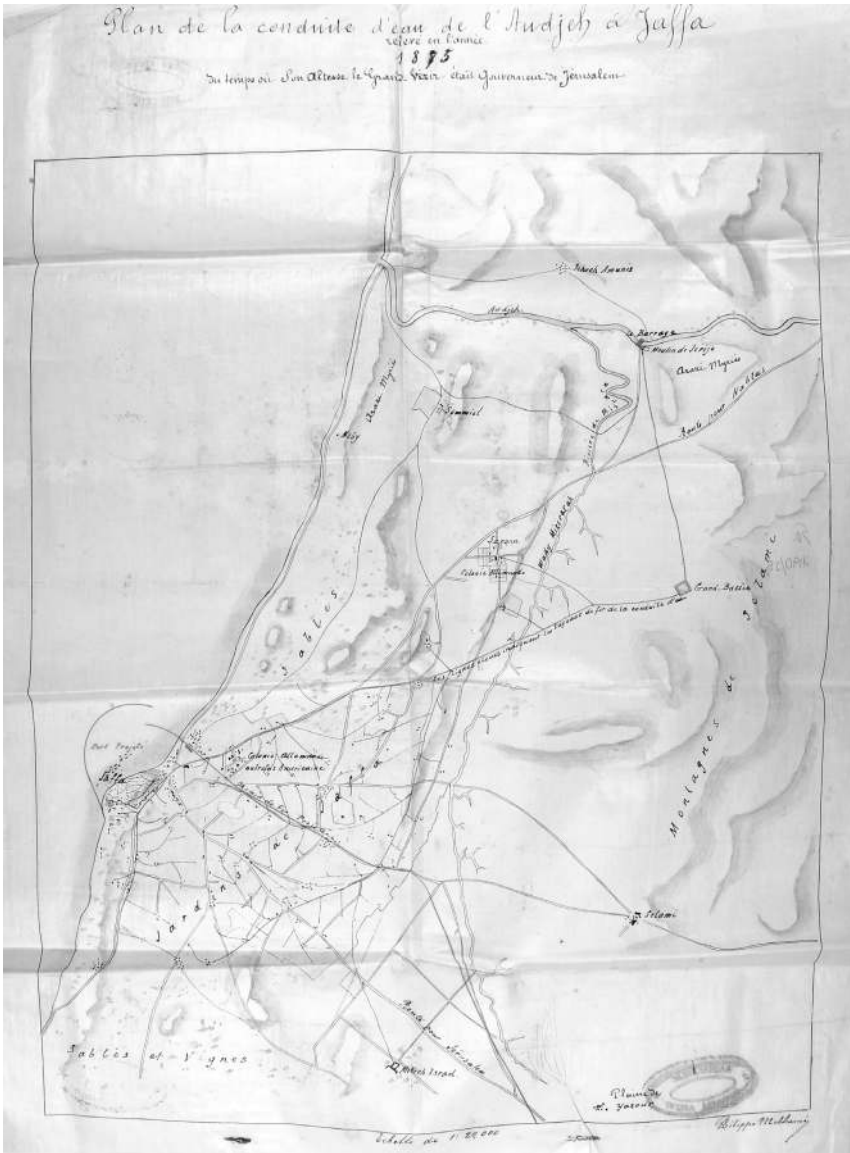
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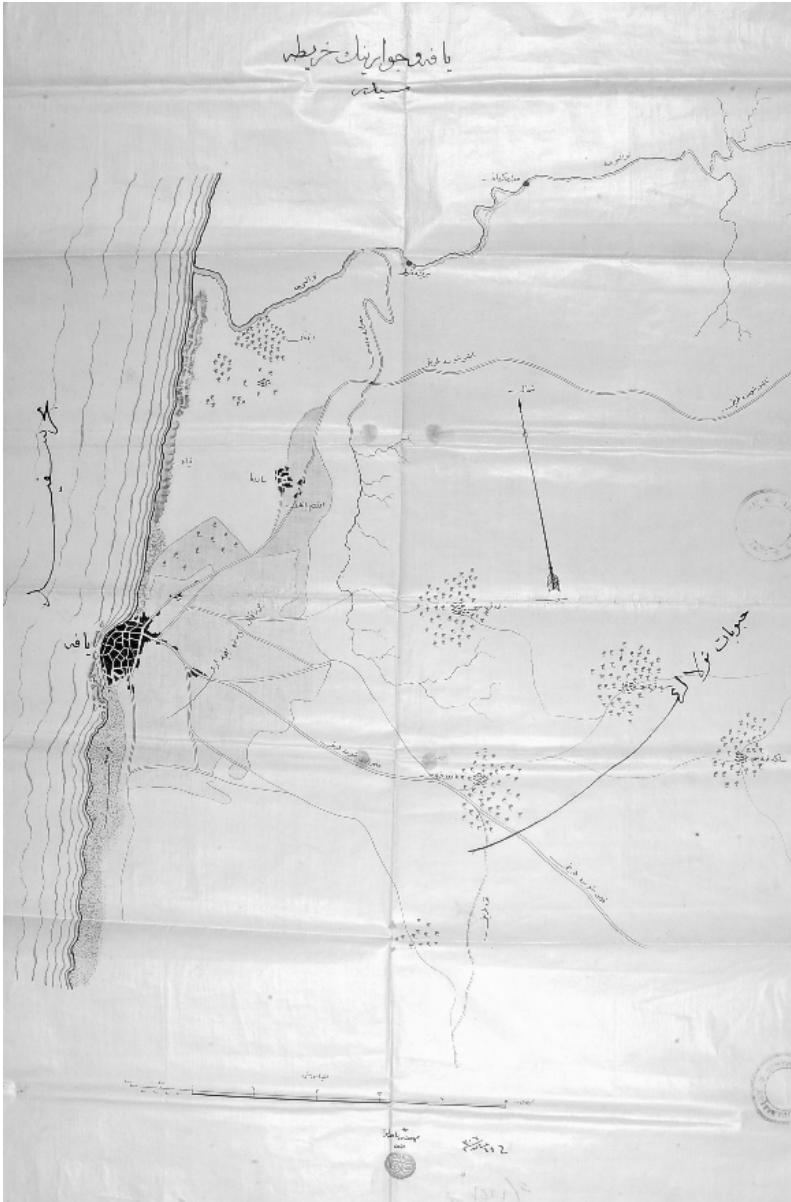
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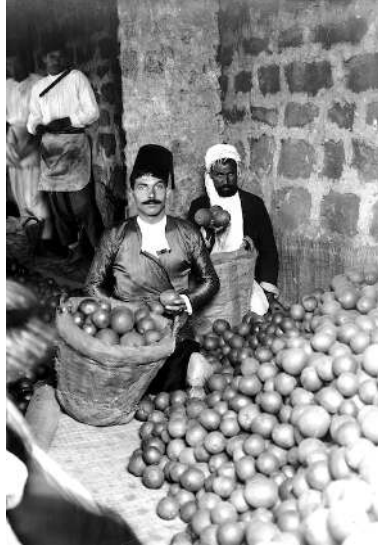
APPENDICES



Appendix-I: The First Plan For Irrigation Project Which Was Prepared By Philip Melhame (Prime Ministerial Ottoman Archive, ŞD, 1190/38, 17 Teşnî-i Sâni 1306)



Appendix II: The Second Plan For Irrigation Project Which Was Prepared By Philip Melhame (Prime Ministerial Ottoman Archive, *şD.*, 1201/5, 1 Kānūn-i Sāni 1309).



Appendix III: Workers Grading Jaffa Orange (Library of Congress Archive, Matson Photograph Collection, 1900).



Appendix IV: Young Workers Packing Jaffa Oranges (Library of Congress Archive, Matson Photograph Collection, 1898).



Appendix V: Orange Gardens In Jaffa (Library of Congress Archive, Matson Photograph Collection, 1898).



Appendix VI: Air Views of Al-Auja River (Library of Congress Archive, Matson Photograph Collection, 1932).