Jewish Genealogical Research and Historical-Geography of the Land of Israel:

Lessons from the Study of the Sephardi Entrepreneurial Elite

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INTRODUCTION

Our paper presents an example of **Jewish Genealogy as a legitimate emerging field in Jewish Studies**

It strengthens Dr. Neville Lamdan’s presented assessment of the status of modern scholarly Jewish genealogy and its potential as a sub-branch of Jewish Studies.

It also complements the work and methodologies presented here by **Prof. Aaron Demsky** on the *Abbaye’s Family Origins* (a clarification of rabbinic sources, using genealogical methods to synthesize biography, historical geography and the communal recollection of genetic disorders), and **Prof. H.D. Wagner, Zdunska Wola (Poland)** (presenting a new tool for merging family records from discrete sources and partially overlapping databases).
On-going studies and publications by Glass and Kark present a unique angle and fit into Jewish Genealogy.

While historical-geographical research in Israel focused more on spatial processed (Jewish settlement, urbanization, etc.) it also dealt with institutions (e.g. Jewish National Fund, Jewish Agency for Palestine), collectives, groups and a few key individuals as agents of change but did not choose to use the family biography genre.

**Our main research objective:** In-depth investigation of the smaller unit of the extended family, focusing among other topics on its interrelationship with and long-term impact on place, space, and landscape.

**Results:** Inter-disciplinary studies of leading Sephardi families, combining genealogy with historical-geographical research.
Research by Kark & Glass on Sephardi Entrepreneurial Families

Studies of Sephardi entrepreneurial families (Amzalak, Valero, Navon, Chelouche, Moyal) in late Ottoman and British Mandate Palestine can serve as a fruitful mode to merge genealogical aspects into historical-geographical research.
Conceptual Model for the Study of Sephardi Entrepreneurial Families and their Contributions to the Development of the Landscape of Eretz Israel.
Joseph Navon Bey (1852-1934)

Father: Eliyahu Navon (1820-1896)
- rabbi & community leader
- administrator of philanthropic institutions
- connections with Ottoman government

Uncle: Haim Amzalak (1828-1916)
- very wealthy family
- merchant with local & international relations
- British vice-consul at Jaffa
- Jewish community leader

Brother-in-law: Israel-Dov Frumkin (1845-1916)
- editor of the "Havatzelet" newspaper
- against the halukka system (dependence of the Jewish community on donations from abroad)

Business Partner: Johannes Frutiger (1835-1899)
- Banker with large-scale capital
- international and inter-communal connections

Historical Geography & Landscape Change
Commercial Neighbourhoods in the 1880s
Development of Jaffa-Jerusalem Railroad

- Family network important for understanding process of receiving railroad concession
- 1885 beginning of planning with financial support from Frutiger
- Hope for support of Ottoman Minister Kamal Pasha through Musa Pasha Al-Hussaini
- Support of British & other consuls through Haim Amzalak and family connections to Jewish leadership in Constantinople
- Concession granted 28 October 1888 for 71 years, Jaffa-Jerusalem & to Nablus & Gaza
- Opening 26 September 1892 - 87 km, 7 stations, significantly reducing travel time & facilitated movement of goods
Jacob Valero migrated to Jerusalem from Turkey

Moneychanger in the market & elevated to conduit from transfer of funds from Europe (PAKUAM, Rothschilds, Franz Josef I)

Haim Aharon took over direction of the bank following deaths of father & brother

Attempted to include his sons in the bank with the hope of being like the Rothschilds

Investment in land - Jerusalem, Jaffa, Hebron, Wadi Hawareth, & other areas.

Limited development - neighborhoods or commercial properties not initiated
Valero Properties in Jerusalem and Areas of Development

Economic History & Entrepreneurial Activity

Jaffa & King George V

Mahane Yehuda

Damascus Gate
Development of King George V Street & Jaffa Road intersection during the British rule

1936
- One & two-storey buildings
- Stores & 2nd floor apartments
- Key-money rental

1923-24
- Paving of King George V & beginning of development of new Central Business District
- Additional properties on Rabbi Akiva, King George, & Bezalel Streets

Economic History & Entrepreneurial Activity

Yaakov Valero house
Gabriel Valero house & clinic
H.A. Valero house
Economic History & Entrepreneurial Activity

Preliminary Mapping of the Chelouche Family’s Economic Networks

1. connection at the level of the economy and influence
2. countries:
   - Cyprus
   - Bulgaria
   - Romania
   - Egypt (with Lebanon)

3. connections and partnerships
   - Business
     - Samuel Montagu Bank
     - Bank & Lario
     - Palestine - Anglo Bank

4. Chelouche family
   - Hashem family
   - Mowal family
   - Lario family

5. local Muslim and Christian entrepreneurs

6. land acquisition
7. building materials
8. building products
9. agricultural products
10. small industries

7. areas of business activity

8. people from the Jewish settlement leadership
9. in the north of the Negev

10. Israel

11. Zionist organizations and semi-Zionist organizations

12. connections with bodies and people with ties to activity, mainly in the fields of : Zionism

13. land registration, construction and connection with organizations in the areas of : Zionism

14. mediation, land and construction of infrastructure

15. financial connections

16. development of mutual trade agreements - Germany

17. training in technologies

18. news and recruitment of professionals

19. trade and industry in the fields of: agriculture, construction (and small industries)

20. connections with non-Jews, mainly in the fields of: agricultural trade, small industries and training
Avraham Haim Chelouche (1867-1925)
- Traded in agricultural produce (watermelons) with Negev Bedouins
- Partner with brother Yosef Eliyahu in real estate purchases and “Frères Chelouche”

Yosef Eliyahu Chelouche (1870-1934)
- Building supplies “Frères Chelouche” and contractor in Jaffa & Tel Aviv (Gymansia Herzlia, Alliance Israélite Universelle, Finegold house)
- Commercial connections with local Muslim and Christian entrepreneurs in agricultural produce and industrial products (glue, tiles and silicate bricks)
- Economic connections with Egypt and Beirut
- Business partnerships with other Sephardi entrepreneurs (Valero, Moyal, Amzalak) in real estate, land purchases, and infrastructure development
- Connections with Zionist institutions in land transactions and building (Arthur Ruppin, Yaakov Thon, Menachem Sheinkin)
- Purchase land in Jaffa, Tel Aviv, Jezreel Valley, Safed
- Founded Commerce and Industry Bank and Kupat Am Bank

Yaakov Chelouche (1880-1944)
- Clerk and later manager with Anglo-Palestine Company
- Extended credit to Jewish farmers during World War I

Economic History & Entrepreneurial Activity

Chelouche Family – Third Generation Economic Activities (Late Ottoman & British Mandate periods)
Movement of Valero Family from Spain to Jerusalem

The Valero family today resides in Israel (Jerusalem, Tel Aviv area & other locations) & abroad (United States, Great Britain, France, Argentina).
Genealogy & Family Networks

Valero Family and patterns of intermarriage

Yaakov (1813-1874)
= Esther Aziza (? - 1880)

Joseph Moshe (1836-1879)
= Mina

Haim Aaron (1847-1923)
= Simha Papu (1850-1908)
= Miriam (niece)

Luna = Yaakov Saporta
Miriam (1871-1937)
= ? Bornstein

Esther (1869-?)
= ? Bornstein

Joseph Moshe (1884-1945)
= Leah Batia Sheikovich

Haim Aaron (1886-1951)
= Irma
= Victoria Vida Hahamshvili

Nissim (1888-1949)
= Esther Kokia

David (1888-1889)

Abraham (1906-1906)

Clara (1907-1949)
= David Sasson

Son

Zion

Moshe

Aaron

Miriam

Gabriel (1886-1951)
= Leah Batia Sheikovich

Malka (1882-1901)
= Menuha Goldberg

Jacob (1876-1928)

Malka (1884-1945)
= Leah Batia Sheikovich

Gabriel (1886-1951)
= Irma
= Victoria Vida Hahamshvili

Haim Aaron (1847-1923)
= Simha Papu (1850-1908)
= Miriam (niece)

Ethnicity of spouses
Sephardi
Ashkenazi
Christian

Bornstein

Roli

Yechiel

Haim Aaron

Simcha
Haim Aharon Valero b. 1847
Eliezer Ben Yehuda b. 1858

Dr. Abraham Abu Shdid

Moshe Valero b. 1884

Nissim Valero b. 1888

Leah Abu Shdid

Itamar Ben-Avi b. 1882

Romance in Jerusalem
Search for Valero on Ellis Island passenger lists (www.ellisisland.org)
Result = 117 records of which 6 appear to refer to Jews. All of 6 relate to a Moise Valero of Rio de Janeiro.

First Name: **Moise**
Last Name: **Valero**
Ethnicity: **Turkey, Hebrew**
Last Place of Residence: **Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, So. Am.**
Date of Arrival: **Apr 07, 1916**
Age at Arrival: **44y**
Gender: **M**
Marital Status: **M**
Ship of Travel: **Vauban**
Port of Departure: **Barbados, British West Indies**
Manifest Line Number: **0001**

**Tools for Genealogical Research**

- Accessibility to genealogical resources has widen our horizons with regard to the Valero family following the publication of the books
- Availability of archival catalogues (and sometimes documents) on-line
- Availability of digitalized and searchable out of copyright books and newspapers

**Search results for Valero = 2**

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Yosef Eliyahu Chelouche (1870-1934)
- Married Farha Simha Moyal, daughter of Abraham
- Friendly relations with Ottoman rulers and facilitated the resolution of problems between the Jewish community and the government
- Member of Jaffa community committee, Jaffa municipal council
- Member of Agudat Ha-Magen, Bnai Brith, and Ahuzat Bayit
- Connections with Valero, Navon, Amzalak, and Moyal families

Yaakov Chelouche (1880-1944)
- Founder of Ahuzat Bayit
- Mediator and assisted in settling disputes between Jewish settlers and their Arab neighbours
- Freemason
Family Life of Jerusalem’s Sephardi Elite

Following the life cycle
- Courting, engagement & marriage
- Childbirth, childrearing
- Childhood & education
- Old Age

Aspects of lifestyle
- Domestic servants
- Fashion & furniture
- Leisure & cultural activities
- Travel – leisure, medical, & business
- Living spaces

Brit Milah dress used by the Valero family for generations
Cultural Studies & Sephardi Elite

Education

**Secondary education in Jerusalem** – Alliance Israélite Universelle, Hebrew Gymnasium, Jerusalem’s Girl College, Terra Sancta College

**Higher education outside Palestine** – University of Lausanne, American University of Beirut, Seminaire Israélite (Paris), Cambridge University, University of Birmingham, Oxford University

University of Lausanne

Terra Sancta College, Jerusalem

American University of Beirut
Cultural Studies & Sephardi Elite
Travel for leisure, medical, & business

Raya Valero, an early women driver in Palestine, 1938

Moshe & Batia Valero in front of the pyramids, circa. 1911

Picnic outside of Jerusalem in the village of Kubeibah
Travel Abroad by Members of the Valero Family 1890s-1948
U.S. Department of State, Jerusalem, Jaffa, and Haifa Consular Post Records (UD #448 Jaffa), **Compiled by the Jewish Genealogy Society of Greater Washington**

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“Formative personal influences, however, had also already shaped his mind and conditioned a certain solitariness in his character. His parents — the flamboyant, tempestuous father [David], given to chasing an unruly Arab servant noisily around the house with a whip, and the ‘tactful’, innately conservative French mother — had proved an ill-assorted couple and, during 1915, Claire Moyal had abandoned her unhappy marriage and her small son to move to Egypt with the Greek Dr. Apostoli whom she would later marry. Left to be reared largely by Arab servants, Joe would carry the marks of a rejected child throughout his life.”

Concluding Remarks

Limited number of studies have fully utilized genealogical methodologies and studies and life histories of families to comprehend the true complexity of factors that contributed to decision-making processes in landscape chance.

Genealogical research delves further into grasping the complexity of processes by mapping intra-familial and extra-familial relationships. This direction of research can focus on social class, culture, gender, age, religion, and ethnic groupings.
Concluding Remarks

Facilitates understanding of the continuity in the “building” of small family “empires” and their status in many spheres of the public and private life over time.

The study of entrepreneurial families in the Middle East in the modern era is a fruitful direction for the incorporation of genealogical research into historical-geographical research.

We are applying this to our on-going study of the two entrepreneurial families in Jaffa – Chelouche and Moyal - thus continuing to underscore the role of prominent Sephardi and Mizrahi families.