Introduction

Travels to the "Holy Land:"
Perceptions, Representations and Narratives

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Introduction

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by *Serena Di Nepi, Arturo Marzano*

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This monographic issue, composed of 10 essays, investigates the relationship between travel and the Holy Land from the 19th century to the beginning of the 21th century. By focusing on travel as its main research topic, this issue intends to analyze the way in which the Holy Land was perceived, represented and narrated during these centuries.

As Luca Clerici states in the Introduction to his *Scrittori italiani di viaggio* [Italian Travel Writers], it is important to "distinguish between odeporic writings, i.e. reports written by authors that describe travel they in fact undertook , and those works in which travel is the author's invention." As two comparable examples of this, Clerici presents Marco Polo's *Il Milione* on the one hand, and Dante' *La Divina Commedia*, on the other. Even though these "two 'families' [are] (…) identifiable" and their contents are clearly different, the mutual relationship and the reciprocal influence one 'family' has on the other sometimes makes it difficult to distinguish them.[1] What impact does an 'imagined land' have on the perception and representation of the 'real land' that travelers actually visit?

This question is particularly important in regard to the Holy Land, certainly the most 'imagined,' and probably the most visited land. For this reason, this monographic issue includes articles that deal with perceptions, representations and narrations provided both by travelers to the Holy Land and by subjects (individuals, as well as groups, organizations and institutions) who envisioned it without ever having traveled there. By presenting essays that discuss these two different 'families,' this issue intends to identify reciprocal and intertwined influences between narratives of the imagined Holy Land and travelers' accounts, thus exploring to what extent the construction of the Holy Land has been carried out according to a combination of travelers' reports and imagined narratives.

For the purpose of analyzing perceptions, representations and narratives of the Holy Land, the category of travel is particularly useful, since travel was – and in

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[1] Luca Clerici, *Introduzione*, in *Scrittori italiani di viaggio*, ed. Id., vol. 1 (Milano: Arnoldo Mondadori, 2008), ix.

some ways still is – a preferential mode of circulation, transmission and dissemination of ideas, perceptions and narratives. The essays in this volume examine how individuals and groups of travelers introduced perceptions, representations and narratives of the Holy Land both to their own and to other contexts, thus producing a complex set of exchange and reverberations regarding the Holy Land.

Travels, Travel Literature and Related Historiography

Since ancient times travel has been a common phenomenon, and travel literature has existed: Herodotus and Homerus are obvious examples of authors who belong to the two 'families' we referred to previously. With the modern age, thanks to advancements in transportation, travel became increasingly frequent and the number of travelers grew substantially, as the well-known phenomenon of the *Grand Tour* in the 18th century easily demonstrates.[2]

At the beginning of the 19th century, a revolution in travel took place. The *Grand Tour* as a sort of aristocratic institution was brought to an end, and traveling became a more common endeavor: new transportation-- in particular the steamboat-- the publishing of Baedeker guides, and the birth of the tourist agency Thomas Cook & Son, which organized group trips, were unequivocal signs of that transformation. Finally, during the 20th century, mass tourism arose. Up until the 18th century, travelers were either young aristocrats, who traveled for educational purposes, or people who moved for professional reasons: diplomats and statesmen; scientists and literary men; painters, architects, and people in the field of music (musicians, music librettists, singers); even swashbucklers (honorable and not: spies, gamblers, swindlers, alleged scientists). With the 19th century, travelers' typology changed as their numbers swelled.

To begin with, more people started traveling for professional reasons: the first category that expanded was that of explorers, particularly between the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. More scientists traveled, because of the boom in natural sciences; the number of archeologists also increased and more religious people traveled due to the boost of missions all over the world. Finally, with the growing role of the press, new occupations were created: reporters and special correspondents. At the same time, a new form of travel began, promoted by the expansionist and colonial enterprises of states: a growing wave of military personnel and people involved in economic activities (in either agriculture, trade or banking) relocated from the colonial power to its colonized countries, in some cases accompanied by their families.

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[2] Jeremy Black, *The British Abroad, The Grand Tour in the Eighteenth Century* (London: St. Martin's Press, 1992).

Next, there was also a rise in the number of those who did not travel for work, but for pleasure, especially in the 20th century, when tourism became an increasingly popular (if not the most common) reason to travel. In general, the expansion of typologies and number of travelers was part of the trend that the above-mentioned Luca Clerici refers to as the "democratization of travel."[3]

This transformation affected the phenomenon of travel to the Holy Land as well, which experienced a surge in the 19th century, following a few centuries of a reduced number of travelers. Despite the war against the Ottoman Empire, between the 15th and the 18th centuries there remained a continuous flow of people moving across the Mediterranean to/from the Ottoman-controlled Holy Land: pilgrims and slaves, soldiers and merchants, diplomats and convicts, missionaries and intellectuals all came and went, and in turn engendered a wide circulation of stories concerning the region. Thus, in the Early Modern period members of lower social classes travelled to and from the Holy Land and can easily be added to the typology of 'illustrious' travelers. Although the complexity and uncertainty of available sources does not allow for validating definitive numbers, following Fernand Braudel, various scholars have investigated the porosity of Mediterranean borders and have confirmed the constant movement of people along the Mediterranean routes during those centuries.[4] The opportunity to travel to the Holy Land was offered to a wide range of travelers: they could be slaves captured along the coasts and/or imprisoned in battle, rowers, merchants belonging to various social classes, as well as missionaries. Among them, many were able to spread their own narrative concerning the Holy Land.

Although travel to the Holy Land never stopped (its religious sites were amongst the most important stations in the framework of what was termed the *Oriental Grand Tour*),[5] in the 19th century visiting the Holy Land became more popular. As some of the articles of this monographic issue well explain, the reasons for this heightened interest were numerous: the invention of the steamship, which was especially relevant for American travelers; the religious revival of the Holy Land (the reconstitution of the Latin Patriarchate,[6] the

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[3] Luca Clerici, *Introduzione*, in *Scrittori italiani di viaggio*, ed. Id, vol. 2 (Milano: Arnoldo Mondadori, 2008), xxvi.

[4] Of course, see Fernand Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1949; 2nd Rev. Ed. 1966). As to recent publications, see Bartolomé Bennassar, Lucile Bennassar, *Les chrétiens d'Allah: l'histoire extraordinaire des renégats - 16-17 siècles*, (Paris: Perrin, 2001); Mercedes García-Arenal, Gerard Wiegers, *A Man of Three Worlds: Samuel Pallache, A Moroccan Jew in Catholic and Protestant Europe* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003); Robert Davis, *Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters: White Slavery in the Mediterranean, the Barbary Coast and Italy, 1500-1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Natalie Zemon Davis, *Trickster Traves. A Sixteenth Century Muslim Between Two Worlds* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006); *Les commerce des captifs: les intermédiaires dans l'échange et le rachat des prisonniers en Méditerrané (XVe-XVIIIe siècle)*, ed. Wolfgang Kaiser (Roma: École Française de Rome, 2008).

[5] See Attilio Brilli, *Il viaggio in Oriente* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2009), 41-54.

[6] See the essay of Paolo Maggiolini published in this issue, pp. 19-47.

Russian Orthodoxy presence);[7] the increased political interest of the European Powers; improved security due to Mohammed Ali's presence, and the Ottoman Empire's reforms.[8] The "democratization of travel" we referred to previously also occurred vis-à-vis travels to the Holy Land: more people traveled for various reasons, including for work, tourism, or, indeed, pilgrimage.[9] It is worth noting that in many cases – and the situation has remained the same until today – it was not possible to distinguish between those who traveled for work, tourists and pilgrims, and the distinction was (and still is) quite blurred.[10]

As a consequence of this major change in travel, a parallel transformation took place in travel literature: both its production and consumption increased. On one hand, the habit of writing travelogues and travel reports progressively grew; increasingly, less educated people began writing and texts of lesser (or no) literary value were published. On the other hand, more people started reading travel literature, both those who used it as a means to culturally prepare for an upcoming trip, and those who had returned and wanted to relate their experience to the one of a more famous traveler.

Of course, this transformation also characterized the production of travel literature concerning the Holy Land. Starting with mid-19th century, a huge number of books were published,[11] and travelogues and travel reports became extremely popular. In fact, this process never stopped and different typologies of travel accounts and reports have continued to appear over the last decades: for example, the popularity of websites and blogs[12] on traveling to the Holy Land[13] is enormous, as are graphic novels dealing with the same theme.[14]

The attention that previous historiography has devoted to the topic of travel has recently increased, especially in the last thirty years: many individual and collective works have been published[15] and conferences and workshops

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[7] See the essay of Simona Merlo published in this issue, pp. 48-67.

[8] See *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman*, ed. Robert Mantran (Paris: Fayard, 1989).

[9] For a definition of "pilgrim," see Stephanie Stidham Rogers, *Inventing the Holy Land: American Protestant Pilgrimage to Palestine, 1865–1941* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2011), 4-7. On the difference between tourism and pilgrimage, see Erik Cohen, "Pilgrimage and Tourism: Convergence and Divergence," *Sacred Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage*, ed. Alan Morinis (Westport Conn.: Greenwood, 1992), 47-61.

[10] Just as an example, see the case of Ida Pfeiffer that the essay of Jennifer Michaels published in this issue (pp. 68-89) deals with.

[11] See the essays of Guy Galazka and Milette Shamir published in this issue, pp. 90-115; 116-137.

[12] In 1993-94, Jeff Greenwald posted reports of his travels around the world on the website of GNN, the Global Network Navigator. Famous websites are http://www.wanderingearl.com, http://www.everywhereist.com, but many others could be taken as examples.

[13] There are, of course, a countless number of blogs concerning tours, travel or pilgrimages to the Holy Land. To get a sense of this, we suggest doing a web search containing the words "blog travel Holy Land."

[14] See the essay of Nina Fischer published in this issue, pp. 201-236.

[15] It would be impossible to present them all. The ones we quote here are a selection of the most representative: *Muslim Travellers: Pilgrimage, Migration, and the Religious Imagination*, eds. Dale F. Eickelman, James Piscatori (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990); *Voyages and*

organized.[16] This monographic issue inserts itself in this path and the 10 essays that compose it draw on the many historiographical works that exist on this topic. At the same time, the larger historiographical framework that informs this issue is closely engaged with recent research concerning Mediterranean society, which stresses the uninterrupted mobility of people, goods, commodities and ideas since the Early Modern era.[17] Travel, travelers and travelogues, both real and imagined, should be considered 'contact zones' that allowed and fostered dialogue beyond religious and political conflicts.

Yet, despite the substantial amount of historiography on travel, and notwithstanding the huge extent of research conducted on the Holy Land - as a physical region, a political concept, a psychological dimension, and a sacred space - the specific issue of travel to the Holy Land has received less attention by scholars than it deserves. And although the question has often been regarded as part of the enormous debate on Orient and Orientalism,[18] not many studies specifically addressing travel to the Holy Land have been published.[19]

This volume intends to contribute to filling this gap, by specifically investigating the way in which actual travel - as well as non-travel to an imagined land - perceived, represented and narrated the Holy Land throughout three centuries. In particular, this issue intends to simultaneously present the way in which different travelers, coming from different geographic, religious,

Visions: towards a Cultural History of Travel, eds. Jàs Elsner, Joan-Pau Rubiés (London: Reaktion Books, 1999); *Mobility and Travel in the Mediterranean from Antiquity to the Middle Ages*, eds. Renate Schlesier, Ulrike Zellmann (Münster: Lit Verlag, 2004).

[16] Just as an example, see *Jews and Journeys. Travel and the Performance of Jewish Identity*, 29 April – 1 May 2012, 18th Annual Gross Colloquium in Judaic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, http://katz.sas.upenn.edu/sites/katz.sas.upenn.edu/files/document-library/2012GrussColloquium.pdf (accessed 15 January 2013)

[17] As the bibliography on this topic is huge, see for essential references: Mercedes García-Arenal, Gerard Wiegers, *A Man of Three Worlds: Samuel Pallache, A Moroccan Jew in Catholic and Protestant Europe* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003); Robert Davis, *Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters: White Slavery in the Mediterranean, the Barbary Coast and Italy. 1500-1800.* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Natalie Zemon Davis, *Trickster Travellers. A Sixteenth Century Muslim Between Two Worlds* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006); *Les commerce des captifs: les intermédiaires dans l'échange et le rachat des prisonniers en Méditerrané (XVe - XVIIIème siècle)*, ed. Wolfgang Kaiser (Roma: École Française de Rome, 2008); Giovanna Fiume, *Schiavitù mediterranee. Corsari, rinnegati e santi di età moderna* (Milano: Bruno Mondadori, 2009); *Les musulmans dans l'histoire de l'Europe*, eds. Jocelyn Dakhlia, Bernard Vincent, 2 Vol., (Paris: Albin Michel, 2011).

[18] Edward Said, *Orientalism*, 1978, (New York: Panthon Books, 1978); Ali Behdad, *Belated Travelers: Orientalism in the Age of Colonial Dissolution* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994). On this, see the essay of Milette Shamir published in this issue.

[19] Among them, we quote only some of the most significant, given that each essay provides a vast bibliography. See Yehoshua Ben-Arieh *The Rediscovery of the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1979); Burke O. Long *Imagining the Holy Land. Maps, Models, and Fantasy Travels* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003); F. Thomas Noonan, *The Road to Jerusalem: Pilgrimage and Travel in the Age of Discovery* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007); *Through the Eyes of the Beholder: The Holy Land, 1517-1713*, eds Judy A. Hayden, Nabil I. Matar (Boston-Leiden: Brill, 2013).

cultural, socio-economic and political backgrounds perceived the Holy Land, depicting, narrating and constructing it, irrespective of their reasons for traveling, whether based on religion (i.e. Jewish, Christian and Muslim pilgrims) profession, or tourism. Our intention was – and we hope we have succeeded - to collect as many diverse viewpoints as possible, thus shedding light on the similarities and differences, continuities and fragmentations concerning the Holy Land that may have occurred during the last three centuries.

This Issue: from the Call for Papers to Publication

In December 2012, a call for papers was launched and distributed through informal and formal channels,[20] in order to reach the widest academic audience in terms of scholars (junior and/or senior), their backgrounds (historians, literary scholars, anthropologists, art historians, sociologists, political scientists), and their access to different sources (both in terms of language and typology). The response to the call was enthusiastic, and we received an extensive amount of diverse proposals. We selected a total of 10, which were chosen with the purpose of including articles that would deal with the widest variety of topics.

Of course, given the breadth of the subject 'Travels to the Holy Land,' we are aware that there are several themes that this monographic issue does not touch on - and this was unavoidable – such as travel carried out by merchants; archaeological expeditions and, in particular, biblical archaeology[21] and 20th-century pilgrimages.[22] Nor are political figures' trips to Israel, such as the Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's famous visit[23] or the more recent visit by the

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[20] Among the various mailing lists, there were those of the Italian Society for the Study of Modern History (Sisem); the Italian Society for the Study of Contemporary History (Sissco); H-net, Humanities and Social Sciences Online; the Italian Society of Middle Eastern Studies (Sesamo); the European Association for Middle Eastern Studies (Eurames); the Middle East Studies Association of North America (Mesa); the Italian Association for the Study of Judaism (Aisg); the European Association for Jewish Studies (Eajs).

[21] On the topic, see Peter Roger Stuart Moorey, *A Century of Biblical Archaeology* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991); Uzi Baram, "Images of the Holy Land: The David Roberts Paintings as Artifacts of 1830s Palestine," *Historical Archaeology* 41/1 (2007): 106-117.

[22] For a sociological analysis of pilgrimages to the Holy Land in recent years, see *Christian Tourism to the Holy Land. Pilgrimage during Security Crisis*, eds. Noga Collins-Kreiner, Nurit Kliot, Yoel Mansfeld, Keren Sagi (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006). On Protestant pilgrims, see Jackie Feldman, "Constructing a Shared Bible Land: Jewish-Israeli Guiding Performances for Protestant Pilgrims," *American Ethnologist* 34/2 (2007): 349-372. On the American Evangelical pilgrimages, see Yaniv Belhassen, Jonathan Ebel, "Tourism, Faith and Politics in the Holy Land: An Ideological Analysis of Evangelical Pilgrimage," *Current Issues in Tourism* 12/4 (2009): 359-378. As to the Italian Catholic pilgrims' experience, see Elena Mazzini, *Narrare un luogo: le testimonianze dei pellegrini italiani in Terra Santa (1950- 1970),* in *Orientalismi Italiani 3*, ed. Gabriele Proglio (Alba: Antares Edizioni, 2013), 59-75.

[23] See Moshe Shemesh, "The Origins of Sadat's Strategic Volte-face (Marking 30 Years Since Sadat's Historic Visit to Israel, November 1977)," *Israel Studies* 13/2 (2008): 28-53.

US President Barack Obama[24] included. Nevertheless, we believe that the 10 contributions to this issue cut across a vast spectrum of varied relevant and in-depth topics.

Before entering specifically into the contents of this issue, three preliminary remarks are necessary.

The first one concerns the meaning of the expression 'Holy Land:' in this issue, it is not considered a religious designation alone, but is used as a neutral term to define the geographical region that was part of the Ottoman Empire, then became a Mandate under the British and is now divided between Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Although problematic – it is obviously connected to a Christian perception and representation of this region - we believe that this term is worth employing for several reasons. First of all, it is a term to define that geographical region that is more impartial than others that are closely connected to specific narratives, such as *Eretz Israel* or Palestine, which in the last century have been coupled with a pro-Israeli or a pro-Palestinian narrative. Secondly, it encompasses the attitude of Judaism, Christianity and Islam to this region, which contains holy sites that have been regarded as pilgrimage destinations by visitors of those faiths for centuries. In fact - as Paolo Maggiolini states in his essay - the Holy Land is not a unique and individual "holy land," but must be considered as a "multitude of holy lands." Third, this expression has already been employed by historiography dealing with the issue of travel towards this region.[25]

As to the sources, within the large range of material used by the authors in this issue, ego-documents (letters or travelogues) are certainly the most central ones.[26] This is not by chance: in fact, the individual experience connected to the Holy Land is one of the main focuses of our monographic issue. Two aspects have to be underlined. One is that published works on the Holy Land (either reports of real/imagined travels, religious accounts - including the Bible - or any narrative concerning the region) mediate the individual relationship to the holy sites. Another is that it is precisely the individual's subjectivity that emerges from their encounter with the Holy Land. The collective imagination that exists within the religious/cultural/political/social group one belongs to can be confirmed, denied or transformed by the traveler's personal experience. Traveling to the Holy Land, however experienced, on one side relies on preconceived beliefs, and on the other contests them, as the individual narrates the visited places from his/her personal point of view. The Holy Land is never

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[24] For example, see Herb Keinon, "The Deeper Significance of Obama's Visit," *The Jerusalem Post*, March 13, 2013.

[25] Apart from the already quoted historiography, see *Encounters with the "Holy Land": Place, Past and Future in American Jewish Culture*, eds. Jeffrey Shandler, Beth S. Wenger (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1998); Elliott Horowitz, " 'Remarkable Rather for its Eloquence than Its Truth'. Modern Travelers Encounter the Holy Land - and Each Other's Accounts Thereof," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 99/4 (2009): 439-464.

[26] *Egodocuments and History: Autobiographical Writing in its Social Context since the Middle Ages*, ed. R. Dekker (Hilverum: Verloren, 2002). For a rich bibliography on this topic, see *Ecrits du for privé*, in http://www.ecritsduforprive.fr/bibliographie.htm (accessed 1 December 2013).

a neutral topic: it is a delicate matter, and for this reason, it challenges the personal sensitivity (and therefore, the individuality) of those people who travel to and write on it, whoever they are: pilgrims, missionaries, merchants, scholars, archeologists, tourists or political activists.

Finally, as to the chronological framework: though aware of the existence of previous narratives regarding the Holy Land,[27] for example, the famous itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela in the 12th century,[28] or the travels that were embarked upon, as mentioned, despite the war between Christian Europe and the Ottoman Empire, we have chosen to begin our analysis with the 19th century, and its boost in travels to the Holy Land.

The one exception is the first essay, written by Yaron Ben-Naeh, which focuses on Evliya Çelebi's travels to Ottoman Palestine in the second half of the 17th century. We decided to include it for two main reasons. First of all, Çelebi was one of the few Muslims who wrote a travelogue, compared to the many Christian and Jewish travelers who wrote travelogues of their experience traveling to the Holy Land. Thus, Çelebi provides the readers with an alternate map of holy places to those presented by Christians and Jews, thus confirming the existence of a 'multitude of holy lands' dependent on the traveler's faith. Secondly, by stressing a longer chronological perspective, it is possible to identify continuity and discontinuity in the narratives that developed over the centuries. For instance, on one hand, Çelebi describes a country that "is blessed with water," thus presenting a different account than those of 19th century European and American travelers; on the other, he refers to the Bedouin "poor mud shacks," in line with what European and American travelers would write two centuries later.[29]

Five articles focus on the 19th century: two of them deal with Christian pilgrims (Paolo Maggiolini and Simona Merlo); one concentrates on a woman traveler, Austrian-born Ida Pfeiffer (Jennifer Michaels); and two of them engage with European and American travelers (Guy Galazka and Milette Shamir). All these essays share one representation of the Holy land, which is simultaneously perceived as the exotic 'Orient,' and familiar, because of its biblical past.

More specifically, Paolo Maggiolini concentrates on the travels of Catholic and Protestant pilgrims, within the framework of the 19th-century revival of pilgrimage to the Holy Land. As he states, while the Protestants perceived the Holy Land as a sort of "Fifth Gospel," due to their association of the "Land" with the "Book," Catholics mainly concentrated on the holy sites, focusing on the historical connections between them, the Bible, and the Catholic Church's

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[27] Elchanan Reiner, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage to Eretz Yisrael, 1099-1517* [Hebrew], PhD dissertation, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1988.

[28] Zur Shalev, "Benjamin of Tudela, Spanish Explorer," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 25/1 (2010): 17-33; Joseph Shatzmiller, "Jews, Pilgrimage, and the Christian Cult of Saints: Benjamin of Tudela and His Contemporaries," in *After Rome's Fall: Narrators and Sources of Early Medieval History,* eds. Walter A. Goffart, Alexander C. Murray (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 337–347.

[29] See what Attilio Brilli refers to as "the Bedouin myth:" Brilli, *Il Viaggio in Oriente*, 150-153.

presence in the Holy Land. Simona Merlo deals with Russian travelers (whether State agents, Church clergy or simply pilgrims) and underlines their traveling to the Holy Land as part of a larger phenomenon, which included the widespread perception of Moscow as the 'new Jerusalem' and the strict religious, cultural and political relations that existed between the Holy Land and Holy Russia; all of which can be defined as the 'Golden Age' in the history of the Russian Orthodox presence in Jerusalem.

Jennifer Michaels focuses on the travelogue of middle-aged Austrian Ida Pfeiffer, who visited the Holy Land in 1842. By following the experience of two other famous women who had traveled to the *Levant* (Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and Mary Eliza Rogers, who had accompanied respectively their husband and brother), Pfeiffer demonstrates her desire to not be confined to the domestic sphere. Yet, she must present herself as a religious woman eager to visit the Holy Land in order to be allowed by her family to travel alone. Her trip is a combination of the pilgrimage she is theoretically making and the journey she is actually on, during which she wants to describe what she witnesses in an 'authentic' way. The Holy Land Pfeiffer describes in her travelogue is a fusion of the Holy Land she has imagined through the Bible and previous accounts she read, and the land that she is actually visiting and experiencing directly.

Finally, the essays of Milette Shamir and Guy Galazka intertwine to good effect, as both of them intend to challenge Edward Said's idea of an Orientalist approach characterizing the entire Western perception of the East.[30] Guy Galazka concentrates specifically on the way Western travelers depicted the Palestinian urban landscape and analyzes several travelogues and paintings by European and American travelers. Despite not totally rejecting Said's thesis, i.e. that Western representations of the East were based on the "impulse not simply to describe, but also to dominate", Galazka wants to demonstrate that "no single and homogenous narrative" exists concerning the Holy Land, but a wide variety of "contradictory, shifting, evolving and sometimes overlapping discourses." At the same time, he stresses the interlaced relationship between "imagination and reality" as a sort of "recognition" of the Holy Land, as it had been imagined through the Bible, rather than a "discovery" of its reality. Milette Shamir analyzes the books of two famous American writers, Mark Twain's *The Innocents Abroad* and William C. Prime's *Tent Life in the Holy Land*, both of which were published after their authors returned from the Holy Land. By examining these two books, Shamir strives to transcend several binaries often used when dealing with Western narratives of the Holy Land: "religious/secular," "fantasy/authenticity," "revelation/disappointment," "sentimentalism/realism," and "pilgrim/tourist," thus opening the door to an encounter of a "third kind."

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[30] On travelers who had been critical of British representations of the East, see Geoffrey P. Nash, *From Empire to Orient. Travellers to the Middle East 1830–1926* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2005).

Two essays discuss Jewish travelers to Palestine in the 19th and 20th centuries. Ilia Rodov focuses on the way the Holy Land was perceived and depicted in the paintings of Romanian Moldavia's synagogues from the mid-19th to the mid-20th century: synagogue artists painted a distant, unseen and imagined land by referring to close, familiar and concretely experienced landscapes. Rodov casts light on an interesting shift: towards the end of the 19th century, when Zionism began conquering the hearts and minds of a minority of Romanian Jews (some of them took an active part in establishing new settlements in the Galilee), images of secular buildings and of the Jewish colonization enterprise were included in the Botoşani synagogue wall and ceiling paintings, thus confirming the reception of Zionist propaganda in Romania synagogues.

Arturo Marzano focuses on Jewish travelers to British Palestine and analyzes their travelogues, which were published in the 1920s and 1930s. On one hand, these travelogues conveyed images of the Holy Land that were commonly used by Western travelers in the 19th and 20th centuries. On the other, they matched the way in which Zionism presented Palestine by employing its images and rhetoric; in this way, these travelogues reinforced the Zionist agenda since their authors added their personal and direct experience of *Eretz Israel*, thus making the Zionist narrative more effective.

Finally, two essays concentrate on the 21st century, and therefore use different sources than previous essays. By focusing on Jerusalem, considered a metonym of the Holy Land, Dana Hercbergs and Chaim Noy intend to highlight a turning point in Jerusalem's history of iconic representation, For decades Jerusalem was presented via the Muslim structure of the Dome of the Rock and the adjacent Jewish holy site of the Western Wall, but in recent decades it has been presented as an exclusively Jewish Israeli city, with the *Tower of David* serving as its new icon. Hercsberg and Noy perform a semiotic analysis of two types of sources: one are the recent architectural sites and structures that make reference to the Tower of David or to the biblical King David; and the other are municipal street posters, high-profile real-estate advertisements, and other spatial and visual markers.

In contrast, Nina Fischer analyzes graphic novels as contemporary travelogues, since they present Israel and Palestine as perceived by visitors traveling from abroad. In particular, Fischer investigates Joe Sacco's *Palestine* (1993–6) and *Footnotes in Gaza* (2009); Sarah Glidden's *How to Understand Israel in 60 Days or Less* (2010); and Guy Delisle's *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City* (2012). Despite the authors' diverse backgrounds and different reasons for being in Israel/Palestine, what emerges from these travelogues is the complexity of the Holy Land and the difficulty of experiencing it without being swayed by what has been previously imagined. And while it is no longer the Bible that influences the traveler – but rather, in these cases at least, the production surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict - this article once again confirms the interlinked relationship between the 'real' and the 'imagined' Holy Land.

We would like to thank the entire Board of *Quest* for the support they have given us from the moment we proposed the idea of editing this issue, and in particular to Laura Brazzo, for her patience and competence in revising all the essays with us. We want to acknowledge our gratitude to all the anonymous referees who have enriched each paper with their insightful and appropriate remarks and suggestions. Finally, we are grateful to Marina Caffiero, Ester Capuzzo and Alberto Cavaglion for revising previous versions of the Introduction.

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"Thousands great saints:" Evliya Çelebi in Ottoman Palestine

by *Yaron Ben-Naeh*

Abstract

Evliya's description of his journey in 17th century Ottoman Palestine is a good example of the importance of travelogue, especially as it gives another viewpoint, that of a Muslim scholar. Through his eyes, it is possible to see the country, hear local traditions and get a better understanding of realities in that time and place. This article should be considered as an attempt to initiate either a greater research project on Evliya's Seyahatname *concerning Palestine or a collection and publication of other Muslim travelers' narratives from the Ottoman period, which are scarce and not always accessible.*

- Introduction
- Early Ottoman Palestine
- Evliya Çelebi and his Travelogue
- Rulers and Residents of Palestine
- Description of the Country
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Introduction

In contrast to the hundreds of books from the 16th to the 19th century, written by Christian travelers and pilgrims to the Holy Land in various European languages, and the dozens of books written by Jewish travelers and pilgrims in Hebrew, there are only few descriptions written in Arabic or Turkish. This lacuna could be well explained by the absence of a tendency towards travelling among Muslim scholars and moreover by the fact that Palestine was a province of minor importance in the Ottoman Empire. It was mainly significant as being the most relevant route from Damascus to Cairo and as the locus of various holy places, of which the *Haram al-Sharif* [the Temple Mount] and the *al-Aqsa* mosque in it, were the most important. Yet they did not generate a serious phenomenon of pilgrimage as did Jerusalem and other sites in the Holy Land for Christians and Jews through the ages.

Evliya Çelebi, an Ottoman learned person with good connections in the Sultan's court, was an exceptional figure who devoted forty years to travelling within the vast boundaries of the Ottoman Empire, and left a ten-volume book on his travels (*seyahatnamesi*). His work is unique in its scope, in its richness and the numerous possibilities to reconstruct Ottoman mentality and worldview. We still lack, even in Turkish, a scientific annotated edition of the passages

concerning his sojourn in Ottoman Palestine. One version was translated and published in English in the 1930s. Its importance lies in three areas: a) It reconstructs Ottoman Palestine – its cities, towns, fortresses, roads, and buildings – which hardly survived. Since Israeli archeology does not take an interest in it,[1] much is still to be done, and a written description might be of great help; b) It shows how a Muslim *'alim* [a scholar, religiously learned man] depicts the country and its dwellers, including Christians and Jews, and their holy places; c) It is an important source that might help reconstruct certain aspects of popular culture, including, for example, local traditions about the erection of the citadel in Jerusalem.

Early Ottoman Palestine

During the period of Ottoman rule, Palestine was part of the province of Syria (*vilayet al-Sham*) and the capitals of the province's sub-divisions were Damascus and Sidon. Its area was divided between the *sanjaks* [districts] of Safed, Nablus, Jerusalem, and Gaza. Each *sanjak* was divided into *nahiyas* [sub-districts] which in the mid-sixteenth century included between 150 to 300 villages, totaling 800 villages and a total of about another 1600 *mazara'a* [sown areas] in all four sanjaks.[2]

Palestine was distant from the central parts of the empire, a province of secondary importance serving as a route of transit between Syria and Egypt. With the exception of the *Haram al-Sharif* and a few other holy sites, it contained nothing of any strategic or economic value. For the Empire rulers the country did have some importance, since the route followed by the *hajj* [the pilgrimage to Mecca] convoys ran near its territory and local governors were obligated to accompany the convoys from Damascus to Mecca.[3] Even though it served as a country of transit for people and goods, Palestine never gained decisive importance, especially after the mid-sixteenth century and the discovery of new trade routes to the Far East.

The sanctity of Jerusalem in Islam stemmed from its being the destination of Muhammad's wondrous Nocturnal Journey from Mecca on his legendary winged horse al-Burāq. In Jerusalem he met prophets who preceded him,

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[1] *A historical archaeology of the Ottoman Empire: breaking new ground*, eds. Uzi Baram, Lynda Carroll (New York: Kluwer Academic – Plenum Publishers, 2000).

[2] For statistics based on Ottoman sources, see Bernard Lewis, "Some Statistical Surveys of 16th Century Palestine," in *Middle East Studies and Libraries: A Felicitation Volume for Professor J.D. Pearson,* ed. Barry C. Bloomfield (London: Mansell, 1980), 119-20. For an overview of Palestine during the Ottoman period, see *The History of Eretz Israel*, VII, *Under Mamluk and Ottoman Rule*, ed. Amnon Cohen, (Jerusalem: Keter, 1981), 93-199 (Hebrew). For the Jerusalem *sanjak* and the city of Jerusalem in the seventeenth century, see Dror Zeevi, *An Ottoman Century: The District of Jerusalem in the 1600s* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 9-33.

[3] On the subject, see Suraiya Faroqhi, *Pilgrims and Sultans: The Hajj under the Ottomans, 1517-1683* (London – New York: Tauris, 1994).

prayed in their company, ascended to Heaven, and returned to Mecca. During the first years of the Muslim calendar (*hejira*), Jerusalem was the *qibla* – the direction in which Muslims turned when in prayer. Only after Muhammad was unsuccessful in gaining the recognition of the Jews did he change the *qibla* to the Ka'ba in Mecca.

Jewish and Christian traditions led to a change in the status of Jerusalem in the eyes of the Muslim conquerors, and the corpus of literature known as 'Praises of Jerusalem' developed over the centuries, especially during the Umayyad period. In these works Jerusalem was a holy city and the center of the world, where the earlier prophets were active, as well as the scene of important events at the End of Days. The *al-Aqsa* mosque was held to be holier than the Dome of the Rock, becoming a focus of Muslim pilgrimage, the third in importance after Mecca and Medina, as recorded in *hadīth* [traditions attributed to Muhammad himself].

Despite this, pilgrimage to Jerusalem was not considered a *hajj* but only a *ziyara*, which is of a slightly lower degree of importance. This did not prevent the emergence of a parallel phenomenon – the increasing importance of Jerusalem to mystics and Sufi ascetics, many of whom came to the city to live in the shadow of its holy sites, an act that was not considered appropriate and befitting by Muslim religious scholars (*ulama*). It should also be borne in mind that the reconquest of Jerusalem from the Crusaders in a holy war enhanced the city's status in the consciousness of Muslims and in Islam, and that during the Mamluk period, which preceded that of the Ottomans, its religious importance and power of attraction increased greatly.[4]

Ottoman Palestine's population, comprised mostly of peasants (*fellahs/-in)*, was about 250,000 people, a number that fluctuated from time to time; this is an average estimate of the population prior to 1800. Many areas remained untilled and those who passed through them with their flocks of sheep were primarily Bedouins, who numbered about twenty to thirty thousand. There were few

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[4] Israeli scholars wrote a lot about the subject. Among the many, see for example Ofer Livne-Kafri, *Jerusalem in Early Islam, Selected Essays* (Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi Press, 2000) (Hebrew). The book relates to many subjects and reaches the 14th century, with many references for primary and secondary sources; among them Immanuel Sivan, "The Holiness of Jerusalem in Islam," in *Notes and Studies on the History of the Holy Land under Islamic Rule*, ed. Moshe Sharon (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1976), 35–42 (Hebrew); Izhak Hasson, "The Muslim View of Jerusalem: The Qur'an and Hadīth," in *The History of Jerusalem: The Early Muslim Period 638–1099*, eds. Joshua Prawer, Haggai Ben-Shammai (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1996), 349–85 (Hebrew). On a representative of the late Mamluk period see Donald P. Little, "Mujir al-Din al-Ulaymi's Vision of Jerusalem in the Nineth/Fifteenth Century," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 115 (1995): 237-247. For a recent overview of the Mamluk period see Sylvia Schein, "Jerusalem in the Late Middle Ages," in *The History of Jerusalem: The Mamluk Period (1260-1517)*, eds. Yvonne Friedman, Joseph Drori, (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi: 2012), 276-309 (Hebrew).

cities within the borders of Ottoman Palestine, the most important of which was Jerusalem. It served as a district capital, and its primary significance for members of the monotheistic faiths stemmed from its role in religious thought, its holy sites, and the many religious institutions located within its bounds. Many of Jerusalem's residents were religious functionaries who lived in institutions such as monasteries or theological schools (*madrasa*s), or pilgrims who resided in the city for certain periods of time. Pilgrimage to Jerusalem from all over the Muslim world – especially the Maghreb – increased under Mamluk rule in Palestine and apparently continued to do so throughout the Ottoman period. With our present state of knowledge, it is difficult to ascertain whether the number of pilgrims increased once the Ottoman sultan became the ruler of the three continents [that is – 'the civilized world'], or to what extent was there change in the composition of the emigrants to Palestine. Naturally, during peaceful periods there were more pilgrims, while in times of war, in years in which pirates were more active, when security slackened, or in periods of famine their number declined.

In addition to Jerusalem, the cities of Gaza, Hebron, Nablus, and Safed should be noted. It was only during the eighteenth century that important urban centers were newly established along the coastline, which had been purposely devastated by the Mamluks who were afraid of a new crusade: Jaffa, Acre, and to a lesser extent also Haifa. Until the mid-eighteenth century Jaffa was the major seaport, through which Jewish and Christian pilgrims arrived. The alternative was to disembark at Sidon on the Lebanese coast or at the port of Alexandria in Egypt, from where pilgrims travelled northwards overland.

After the Ottoman conquest in 1516 by Sultan Selim, the new rulers did give some thought to Palestine, particularly Suleyman I ('The Lawgiver') who shaped anew the landscape of Jerusalem. In addition to a surge of construction in Jerusalem and the supply of water to that city, other noteworthy efforts were improvement of the roads, the establishment of caravansaries along them, and the building of a number of citadels, such as those of Beit Govrin and Rosh Ha'ayin, for example.

Evliya Çelebi and his Travelogue

In contrast to the hundreds of books written by European travelers to Palestine in the pre-modern age, and a few dozen short itineraries in Hebrew, only a small number of descriptions by Muslim travelers and pilgrims have survived. We can only guess that there were others, yet their overall number is by far lower than European travelogues. The Muslim East lacks an Islamic parallel to the rich genre of European travel literature resulting from the journeys of tourists, adventurers, clergy, and pilgrims who aspired to relate their experiences and what they saw to their countrymen in Europe. This can be attributed *inter alia* to the Ottomans' sense of superiority reflected in a lack

of interest in anything outside their own immediate country, the lack of Muslim print presses (in Arabic, Turkish and Persian) and bookstores, the absence of a tradition of reading among the wider public, and more.

It is this state of affairs that makes all the more important the testimony of Evliya Çelebi, the most renowned Ottoman traveler who left us a detailed ten-volume description of his travels throughout the Ottoman Empire in the second third of the seventeenth century. Evliya Çelebi, born in Istanbul in 1611 and educated to fill a religious role, spent most of his adult life traveling through the Ottoman Empire. There are several manuscripts of his work, on the basis of which a few abridged versions, replete with errors, were published in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. To this day there is no scholarly edition of the full work, and only the sections dealing with certain regions have been published in full and authoritative editions.[5] While there is no consensus among scholars of the Ottoman Empire as to the credibility of this work and whether it should serve as a source,[6] even if Evliya Çelebi did exaggerate in his descriptions and the statistics he recorded, his book is still a valuable source of information about the Ottoman world from various standpoints. The stories which he cites from locals, should be treated as a mirror to their cultural world, and not necessarily judged as true or false.

Evliya Çelebi visited Palestine twice, once in 1649 and again in 1672, a decade before his death in Cairo (1682). During the 1930s Stuart H. Stephan translated the sections of the *Seyahatname* dealing with Palestine and published them in installments in the *Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities of Palestine*.[7] Though annotated, it is not a critical scholarly edition. For my following discussion I have used Stephan's English translation. I have also drawn additional details

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[5] See, for example, Korkut M. Buğday, *Evliya Çelebis Anatolienreise* (Leiden: Brill, 1996); Robert Dankoff, "Establishing the Text of Evliya Çelebi's Seyahatname: A Critique of Recent Scholarship and Suggestions for the Future," *Archivum Ottomanicum* 18 (2000): 139–44; Erich Prokosch, *Kairo in der zweiten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Istanbul: Simburg, 2000); Robert Dankoff, Robert Elsie, *Evliya Çelebi in Albania and Adjacent Regions: Kosovo, Montenegro, Ohrid*, edited with translation, commentary and introduction (Leiden: Brill, 2000); Robert Dankoff, *An Ottoman Mentality: The World of Evliya Celebi* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004); Robert Dankoff, Sooyong Kim, *An Ottoman Traveller: Selections from the Book of Travels of Evliya Çelebi* (London: Eland, 2010). Evliya's journeys to Palestine and his person were lately treated by Hasan Baktir, "Evliya Celebi's Seyahatname and the Holiness of Jerusalem," in *Through the Eyes of the Beholder: The Holy Land, 1517-1713*, eds Judy A. Hayden, Nabil I. Matar (Boston: Leiden, 2013), 111-124.

[6] Scholars such as Hayim Gerber, Suraia Faroqhi and others incline to his credibility. See for example R. Dankoff, *An ottoman Mentality (Evliya Celebi)*, Brill: Leiden-Boston 2006

[7] Stuart H. Stephan, "A facsimile edition of the collected installments," in *Evliya Tshelebi's Travels in Palestine (1648–1650)*, ed. Nathan Schurr (Jerusalem: Ariel, 1980) (Hebrew and English). While providing a translation of vol. IX (Vols 85–101 of the manuscript of the Topkapı Sarai Library in Istanbul), the editor at times adds passages from vol. III.

from Dankoff and Kim later and more exact translation, though he included only sections relating to Jerusalem and Safed.[8]

The part devoted to Evliya Çelebi's journey through Palestine begins in Tibnin, in the north of the country, and moves southwards to Jerusalem, noting the villages through which he passed, their size and the religious affiliation of their residents – Muslims, Druzes, Christians, etc. He also reports on the sources and quality of the water supply, what agricultural crops were raised, the difficulties and dangers of travel along the roads, and his encounters with local residents. In addition, he describes unique structures and records other details that he believes might interest the reader or the potential traveler.

Distances are measured by hours of travel on horseback, and at times by a "cannon's range." Dimensions of buildings are given in paces or Mecca yards. Evliya travels through Palestine as a devout Muslim tourist, but explicitly not as a pilgrim to whom Jerusalem is his destination. He punctiliously reports that at each of the many holy sites he came across he recited one prayer or another. It would be interesting to learn just how much his departure from Istanbul was connected to the fact that during the reign of Murad IV (1623–40) it was the Kadizadelis who called the tune and there was a climate hostile to Sufis, mysticism, and the veneration of saints.[9] Perhaps something in the public atmosphere in the capital induced Evliya Çelebi to repeatedly stress that he carried out his religious obligations, first and foremost the five daily prayers.

Currently, we have only one additional published source that can be used as a comparison with that of Evliya Çelebi or at least can supplement his descriptions. Gideon Weigert published, in Hebrew translation, the travel diary of a Sufi shaykh of the Khalwatiyya mystical order in Damascus, written in 1710, about half a century after that of Evliya. A comparison of the two raises some interesting points. The author, Mustafa al-Bakri as-Sadiqi, then twenty-three years old, was greatly excited by what he saw but does not note his exact and detailed impressions, as did Evliya Çelebi. He was content with describing the beauty of the scenes he beheld; his diary is filled with spirituality, colored by the enthusiasm of a pilgrim to Jerusalem. Like Evliya, he prays often and reads passages from the Qur'an.[10] Al-Bakri came to Jerusalem as a pilgrim, so that what he saw on the way and his impressions took second place to (and were less relevant than) his desire to reach the holy city. He stayed in Jerusalem for six months, during which he conducted diverse Sufi ceremonies in the various *khalwa*s and *zawiya*s in the city and its surroundings.[11] Weigert stresses

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[8] Dankoff, Kim, *An Ottoman Traveller.*
[9] Madeline C. Zilfi, "The Kadizadelis: Discordant Revivalism in Seventeenth-century Istanbul," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 45 (1986): 251–69.
[10] Gideon Weigert, "An Eighteenth-century Travel Diary: From Damascus to Jerusalem," *Cathedra*, 68 (1993): 49–56 (Hebrew).
[11] For the religious life and atmosphere in Jerusalem, see Gideon Weigert, "Muslim Religious

the fact that al-Bakri dutifully fulfilled all the obligations of the *Şari'a* (Muslim religious law), refraining from anything that would be considered idolatrous,[12] and visited only the tombs of prophets, i.e., those mentioned in the Qur'an, whereas Evliya stopped at every tomb he encountered on his journey. Evliya, too, does not mention lighting candles, kissing the tombs, or praying to the dead, only prayers recited for the exaltation of the deceased and the success of his journey. Later, al-Bakri returned to Jerusalem and lived there for forty years, as many other scholars did before and after him, as is evident from biographical dictionaries. It may be that he was not exceptional, but only few manuscripts similar to his travel diary to Jerusalem still exist.

In his concluding remarks of *Through the Eyes of the Beholder* Nabil Matar rightly speaks of a different holiness of Jerusalem and Palestine for Christians, Jews and Muslims – "all the travelers and pilgrims (...) viewed the land through their different histories, beliefs, and forms of worship"[13] - and makes an important distinction: "the Euro-Christian combination of piety and conquest was in stark contrast with the view of the land by the peoples from the Ottoman Empire and beyond. For them *ard Filastin* [the land of Palestine] was part of their traveling and living space. Pilgrims and students, teachers and sufi masters saw *Quds Sharif* [holy Jerusalem] (...) as part of their destination for employment and prayer (...) [in a real territory between Syria and Egypt]. (...) For the Muslim population, along with eastern Christians and Jews of the Ottoman Empire *ard Filastin* was part of the *lebensraum* in which their personal history took shape."[14] I find that in this respect Jewish conceptions are closer to those of the Muslims for whom it's mostly Jerusalem and to a lesser degree some other places which are sites of holiness, rather than to the Christians who saw the country as a whole unit of sanctity.

Evliya's description is important from at least three aspects: a) The views of a Muslim scholar from the imperial capital on provincial Palestine, its administrative organization, and the presence of 'others' – non-Sunni Muslims, Druzes, Jews, and Christians; b) As a means of historical-archaeological reconstruction of roads, buildings (some of which have entirely disappeared or only partially survived), and urban daily life; c) Description, even partial, of the cultural and religious life of Muslims in Palestine as revealed, for example, in the most important site of popular ritual or in folk traditions relating to the origin, construction, and character of various sites, such as the citadel of Jerusalem.

Life in Eighteenth-century Jerusalem," *Cathedra*, 49 (1988): 76–86, in particular 79 (Hebrew). For this particular matter see also Zeevi, *An Ottoman Century*, 69–72. Zeevi bases his discussion on the second chronicle mentioned by Weigert, that of Abd al-Ghani al-Nabulsi, which was written somewhat earlier than that of his disciple, al-Bakri.
[12] Weigert, "Muslim Religious Life," 85.
[13] Nabil Matar, "Conclusion," in *Through the Eyes of the Beholder*, 225-227.
[14] Ibid., 226.

Rulers and Residents of Palestine

Evliya Çelebi punctiliously notes exactly his present location in the vast Ottoman state and provides the reader with administrative details, probably supplied by representatives of the central authorities in every place. He informs us of the Ottoman conquest of the area that formerly was held by "the despicable Circassians" [the Mamluk Sultans],[15] a subject to which he will return in describing Jerusalem, and then pays attention to the administrative division of the country into districts and the changes that this division has undergone. For example, he reports that the Safed district is part of the *vilayet* of Sidon, but in the past belonged to the *vilayet* of ash-Sham. He provides detailed information about the income of the local governors and *qadi*s, the size of estates or fiefs allotted as *timar* and *zia'amet* to soldiers and officers who were obliged to accompany the *hajj* convoys in return for these fiefs and their income.[16] He reports about officials and the number of soldiers in the garrisons in various cities and citadels. In addition to recording the salaries of senior officials, he also informs about the income from taxes.[17] He repeats time and again that the owners of the fiefs and the governors in this area are obligated to accompany the convoys to Mecca instead of paying taxes in cash.

Evliya reports, for example, about the administration of Jerusalem by the local *qadi* and his subordinates. This is an important testimony; even if it is not an actual description of the state of affairs in Jerusalem, it at least outlines what was supposed to be the situation in an Ottoman city. When Dror Zeevi refers to this passage he stresses that despite the fact that only a few of the officials mentioned appear in the *sicil* (Muslim court records), this does not detract from the credibility of Evliya's report.[18]

The overwhelming majority of the residents were Muslims, especially in the cities. Here and there he mentions "others" among the rural residents – there were non-Sunni Muslims – and relates with suspicion to the Druzes or to the presence of various *Mazhabas* (the four schools of Muslim law) in Jerusalem. Moreover, the Jews and Christians are infidels, and there are also foreign Christians who are not subjects of the sultan. Evliya is far from being objective: when writing about Sunni Muslims, he does so in a positive manner:

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[15] Stephan, "A facsimile," 18.

[16] The *timar* was a fief with a small income, while that of a *zia'amet* was greater, generally allotted to senior military officers in the capital of the *sanjak* or *vilayet*. See Bernard Lewis, "The Ottoman Archives as a Source for the History of the Arab Lands," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 83/3–4 (1951): 146; Id., "Studies in Ottoman Archives," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 16/3 (1954): 481–83.

[17] His information could be compared to the figures supplied for the sixteenth century by Amnon Cohen, Bernard Lewis, *Population and Revenue in the Towns of Palestine in the Sixteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978).

[18] Zeevi, *An Ottoman Century*, 25–26.

"The inhabitants [of the village of Tirzāt] are sympathetic and 'well beloved' Moslems."[19] But when relating to Muslims who are not of the *Ḥanafi* order or to other groups, his language is more denigrating: "Schismatics (*rāfiziler*) are yet living in it. (…) Then comes the village of Jish, with one hundred houses of accursed believers in the transmigration of souls (…). From this village we had a narrow escape to the village of Yāzūn, which also consists of one hundred houses of schismatics."[20]

In describing the folk celebration at Meiron, in which Jews and non-Jews participate, he writes: "When the time of the Jewish feast approaches, i.e. the notorious [Feast of the] Tabernacles (*qāmish*), all people (*'Arab ve 'ajem*), mostly Druzes, Timānis, Yezīdis, and Mervānis, are wont to assemble there – a dangerous crowd, counting several thousands."[21]

When he mentions that during "the infamous feast of Easter" some 5,000 to 10,000 Christians congregate in Jerusalem, he terms them infidels who will inherit Hell.[22] Pejorative epithets are applied to Christian pilgrims in the continuation of his chronicle. In this he does not deviate from the customary terminology and rhetoric in the writings of the *'ulema*. His depiction of the Christians is full of scorn. He is also critical of proceedings in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, whether because of the relations between the various denominations or from the standpoint of religious practice – there are too many statues, for example – and the manner in which the priests trick innocent believers. Notwithstanding that, he does admire some of what he sees,[23] and the fact that he is willing to go inside and look around, and even document it in his narrative, is meaningful in itself.

Evliya displays a negative attitude towards Jews, as well. He begins his description of Palestine in the *sanjak* of Safed, maintaining that this is the biblical Canaan, the historic land of the Jews - in fact, the Dankoff and Kim translation writes: "It was the original homeland of the Children of Israel (…). Nebuchadnezzar (…) massacred the Israelites."[24] His hostility towards Jews comes through clearly in his chronicle; time and again he records pejorative descriptions of the Jews, their rituals, and their homes. In relation to Safed, which he believes to be the place of origin of the Jews, he maintains that they had an ancient temple there – perhaps basing himself on the name Beit El (an identification which also appears in the diaries of some Christian travelers,

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[19] Stephan, "A facsimile," 9.
[20] Ibid., 16.
[21] Ibid., 17.
[22] Ibid., p. 61. "Even now 5,000 or 10,000 hell-destined infidels gather here every year on their infamous Festival of the Red-Egg." Dankoff, Kim, *An Ottoman Traveller*, 332. See a similar version in Baktir, "Evliya Celebi's Seyahatname," 121 and note 25.
[23] Baktir, **"**Evliya Celebi's Seyahatname," 121-123.
[24] Dankoff, Kim, *An Ottoman Traveller*, 311, 314. And similarly in Stephan, A facsimile, 18.

probably grounded in information supplied by local Jews) – and even compares its importance and centrality to the Jews to that of the Qaʻba to the Muslims, a comparison for which he apologizes.[25] While noting that the castle is ruined and has no one to command and defend it, he writes: "But there are many Jews."[26]

Description of the Country

Evliya Çelebi makes an important contribution to our knowledge of the cities, towns, and villages of Palestine in the middle of the period of Ottoman rule. Whether from what he personally saw and recorded or from the statistics he reported – even if his figures are generalized or exaggerated – the country seems to have been relatively densely populated in the rural hilly regions and fertile valleys. He places the villages in two categories: having either one hundred or two hundred houses or households – and most of them are Muslim. In addition, he reports on the ethnic or religious composition of the population in the villages. Despite his generalized statistics, it would seem that these are relatively large villages, so it is difficult to learn whether the population dwindled in this area due to the crisis of the seventeenth century.

There is no village without a source of water; Evliya mentions the sources and their nature for almost every village. The impression is that the country is blessed with water, at least in Galilee and the hill country, particularly naturally gushing springs. He is quite interested, almost obsessed, with the local water supply, a matter that calls for a question about the presence of this motif in other descriptions – springs, streams, and wells. He notes the water's taste and medicinal attributes, as certainly reported to him by local residents.[27] He records local traditions about how the springs were formed but especially dwells upon what benefit accrues from drinking their waters.

In addition, Evliya notes the existence of groves and orchards, listing some of the important agricultural crops: grapes, olives, dates, figs, and berries. Surprisingly, he makes no mention of the raising of field crops – cereals, legumes, sesame, and the like, nor does he mention the extraction of honey or the raising of cotton. Here and there he refers to the large areas worked by *fellahin*, but without going into details. There is no reference in his chronicle to commerce in Palestine or the transport of goods overland or by sea. Nor does

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[25] Dankoff, Kim, *An Ottoman Traveller*, 314 (whereas the old British translation is vague: Stephan, 18).

[26] Stephan, "A facsimile," 18-19. On the importance of Safed, its past glory and present decadence, as well as the many holy sites within its bounds, see also the description given by Olf Dapper in 1677: Olf Dapper, *Asia, oder Genaue und gründlich Beschreibung des gantzen Syrien und Palestins, oder Gelobten Landes* (Amsterdam: J. von Meursen, 1681), 94.

[27] Stephan, "A facsimile," 12-13.

he touch upon the complex mutual relationships between villagers and city dwellers with the Bedouins.[28]

Evliya does provide information about the roads – their condition, including the difficulty and personal risk of traveling along them, often from his firsthand experience. He records the citadels and caravansaries along the route, including what the latter supplied the traveler (food, feed for animals, a candle at night)[29] as well as the dimensions and his impressions of buildings: monasteries, ruined citadels (above all the splendid citadel of Safed, but also smaller ones), mosques, and caravansaries, supplying their dimensions in paces or Mecca yards.[30] He describes the decorations in bathhouses and mosques, most of which have now disappeared even if the structures have survived. At times he also records inscriptions on the walls,[31] and more details. Surprisingly, he makes no mention of coffeehouses, even though we know they existed.[32] Also noteworthy are the details he supplies about the restoration and repair of structures, such as the Red Mosque in Safed, carried out by Ṣaleh Bey in A.H. 1082 (1671/2), and about the interior decoration of such buildings: painted ceramic tiles, marble slabs, inscriptions, windows and more.[33] Most interesting are the details about a few small mosques, not in Safed, that had stained glass windows, colorful tiles, and domes and towers overlaid with lead.

As one coming from Anatolia, with its wooden houses, the stone structures in the villages and cities impress him. Only in the case of the Bedouins does he mention poor mud shacks, just as do European travelers, especially when describing the coastal plain.

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[28] For an extensive and original analysis of this issue, see Zeevi, *An Ottoman Century*, 93–114.

[29] See the classification of public kitchens and the analysis of their operation in Amy Singer, "The 'Michelin Guide' to Public Kitchens in the Ottoman Empire," in *Starting with Food: Culinary Approaches to Ottoman History*, ed. Amy Singer (Princeton: Markus Wiener, 2011), 69–92.

[30] See for example the detailed description of 'Ain e-Tujjar, within it "the mosque of Sinan Pasha, an artistically constructed work, with a lead roof, full of light. Its windows have light blue glass enamel fixed symmetrically with rock crystal (…) it measures eighty feet each side. The sanctuary has three graceful and lofty minarets" (Stephan, "A facsimile," 32). Around 1630 Eugéne Roger reported that Fakhr al-Din renovated the fortified *han* and stationed a garrison of one hundred soldiers there. Almost every Tuesday a market for cattle and other merchandise was held there See Eugéne Roger, *La Terre Sainte* (Paris: Antoine Bertier, 1664), 68–69.

[31] For the text of various inscriptions in Safed, see Stephan, "A facsimile," 20–26.

[32] This is surprising, for Evliya took great pains to note the number of coffeehouses in each city in other parts of the Ottoman Empire; see Yaron Ben-Naeh, *Jews in the Realm of the Sultans: Ottoman Jewish Society in the Seventeenth Century* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 39. For coffeehouses in Safed and Jerusalem since the mid-sixteenth century, see Rabbi Moshe Mitrani, *Responsa*, 3 (Venice, 1630), #150, 169v (Hebrew); Amnon Cohen, "Coffee and Coffeehouses in Jerusalem," in *Studies in the History of Muslim Peoples, Papers Presented at a Conference in Memory of David Ayalon*, (Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 2006), 103-112; Id., *The Guilds of Ottoman Jerusalem* (Leiden, Boston, and Cologne: Brill, 2011), (see the term coffee in the index).

[33] Dankoff, Kim, *An Ottoman Traveller*, 312–313.

It might be interesting and illuminating to compare his description of the *Haram al-Sharif* in Jerusalem with pictorial depiction which were painted at that period,[34] as well as the remaining building in the twentieth century.

Culture and Religious Life

If the Holy Land of Jewish and Christian travelers is replete with many holy sites located primarily in the vicinity of Jerusalem, the Jordan River, the Sea of Galilee and its surroundings, and Nazareth, Evliya Çelebi completely changes the map of holy places. In almost every village through which he passes, as well as cities such as Safed, Nablus, and Jerusalem, he notes a site holy to Muslims. He lists hundreds of tombs, shrines, and monuments of holy figures – whether from the Bible, the Qur'an, or Muslim tradition and history relating to the conquest of Palestine.

He introduces the reader to an almost unknown area as he tells of the many holy places (*maqam*s), tombs, and shrines dedicated to the memory of diverse figures from the Hebrew Bible (the Old Testament), the New Testament, and the history of Islam in cities and their surroundings, and to a much lesser extent also in open spaces – from the companions of Muhammad during the Muslim conquest to local religious figures or well-known personages who spent some time in the country. These are sites of popular religious rites.

Such rituals are not reserved only to Muslims, or to a certain Muslim sect. What stands out is joint worship by members of the three religions at some holy sites, and from Evliya's description we learn of the presence of Jews even at places not considered Jewish, such as the 'Grotto of Qetur' under the citadel of Safed, where tradition claimed that the sons of Esau (Ismāʿīl) are buried (p. 26). His depiction of the joint festivities at Meiron by members of various ethnic communities and religions, as well as at the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron or the tomb of the Prophet Samuel just north-west of Jerusalem, are not singular instances. We learn from him about many more local sites of secondary importance at which the same occurs, novel and important information about relationships between diverse groups in Muslim territories in general and in Palestine in particular. In rare instances, this important information is affirmed by other sources in relation to sites such as the Cave of Elijah on Mt Carmel and Jeremiah's Grotto in Jerusalem.[35]

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[34] Rachel Milstein, "Drawings of the Haram of Jerusalem in Ottoman Manuscripts," in *Aspects of Ottoman History*, eds. Amy Singer, Amnon Cohen, *Scripta Hierosolymitana* XXXV (1994): 62-69. For Evliya's enthusiastic description see also Baktir, "Evliya Celebi's Seyahatname," 116-118.

[35] Many other travellers note the joint rituals at Meiron, Hebron, and the tomb of Samuel. References to the itineraries of Christian travellers in this note and elsewhere are based on Michael Ish-Shalom, *Christian Travels in the Holy Land: Descriptions and Sources on the History of the Jews in Palestine* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1965) (Hebrew). On the Cave of Elijah, see Antoine

What prompted Jews to come to a site identified with the sons of Esau? Did they have independent and different traditions concerning the identification of this and similar places? Reading Evliya suggests that in the Galilean Jewish tradition the landscape in which the Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob moved was transferred to Galilee, as Elchanan Reiner has demonstrated in recent years. This assumption fits in well with the strange identification of Safed with Beit El in the chronicles of John Sanderson and other European travelers, a subject deserving of further study.[36]

Another important element that stands out in religious life is the significant presence of dervishes, especially in Safed and Jerusalem, and the conduct of regular *Dhikr* ceremonies.[37] Even if the ceremonies were witnessed primarily by the urban population and pilgrims, they were undoubtedly influential in shaping the religious practice of all Muslims. A most interesting example is Evliya's short description of *Dhikr* ceremonies conducted by dervishes at nightfall in Safed twice a week, illuminated by candles and oil lamps and accompanied by tambourines.[38] Bearing in mind the circumstances of the time, the nocturnal ceremony must have had a great effect and left a tremendous impression. No less important are the various sufis living in Jerusalem, whose presence necessarily affected the city's character.

Evliya Çelebi also opens up new and important vistas on the world of native residents of Palestine. This he does by recording legends concerning local heroes, stories about miracles and wondrous acts, and narratives of battles and other events.[39] The number of stories about the Mamluk period and even of the Muslim conquest is quite impressive. He records them from local residents,

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Morison, *Relation historique d'un voyage nouvellement fait au Mont de Sinai et à Jérusalem* (Paris: A Dezallier, 1705), 567; Johannes Aegidius van Egmond and John Heymann, *Travels through …　Syria, Palestine, Egypt,Mount Sinai &c.*, 2 vols. (London: L. Davis and C. Reymers, 1759), vol. 2, 7–8; and Richard Pococke, *A Description of the East and Some Other Countries*, 2 vols. (London: Printed for the author, 1943–45), vol. 2, 56. In 1697 Henry Maundrell described Jeremiah's Grotto as a site revered by members of the three religions, and during his visit a *zawiya* of dervishes was located there; see Henry Maundrell, *A Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem at Easter A. D. 1697* (Oxford 1703), 76.

[36] For Safed as Beit El, see John Sanderson, *The Travels of John Sanderson in the Levant, 1584–1602*, ed. William Foster (London: Hakluyt Society, 1931), 148–49, 164–65. On the transfer of traditions of sacred geography to Galilee, see Elchanan Reiner, "From Joshua to Jesus – The Transformation of a Biblical Story to a Local Myth: A Chapter in the Religious Life of the Galilean Jew," in *Sharing the Sacred: Religious Contacts and Conflicts in the Holy Land, First–Fifteenth Centuries CE*, ed. Arieh Kofsky, Guy G. Stroumsa (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1998), 223–71. More on the subject has been published by Reiner in Hebrew.

[37] *Dhikr*, or *Zikr*, is a ceremony in Sunni Islam involving the repetitive and ecstatic recitation of the Names of God and of supplications adopted from *hadith* texts and the Qur'an.

[38] Stephan, "A facsimile," 25.

[39] Hasan Bakitr claims, without any examples, that "this feature is characteristic of other Muslim pilgrim-travelers" (Baktir, **"Evliya Celebi's Seyahatname,"** 113-114).

thus documenting and preserving in great detail local traditions of inestimable value, such as, for example, attributing certain buildings and pavings in Jerusalem to King Solomon. Their veracity is irrelevant for the cultural world-scene of Muslims and others in Ottoman Palestine, for whom these stories were part of their daily life.[40]

Here and there throughout his chronicle additional information is scattered about local culture and daily life, such as the healing power of water for diverse maladies, and – in one specific case – a holy place (the site of Jesus' imprisonment) as able to heal mental derangement.[41] Certain places have an extra-territorial status, where villagers deposit their valuables for safekeeping, as for, example, the mausoleum of Sheikh Dāhi, near Jenin.[42]

Here and there one feels that Evliya is not resisting or denying the sanctity of other holy places, and this phenomenon reaches its peak in his visit at the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem.

There is also an interesting passing statement about a library or archive in Safed, most likely the archive of the *Şari'a* court, where the writings of religious personalities who served in Safed during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were also kept, including those of 'Alemshah 'Abdurrahman Effendi, the *qadi* of Safed.[43] This fact should be borne in mind when we wish to draw the cultural profile of the local intellectual elite, comprised of religious functionaries: where they studied, what they wrote, where their works were kept, and the like. These are issues that have not been studied yet for the period preceding the 19th century.

Evliya does not mention food and eating manners, and only in a few cases does he refer to dress, music, and other matters, probably because what he encountered did not differ significantly from what he experienced in his home country, or from what he said during his travels in the empire's Arab provinces. Only here and there he unintentionally records something about lifestyles – for example, that afforested Mt Canaan, near Safed, is a place to which many go out for sightseeing, to rest, and to enjoy the scenery.[44]

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[40] See Matar, *Introduction* and *Conclusion*, in *Through the Eyes of the Beholder.*

[41] On maladies, mental illness, and healing in the Ottoman Empire, see Miri Shefer, "Insanity and the Insane in the Ottoman Empire, 15th–17th Centuries," in *Being Different: Minorities, Aliens and Outsiders in History*, ed. Shulamit Volkov (Jerusalem: The Zalman Shazar Center for Jewish History, 2000), 191–204 (Hebrew?); Id., "Being Ill and Pretending to Be Ill in the Ottoman Empire in the 16th and 17th Centuries," *Zmanim – A Historical Quarterly*, 73 (2000–2001): 60–70 (Hebrew).

[42] Stephan, "A facsimile," 34.

[43] Ibid., 27-28.

[44] Ibid., 28.

Appendix

Description of the Country of the Jews, the Walled town of Safed[45]

It was the original homeland of the Children of Israel (…) it was governed by seventy successive states until, in the year [-] Sultan Selim I took it from the despicable Circassians without a blow. The troops who could not go on to Egypt he stationed there as a garrison, before himself proceeding.

It is now a *sanjak* in the province of Sidon (…) previously it belonged to the province of Sham (Damascus) and when it was registered had 106 *timars* and nine *zeamets*. (…) There are regiment commanders and commandants of janissaries in the city. It is a noble *kadi* district (…) the subdistrict (*nahiye*) consists of 400 rebellious villages (…) the castle is in ruins. It has neither a warden nor garrison troops, nor a colonel of the local cavalry, nor a janissary colonel, nor notables. But there are many Jews. Each of the four Sunni rites has its *seyhülislam*, and there is a chief of the descendants of the Prophet.

(…) These are besides the Friday mosques (…). Besides these there are neighborhood mosques. There are six *medrese* (…) one school of Koran recitation, seven primary schools and seven dervish lodges. There are six baths[46] (…) three *hans* including that of [Piyali] Pasha below the citadel. It is a large *han* (…) four stores high. Previously 12,000 Jews lived in it, but at present they number only 2,000. The city has three *bedestans*, two of which are unoccupied, their shops being locked up they have now become guest houses for travelers. (…) Yet because of oppression, the inhabitants of the city are poor. Jews are more numerous than Muslims. The capitation tax from all the seven Jewish quarters is paid for 9,000. [!] with previously 70,000 Jews living here, this was a magnificent city (…) they have all migrated to Salonica.[47]

In former times Safed boasted 3,000 felt manufactories, of which forty have survived. The felt of Safed was known all over the inhabited world. The reason for the large number of Jewish inhabitants is this, that it has been the original homeland of the Children of Israel, and – saving the comparison! – their Ka'ba and Hose of Sorrows. All the prophets and their descendants grew up here,

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[45] Dankoff, Kim, *An Ottoman Traveller*, 311-314.

[46] See Martin Dow, *The Islamic Baths of Palestine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 111–13. The paucity of information about remains of bathhouses shows how important is the testimony of Evliya.

[47]These numbers are exaggerations, but attest to the impression that remained in the memory.

and here too many are buried. In the Jewish chronicles there are seven volumes treating of Safed.[48]

Description of the Fortified Ancient Town of Nablus[49]

This is a Samaritan *sanjak* in the province of Damascus. (…) The *sanjak* has seven *zeamets* and forty-four *timars*. (…) There are two hundred villages in this district (…) A janissary colonel and a captain are stationed here. There are also notables and the representative of the *naqibu-l-ashraf*, but the Mufti resides in Jerusalem. (…) Around the mosque are vaulted bazars (…) There are other mosques besides these, as well as seven Koran schools, seven dervish monasteries (*zawiya*), seven elementary boy's (or boys'?) schools and two public baths.[50] The 'Sultan's Bazar' (…) measures twelve hundred paces between its two gates and consists of three hundred and seventy shops on each side; (…) to the left stands a fortress-like huge caravanserai[51] with one hundred and fifty contiguous hearths. In the very center rises a mosque with a lead roof. The buildings of this market as well as all the pious foundations belong to Quja Mustafa Pasha. (…) They are poor. The men wear a brownish overcoat (*'abaya*) or the like and wrap their heads with a white muslin turban. Their women-folk, too, envelop themselves in a white sheet.[52] (…) His [Samson's] plastered shrine is situated amidst orchards north of the town. (…) Also to the north of the town (…) the shrine of the children of Isaac and those of Esau. (…) It is no marvel that the Jews visit this shrine (…) they visit also that one of the children of Isaac. Nearby is the shrine (*maqam*) of Yusha'. To the east of the town is the shrine of the Gate of Paradise (…) then comes the Well of Jacob … near this place is the shrine of the prison of 'Isa[53] (…). The shrine of Sheikh Faqir is situated amidst orchards. To the right of it, (…) that of Sufyan et-Tauri of the noble companion of the Prophet. The shrine of Sheikh 'Imadu-d-Din rises on the crest of a high mountain east of the town. (…) The shrine of Sheikh Mujahid with that of Sheikh Mujir-u-d-Din beside it. (…) How many thousands of pious men of God are in this city, yet the humble writer has visited only those which he has recorded.

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[48] Further on he mentions: "In this garden [of the shrine of Ya'qub, 'House of Sorrows', or 'beyt el-ahzan'], all around it, several thousand great saints, pious and godly people, sheikhs and notables are buried" (Stephan, "A facsimile," 25).

[49] Stephan, "A facsimile," 47-55. I made slight modifications in the spelling.

[50] It is interesting that Dow mentions eight baths, while stating that Evliya noted only two. Somewhat after Evliya's visit Abd al-Ghani al-Nabulsi related that he bathed in one of the bathhouses in the city, and Seetzen found five there in 1806. See Dow, *Islamic Baths*, 99.

[51] Turkish: Kervansaray - an inn, square building built around an open courtyard.

[52] This is the *izar* or *lizar* that urban women customarily donned over their clothes until the nineteenth century.

[53] Surprisingly, Sanderson and other seventeenth-century European travellers do not mention any Christian site in Nablus and its vicinity, though they do report the existence of several Jewish ones; see Sanderson, *Travels*, 191.

Description of the Ancient Fortress and Former qibla*, the Sacred House*[54]

It is called [Jerusalem] (…) or al-Quds.[55] It contains the shrines of 124,000 prophets. Before and after the flood it was the *qibla* of mankind. After the prophet, in response to a divine order, fled from Mecca to Medina (…) thus the *qibla* was changed from Jerusalem to Mecca … but the ancient *qibla* was Jerusalem and it is said to be the *qibla* of the poor (or the dervishes). This noble Jerusalem has been the object of the desire of the kings of all nations. In the year 922 (1516) when Jerusalem was in the hands of the Circassians, all the *ulema* and pious men went out to meet Sultan Selim I and handed him the keys to the Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock. (…) Jerusalem was registered as capital of a province (…) there are nine *zeamets* and 106 *timars*. The Pasha of Jerusalem has 500 soldiers at his command and is the commandant of the pilgrim's caravan of Damascus, charged with taking them to Mecca and bringing them back. It is a prosperous province (…) the Molla[56] actually receives as much as the Pasha, because his district counts altogether 1,600 villages,[57] to all of which his deputies are appointed (…). There is also a colonel of the mounted troops in Jerusalem, a commandant of the janissaries of the Porte, and a commandant of the janissaries of Damascus, muftis of the four Sunni legal rites, a supervisor of the descendants of the prophet; and very many notables and nobles, *ulema* and pious men. There is also a castle warden and 100 garrison troops. (…) The Molla also has twenty officers appointed by imperial rescript for court service (…) in short, the sheikhs of all the tradesmen are daily present at the sharia court for duty.

Jerusalem has 700 *waqf*-endowments, each with its administrator who comes to the Molla with a gift and attends the court sessions. It is a grand civil government and a religious jurisdiction.

It should be known to the world-viewing lovers that this city of Jerusalem, although it appears small, yet contains 240 prayer-niches. Aside from the *Aqsa* Mosque and the congregational mosque in the citadel they are all *medreses* and dervish convents and small neighborhood mosques. There are seven Hadith schools, ten schools of Koran recitations, and forty primary schools. Each of the seventy dervish orders has a convent, including the Qadiri, the Badawi, the Sa'di and the Rufa'i. The most frequented is the Mevlevi convent just inside the gate of the pillar. (…) All of these have a contingent of dervishes who perform

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[54] Dankoff, Kim, *An Ottoman Traveller*, 315-388.
[55] For a short discussion of the city's names see Baktir, 114-115. Baktir also mentions Evliya's claim that his grandfathers' brother emigrated to Jerusalem and died there, and he prayed at his tomb (id. 114)
[56] The *Molla* is a doctor of Muslim law, and a chief judge. Usually nominated in Istanbul and sent to Jerusalem.
[57] This despite that Bernard Lewis, on the basis of the official census lists of the sixteenth century, maintains that the Jerusalem sanjak contained about 170 villages; see Lewis, *Population and Revenue*, 473.

zikr (a Muhammadan ceremony) every blessed night, and all have sound endowments.

There are six great *hans* (…) there are six public baths[58] (…) there are three soup-kitchens that distribute food to sojourners. The Khassakiya soup kitchen has sound endowments.[59] There are eighteen fountains (…) the royal marketplace of this city contains 2,045 shops, according to the market inspector's register. But the roads are narrow (…) all the streets in that city are paved with pure white polished stone. (…) There are seven churches in this city, two Jewish, two Armenian, and three Greek. Among them is the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, belonging to the Greeks (…). The wonder of that place is that with so much beautiful adornment, it lacks spirituality; it is more like a tourist attraction. After touring the Church and performing two prostrations in a corner, I prayed that it one day become a Muslim place of worship …

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[58] Most information about bathhouses in Jerusalem relates to the late Ottoman period, but see Dow, *Islamic Baths*, 87–98. Amnon Cohen has published several articles on the construction of the walls and certain buildings in Jerusalem. For an extensive survey and description of Ottoman structures in Jerusalem see Sylvia Auld and Robert Hillenbrand, ed., *Ottoman Jerusalem, the Living City, 1517–1917* (London: Altajir World of Islam Trust, 2000).
[59] For the *waqf* of Khasseki Sultan in Jerusalem, see the studies by Amy Singer, especially *Constructing Ottoman Beneficence: An Imperial Soup Kitchen in Jerusalem* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002).

Images, Views and Landscapes of the Holy Land.
Catholic and Protestant Travels to Ottoman Palestine during the 19th Century

by *Paolo Maggiolini*

Abstract

Rich in historical details and artistic illustrations of the Near East and the Holy Land, the selected accounts of journeys and pilgrimages written by European and American Christians (Catholic and Protestant) provide numerous and broad sets of views, landscapes, sketches and scenarios. This article analyses them in order to define and point out the structure and the ratio of organizing and cataloguing these "epic" stories, and their relationship and connection with the socio-political dimension of the time. In particular, this article analyses the concept and the image produced by Christian missionaries and travelers of various affiliations, thus identifying similarities and differences between their visions of the Holy Land and pointing out to what extent they contributed to the creation of an univocal "Christian" image of the Holy Land during the 19th century and/ or there were perceptible and significant divergences.

- Introduction
- Holy Landscapes and the "Scramble for Palestine" during the 19th Century
- Protestant Pilgrims and Missionaries: Images and Landscapes of the Holy Land
- Catholic Pilgrimages to the Holy Land: Reviving a "New" Moral Order
- Conclusions

Introduction

During the victorious advance of Ottoman troops against the Mamluks that led to Istanbul's conquest of *Bilad al-Sham* in 1516 and Egypt in 1517, Western attitudes and approaches to the Eastern Mediterranean and the Levant slowly began to show an increasing interest in venturing into, discovering and mapping the region. Although limited in number throughout the first three centuries of Ottoman history, during the 16th century, and later becoming more common in the 17th and 18th centuries, the idea of the Grand Tour progressively drove an increasing amount of people bound for to the southern and eastern parts of the Mediterranean basin to learn about the 'other' and themselves, as well as to discover, recover and revive the sites of Biblical history. As a result, during these experiences of travel and encounter the dimension of observation and understanding strongly welded with that of

knowledge of the land being travelled through.[1] Not only pilgrims, but also travelers and, then, from the 19th century on, modern tourist-pilgrims made Ottoman Palestine one of the preferred destinations for a journey increasingly understood as a move from the centre to the periphery,[2] romantically celebrating this region and the wandering among its places with a combination of fascination with the exotic and religious devotion. A growing number of descriptions of the land and its peoples started to circulate along with commentaries, accounts and memoirs of travels and pilgrimages, turning into integral components of what has been described as a political project of colonially dominating the region.[3] This material assemblage favored the interweaving of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Levant with Western Europe,[4] and vice versa, and progressively led to incorporating these regions into the modern world system. Therefore, the 19th century books, paintings and photographs of travels and pilgrimages were not just illustrations of this dynamic, but contributed to stylizing and constructing an image of the "Orient" as a product of a politicized discourse based on a self-evident binary opposition between an "us" and a "them," producing and reproducing a "structure of feeling" that supported, elaborated and consolidated the practice of empire.[5] But the "Orient" of Western colonial appetite, the land invaded by Napoleon between 1798-1801, was also the Holy Land;[6] the "divinely prepared tablet whereupon God's messages to men have been graven in ever-living characters by the Great Publisher of Glad Tidings," as American missionary William Thompson expressed.[7] Ottoman Palestine and the Levant were the lands that brought the Bible to life.[8]

The paper aims at reconsidering the relationship and connection between Western travelers and pilgrims, both Protestant and Catholic, and the land of Palestine throughout the 19th century. It seeks to contextualize their encounters with the Holy Land in the wider historical dynamics that characterized this

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[1] Uzi Baram, "Images of the Holy Land: The David Roberts Paintings as Artifacts of 1830s Palestine," *Historical Archaeology*, 41/1 (2007): 107.

[2] Doron Bar, Kobi Cohen-Hattab, "A New Kind of Pilgrimage: The Modern Tourist Pilgrim of Nineteenth-Century and Early Twentieth-Century Palestine," *Middle Eastern Studies*, 39/2 (2003): 134.

[3] According to Kalman, France alone saw sixty-six pilgrimage accounts produced in the 19th century after the publication of Chateaubriand's work: Fernande Bassan, *Chateaubriand et la Terre Sainte* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France 1959), 226. See also Julie Kalman, "Going Home to the Holy Land: The Jews of Jerusalem in Nineteenth-Century French Catholic Pilgrimage," *The Journal of Modern History*, 84/2 (2012): 343.

[4] Baram, "Images of the Holy Land, 107.

[5] Edward W. Said, *Culture and imperialism* (New York: Knopf, 1993), 14.

[6] Daniel Martin Varisco, "Orientalism and Bibliolatry: Framing the Holy Land in 19th Century Protestant Bible Customs Texts," in *Orientalism Revisited. Art, Land and Voyage*, ed. Ian Netton (London: Routledge, 2012), 186.

[7] William M. Thomson, *The Land and the Book, Biblical Illustrations Drawn from the Manners and Customs, the Scenes and Scenery, of the Holy land* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1880), v.

[8] Varisco, "Orientalism and Bibliolatry," 186.

period. The purpose is to analyze their connection with this land (namely, Ottoman Palestine and the Christian Holy Land) and the content of and rationale behind the images produced during their experiences of traveling and pilgrimage. Given the great number of travelogues printed during the 19th century and the variety of people that headed to this land, the paper does not focus on specific biographies and memoirs but moves freely amongst different sources, both primary and secondary, with the intention of highlighting the core aspects of this dynamic of encounter, pointing out the reasons for and the significance of producing and reproducing a certain image of this land, the Christian Holy Land, out of its real character of Ottoman province.

Holy Landscapes and the "Scramble for Palestine" during the 19th Century

From the beginning of the 19th century, the interest in traveling throughout and mapping Ottoman Palestine and the Levant mixed with the desire to experience these lands to better interpret and consequently immerse oneself in the Bible, leading to what Prior calls "a scramble for Palestine."[9] It was during this period that the image and concept of "the Holy Land *propement dite*," and not the Ottoman province, definitively consolidated, informed the tone and attitude of the numerous surveys, memoirs and accounts produced by "zealous intruders" who sought to rediscover this land to permanently reunite the East and the West.[10] A "gentle crusade"[11] performed by an "artillery of heaven"[12] favoured the emergence of the concept of the Holy Land as a region set apart, simultaneously a *terra incognita* and the well-known Biblical land, "both fetid Oriental wasteland and resplendent biblical garden" as Vogel reveals.[13] This ideal dominated the intellectual Western imagination of the 19th century, as evidenced by the growing usage of the term Holy Land, which is remarkable in view of the fact that it was not a separate political entity at that time.[14] Nonetheless the land of Palestine was not only a territory of exploration and pilgrimage but also a mission land for both Catholics and Protestants.[15]

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[9] Michael Prior, "Holy Places, Unholy Domination: The Scramble for Jerusalem," *Islamic Studies*, 40/3-4 (2001): 509.

[10] Naomi Shepherd, *The Zealous Intruders: the Western Rediscovery of Palestine Describes the Interactions between Western Explorers, Scholars, Artists, Consuls, Tourists, Antiquarians, Archaeologists, and Missionaries and Palestine,* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987), 15.

[11] Ussama Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism: Community, History, and Violence in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Lebanon* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000), 14.

[12] Ussama Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven: American Missionaries and the Failed Conversion of the Middle East* (New York: Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2008), 76.

[13] Lester I. Vogel, *To See a Promised Land: Americans and the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), 216.

[14] Yehosua Ben-Arieh, "Nineteenth Century Historical Geography of the Holy Land," *Journal of Historical Geography*, 15/1 (1989): 70.

[15] Paolo Maggiolini, "Studies and Memorabilia from Palestine and Transjordan. The revival of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the re-discovery of the Holy Land during the 19th century," in *Orientalism Revisited: Art, Land and Voyage*, ed. Ian Richard Netton (London:

Throughout the 19th century, improved access to Ottoman Palestine following the political developments undergone in the region after the military operation of Muhammad 'Ali and his son Ibrahim Pasha within the *Bilad al-Sham* (1831-1841), the promulgation of the *Tanzimat* reforms[16] and the expansion of steamboat voyages across the Mediterranean, facilitated travel for Westerners wishing to wander among the ancient sites of Palestine, their "Holy Land."[17] Inspired either by the desire to revive old religious institutions or the will to set up new ones, increasing numbers of foreign actors flocked to Jerusalem and Ottoman Palestine developing and giving new significance to the image of this land, the Holy Land as it became known colloquially, styling an iconic representation that came to be deeply bound to these new missionary and religious activities. Ottoman Palestine was involved in a wider, multifaceted dynamic of overlapping between different and often contrasting political, diplomatic and religious interests, known as the *Question d'Orient*, becoming one of the sites of colonial encounter[18] with Jerusalem and the holy places as one of the main theatres of conflict.[19] Ottoman Palestine and Jerusalem found their centrality not because of their geopolitical and economic importance but due to their symbolical and spiritual significance, vividly associated in the mind of Europe with the theme of Christian chivalry and the memory of the Crusades.[20]

Routledge, 2012), 165.

[16] Kemal H. Karpat, "The Transformation of the Ottoman State, 1789-1908," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 3/7 (1972): 245; Eugene Rogan, *Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire: Transjordan 1850-1921* (New York, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 9-12; Sükrü M. Hanioglu, *A Brief History of the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008), 80.

[17] The data preserved by the Custody of the Holy Land confirm the increase in the number of pilgrims heading to the Holy Land during the 19th century: 1862 (7,118), 1863 (6,956), 1864 (8,513), 1865 (7,770), 1866 (8,289), 1867 (9,203), 1868 (11,340), 1869 (11,414), 1870 (14,090), 1871 (10,933), 1872 (10,753), 1873 (10,225), 1874 (22,795), 1875 (13,800), 1976 (10,112), 1877 (7,213), 1878 (7,448), 1879 (7,706), 1880 (10,500), 1881 (11,169), 1882 (14,108), 1883 (9,502), 1884 (11,873), 1885 (8,851), 1886 (9,217), 1887 (12,692), 1888 (10,904). Archivio Storico Congregazione per l'evangelizzazione dei Popoli o 'de Propaganda fide', Scritture Riferite nei congressi, Terra Santa e Cipro, Prospetto Generale della Custodia di Terra Santa dall'anno 1862 al 1889, v. 28, 358-387. See also Lucia Rostagno, "Pellegrini italiani a Gerusalemme in età ottomana," *Oriente Moderno*, 78/1 (1998): 88. Between 1853 and 1873, 618 French pilgrims visited the Holy Land. See Kalman, "Going Home to the Holy Land," 352. In 1882, Cook's Tours took 5,000 people to Ottoman Palestine, mostly British. Regarding the second most numerous pilgrims, the Russians, in the same period over 2,000 pilgrims flocked to this territory. Ruth S. Hummel and Thomas Hummel, *Patterns of the Sacred: English Protestant and Russian Orthodox Pilgrims of the Nineteenth Century* (London: Scorpion Cavendish, 1995), 6. In 1889, the first organized American Catholic pilgrimage led 99 faithful to the Holy Land. David Klatzker, "American Catholic Travelers to the Holy Land 1861-1929," *The Catholic Historical Review*, 74/1 (1988): 63.

[18] Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism*, 7.

[19] Haim Goren, "Sacred, but not Surveyed: Nineteenth-Century Surveys of Palestine," *Imago Mundi The International Journal for the History of Cartography*, 54/1 (2002): 87-88.

[20] Shepherd, *The Zealous Intruders,* 12.

Therefore, 19th century Ottoman Palestine arises as the land of multiple and overlapping landscapes which stood out as a "complex lived space (…) generated within historical and spatial dimensions, both real and imagined, immediate and mediated," according to the notion of "third place" employed by Kahn.[21] The Ottoman Palestine Holy Land condensates through its multiple landscapes "complex social spaces constructed out of physical places, socially shaped perceptions of the place, and human interactions in relation to this place, all at the same time," as Long points out.[22] According to the notion of "third scope" drawn by Soja,[23] moving beyond simple and sole dualisms between an "us" and a "them," understanding Ottoman Palestine through its multiple landscapes reveals the intertwined sense of a place where indigenous and colonial aspects become enmeshed over the Ottoman centuries,[24] and where history, space and the social order are "dynamic and constantly interactive dimensions of human life."[25]

Accordingly, the analyses of travelers' and pilgrims' diaries and other publications on the Holy Land make it possible to understand the intersection and interweaving between Ottoman Palestine's multiple landscapes and the 19th century dynamics of political and social change regarding Ottoman history on one hand, and each country and religious milieu of origin of the travelers, missionaries and pilgrims who wandered among this region, on the other.

To a large extent, the rationale for and meaning of the relationship between freedom to physically wander among the Holy places and their direct political control remained an open question and it gained momentum during the 19th century when England, France, Russia and Germany engaged in political and economic rivalry within Ottoman Palestine and most of Ottoman possessions. By the end of the third decade of the 19th century, the progressive establishments of consuls within Jerusalem[26] symbolized this renewed Western political commitment. Moreover, this "scramble for Palestine" also took the form of Western diplomatic support for developing or reviving Christian institutions in Ottoman Palestine and within the Middle East, thereby interweaving Christian missionary efforts with imperialist designs. A new intense and multifaceted concern for the land of Palestine and the city of Jerusalem that undoubtedly was not nourished by religious interest alone.

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[21] Miriam Kahn, "Tahiti Intertwined: Ancestral Land, Tourist Postcard, and Nuclear Test Site," *American Anthropologist*, 102/1 (2000): 8.

[22] Burke O. Long, *Imagining the Holy Land: Maps, Models, and Fantasy Travels* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2003), 5.

[23] Edward W. Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Cambridge and Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 311-312.

[24] Baram, "Images of the Holy Land," 112.

[25] See Soja, *Thirdspace,* 311-312. See also Long, *Imagining the Holy Land,* 5.

[26] The first European power to open a consulate in Jerusalem was Great Britain in 1838. The second was the Kingdom of Sardinia in 1843.

Consequently, the 19th century Holy Land arose as a space contested, materially by Western expanding economic and political influence, and mentally and spiritually by missionaries and pilgrims in search of the Christian wellspring and of a space to "revive" their faith.[27]

Regarding the religious dimension, along with the development of Uniatism, an ecclesiological movement that sought to re-unite the Christian Churches under the primacy of the Holy See, the revival of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem (1847) was a significant aspect of this new phase in the encounter between East and West, which in fact went beyond the religious meaning of the enterprise.[28] At the same time, the development of Protestant activities in the Near East, sponsored by the evangelical movements that grew in importance within Europe and the United States in the wake of a compelling criticism of the disruptive effects of the Industrial Revolution, and the growing British and German interest in Ottoman Palestine and the Levant favored the creation of the Anglican Bishopric of Jerusalem in 1841.[29] Similarly, throughout the 19th century the Russian government promoted the foundation of numerous missionary endeavors and establishments under its direct control, through which Moscow tried to win over local Christian support.[30] The first official Russian mission dates back to the years 1841-1842, when the Tsar entrusted to Archimandrite Porfirij (Konstantin Aleksandrovich Uspeskij) the task of gathering information about the condition of the Greek Orthodox community of Palestine, especially regarding the relationship between the Arab and Greek Christian components. Later on, thanks to the result of Porfirij's mission, the first Russian establishment was permanently founded, incessantly working within Ottoman Palestine until 1917.[31]

The importance and pervasiveness of such activities were well represented by the Ottoman reaction. During the reign of Abdul Hamid II (1876-1909), the Ottoman Empire launched a major initiative aimed at providing a new basis for solidarity among its Islamic subjects, promoting systematic programs of education and its own "missionary" activities to counteract the Western missionary efforts that were considered to be undermining Ottoman legitimacy within the empire and abroad, feeding the Western press with anti-Turkish sentiment.[32] At the same time, the redefinition of the administrative status of Jerusalem – recognized as chief town of the *mutasarrifiyya* of Jerusalem (1872) –

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[27] Long, *Imagining the Holy Land,* 104.

[28] Étienne Fouilloux, "De L'unionisme à l'Oecuménisme," in *Les enjeux de l'uniatisme: dans le sillage de Balamand: catholiques et orthodoxes,* ed. Comité mixte catholique-orthodoxe en France (Paris, Bayard: 2004), 147.

[29] Thomas C. Hummel, "The Christian Protestant Presence in the Middle East," *Bulletin of the Royal Institute for Interfaith Studies,* 7/2 (2005): 97.

[30] See the essay of Simona Merlo published in this issue.

[31] Derek Hopwood, *The Russian Presence in Syria and in Palestine 1843-1917, Church and Politics in the Near East* (Oxford: Clarendon Press Oxford, 1969), 38.

[32] Selim Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876–1909* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 1998), 112.

and its link with Istanbul through a telegraph line (1865) confirmed Ottoman interest in protecting this territory from foreign appetites.[33]

The ideals and objectives that motivated the development of missionary establishments deeply affected the relationship between travellers, missionaries, pilgrims and the land. Ottoman Palestine, the Christian Holy Land, arose as specific *religio loci* in which to promote the "revival" either of Christianity or of Christian religious institutions, both locally and universally; a secure "refuge" for Christianity, a favorite space to develop Christian "reform" through experiencing an immediate relationship with the roots of Christianity. Accordingly, during the 19th century Western missionaries and travellers delineated a new "moral geography"[34] of the Holy Land, a territory celebrated as inherently holy due its Biblical past. However, behind what can be considered one of the many images of the Holy Land developed through history, this specific form of encounter between the "West" and the "East" stood out also because Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries not only contributed to a new "phase" in the century-old sacralisation and semantisation process of the Holy Land, but also because they succeeded in creating and developing new religious communities by converting local Christians, traditionally mainly affiliated with the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem. This objective was achieved thanks to their ability to organize a complex network of charitable and education establishments within the land of Ottoman Palestine and Transjordan that enabled them to territorially embed their presence, giving new significance to the image of the Holy Land. Therefore this dynamic contributed to the creation and promotion of "new" Holy Land landscapes, which, in turn, were shaped by this missionary "competition," both spiritual and physical, to "colonize" and "occupy" the land.

Protestant Pilgrims and Missionaries: Images and Landscapes of the Holy Land

During the 19th century, increasing numbers of American and English citizens of different denominational backgrounds, usually part of the broad Church and the evangelical movement, but also members of some of the dissenting Protestant sects, came into contact with Ottoman Palestine.[35] These very diverse people (pilgrims, tourists, missionaries, preachers, settlers, explorers, archaeologists, Bible scholars and diplomats) were generally clergymen or pious

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[33] Ibid., 112-113.

[34] Amy Derogatis, "Moral Geography: Maps, Missionaries and the American Frontier," *Journal of Religious History*, 32/1 (2008): 124. See also David N. Livingstone, "Text, Talk and Testimony: Geographical Reflections on Scientific Habits," *British Journal for the History of Science*, 38/1 (2005): 97.

[35] Long, *Imagining the Holy Land*, 1.

laypeople who shared a sort of infatuation with the Holy Land, therefore participating in the much broader Western cultural fascination for Palestine and the Levant that demonstrates the ubiquity of the 19th century "mania" for the Holy Land.[36] Combining the allure of exotic adventure with an ennobling zeal to view and walk within the very land where God had enacted His sacred history,[37] they wandered through the Holy Land expressing a common and specific form of devotion, historically and ontologically detached from traditional Orthodox and Catholic involvement with holy sites.[38] In fact, their presences and travels were distinctive for the great emphasis given to the relationship between the Old and New Testament sites and texts.[39] As stated by Rev. Cuthbertson[40] in his record of travels published for the Wesleyan Conference in 1885,[41] Ottoman Palestine was "the land chosen by God as Sanctuary" into which most of Protestant pilgrims poured their expectations of both expanding their understanding of scripture and deepening their faith.[42] Similarly, the encounter with and entry into Jerusalem aroused feelings that were "not easily described. (…) The scenes and events of 4,000 years rushed upon our minds; events in which Heaven, and Earth, and Hell, have felt the deepest interest. This was the place, selected by the Almighty for his dwelling, and here his glory was rendered visible," as Rev. Fisk recalled.[43]

Therefore, the land of Palestine was perceived as the vehicle and the medium for providing "dramatic" spiritual and educational encounters with the essential truth of Christianity,[44] whereas going on pilgrimage, in the words of Rev. Olin in 1844,[45] was "little less than to be naturalized in the Holy Land. Only then does the Bible become real."[46]

This intense desire to return to the Orient of the Biblical past was motivated and facilitated by specific political and religious circumstances and dynamics, which naturally influenced and affected perceptions of the Holy Land.

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[36] Stephanie Stidham Rogers, *Inventing the Holy Land: American Protestant Pilgrimage to Palestine, 1865–1941* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2011), 32.

[37] Hummel, Hummel, *Patterns of the Sacred,* 7.

[38] Glenn Bowman, "Contemporary Christian pilgrimage to the Holy Land," in *The Christian Heritage in the Holy Land*, ed. Anthony O'Mahony (London: Scorpion Cavendish, 1995), 159.

[39] Hummel, Hummel, *Patterns of the Sacred,* 17.

[40] James Cuthbertson was English-born. In 1856 he became Wesleyan minister.

[41] James Cuthbertson, *Sacred and Historic Lands: Being a Record of Travels in Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Greece, Constantinople* (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1885), 42.

[42] Hummel, Hummel, *Patterns of the Sacred,* 7.

[43] Alvan Bond, *Memoir of the Rev. Pliny Fisk, A.M. late missionary to Palestine* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1828), 280.

[44] Stidham Rogers, *Inventing the Holy Land,* 36.

[45] In 1844, Rev. Stephen Olin (1797-1851) published "Travels in Egypt, Arabia Petræa, and the Holy Land" (New-York, Harper & Brothers). He was an American clergyman and educator who traveled for the sake of his health.

[46] John Davis, *The Landscape of Belief: Encountering the Holy Land in Nineteenth-Century American Art and Culture* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press), 13.

From a socio-political perspective, as a part of the growing political and commercial empire connecting London to India, Britain's interest in Egypt and Palestine intensified its influence within Ottoman domains, providing effective protection to Protestant travelers, pilgrims and missionaries, both British and American. As noted by Mr. John Carne in 1823,[47] "the climate" in Ottoman Palestine was "very favorable, and protection would be granted by the [British] Government, on account of the respect in which the British character is held in the Turkish Dominions."[48] Therefore, although many of them were mainly drawn to Ottoman Palestine to see the land of the Bible and for inspiration and edification through its territory, British pilgrims and missionaries were naturally influenced by the 19th century British imperial ideal and were members of a society with great self-confidence and self-esteem concerning their physical and spiritual superiority.[49] Clergy and missionaries went to Ottoman Palestine and the Levant to "convert" their populations and to introduce Western ideas, while pilgrims and travelers headed for this region not only to visit it but also to support this transformative task,[50] wandering among Holy Places, missions and their British schools, and Biblical-site excavations.[51]

Consequently, the Holy Land of Protestant missionaries' and travelers' memoirs and accounts featured landscapes always filtered through their own culture and religion, where "imperialism" and "missions" naturally intertwined.[52] However, unlike their British companions, American missionaries and pilgrims headed for Ottoman Palestine mostly free from oppressive colonialist designs on this territory, coming from a country without direct territorial ambitions in the area. Consequently, their "battle" and "scramble" for Palestine was mainly figurative and the Holy Land represented a crucial site for constructing American imagination, not its power and empire.[53] From the 17th century onwards, the image of the Holy Land had served to consolidate, unify and justify Protestant Americans' territorial claims and only later on did it interwove with the rhetoric of "manifest destiny" and "historic civilizing mission." Accordingly, Americans were the "chosen people" entitled to their land because it was like the Biblical "Promised Land," as Shamir points out.[54] Consequently, this conviction solidly reinforced the

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[47] Mr. John Crane (1789-1844) was a Church minister and formed a Church Missionary Society.

[48] Thomas Durley, *Lethaby of Moab, A Record of Missionary Adventure, Peril, and Toil,* (London & Edinburgh: Marshall Brothers Ltd., 1910), 99.

[49] Hummel, Hummel, *Patterns of the Sacred,* 9.

[50] Ibid., 9.

[51] Shepherd, *The Zealous Intruders,* 181.

[52] Hummel, Hummel, *Patterns of the Sacred,* 9.

[53] Hilton Obenzinger, "Holy Land Narrative and American Covenant: Levi Parsons, Pliny Fisk and the Palestine Mission," *Religion & Literature*, 35/2-3 (2003): 246.

[54] Milette Shamir, " 'Our Jerusalem': Americans in the Holy Land and Protestant Narratives of

association and overlay between Biblical places and characters, and the "geography and destiny of the New World," as related by Obenzinger.[55] However, the trauma of the Civil War (1861-1865) developed this perception and feeling, driving an increasing number of American Protestants to travel to the Holy Land in search of an "external terra firma" on which war wounds could be inspected and healed.[56] The past and traditional image of the Holy Land evolved, losing its symbolic allure to acquire literalization attributes and a more physical tension that served to reinvigorate the national narrative of "promise" and "election."[57]

From this standpoint, the contemporary development of Holy Land tourism and scientific explorations were a sort of "activism," confirming both an infatuation with the Holy Land and growing nationalistic competition.[58]

From a religious perspective, the Holy Land was sought not only because the most sacred texts had been created there, but also as a locus and medium for the continual re-creation and development of new meaning from a theologically satisfying present.[59] Approaching the Holy Land meant entering a reality understood as unchanged and untouched by time, preserved by God for the faithful. Therefore, a widely shared premillennial sentiment in search of renewing the Church created the image of the Holy Land as the natural actor and signifier for this task.[60] In particular, the Holy Land was approached to refute those in the West who were challenging the Bible's divine authority.[61] Interest in its physical geography, as in the case offered by Smith's works,[62] clearly voiced the anxiety felt by a certain theological milieu to reconcile the Book with the geology of the land of Palestine.[63] Following Robinson's[64] teaching regarding Biblical archaeology, the encounter with the Holy Land would provide tangible and empirical evidence of the infallible character of the Bible.[65] An interesting manifestation of the conviction about the strong

National Entitlement," *American Quarterly*, 55/1 (2003): 35.

[55] Obenzinger, "Holy Land Narrative and American Covenant," 243.

[56] Shamir, "Our Jerusalem," 34.

[57] Ibid., 37.

[58] Long, *Imagining the Holy Land,* 132.

[59] Varisco, "Orientalism and Bibliolatry," 191.

[60] Stidham Rogers, *Inventing the Holy Land,* 4.

[61] Varisco, "Orientalism and Bibliolatry," 190.

[62] Sir George Adam Smith (1856-1942) was a Scottish theologian and ministry of the Free Church of Scotland. In 1894, he published "The Historical Geography of the Holy Land," considered one of the classic handbooks on the subject.

[63] Robi Butlin, "George Adam Smith and the Historical Geography of the Holy Land: Contents, Contexts and Connections," *Journal of Historical Geography*, 14/4 (1988): 394.

[64] Edward Robinson (1794-1863) was an American Biblical scholar. He is considered the founder of modern Biblical archaeology and the discoverer of several famous Holy Land artifacts, such as the eponymous Robinson's Arch.

[65] Brian Yothers, *The Romance of the Holy Land in American Travel Writing 1790–1876* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Co., 2007), 23.

relationship between the "Land" and the "Book" and the role Palestine's topography played in Christian morals and salvation, was the "Park of Palestine," called also the Chautauqua Assembly, created by the Methodist Hey Vincent on the shore of Chautauqua Lake in New York State in the 1870s. This particular fictional and miniaturized rendering of the Holy Land physically testified to confidence in "geoscripture," creating a space where the faithful could see the Bible and its truth through a replica of Palestine's geography shaped by those who had seen and written about it.[66]

However, especially from the 1880s on, the role of confirming theological beliefs as a static "artistic" rendering developed further, acquiring the connotations of a geographical myth bearing political and millennial expectations.[67] On the one hand, the Holy Land's physical size was perceived as being "tiny, minuscule" compared to North America; yet it was a "landscape of psyche (…) expansive and broad," as stated by Davis.[68] On the other hand, Protestant efforts in the Holy Land were interpreted as "not to revolutionize this country, but to renovate and make it glorious," along with the new Zion, quoting Elder Orson Hyde's words.[69] At the same time, aside from its role as a stage for theological battles at home and a medium to affirm traditional Protestant piety,[70] the Holy Land stood out as a "missionary field," the "interesting land" of Fisk.[71] The 19th century evangelical movement, promoting unity and cooperation among the various Protestant denominations in spite of their doctrinal disputes, decided to go beyond the boundaries within which it had hitherto operated and, inspired by a strong humanitarian sentiment, invited their affiliates to dedicate themselves to independent missionary activities to promote universal education in the light of the Holy Bible.[72] This Protestant missionary ideal developed from the theological reflection of America's J. Edwards and the British group of "the Wesleyans."[73] They proposed to reconsider and reform the Calvinist thesis of predestination, thus restoring value to personal responsibility and consequently re-evaluating the importance

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[66] Long, *Imagining the Holy Land,* 38-39.

[67] Stidham Rogers, *Inventing the Holy Land,* 36.

[68] Davis John, *The Landscape of Belief: Encountering the Holy Land in Nineteenth-Century American Art and Culture* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), 5.

[69] Elder Orson Hyde (1805-1878) was a leader of the Church of the Latter Day Saints (Mormons) and American missionary in the United States, Europe and the Ottoman Empire between 1847-1875. Orson Hyde, *A voice from Jerusalem: or, A sketch of the travels and ministry of Elder Orson Hyde* (Boston: Albert Morgan, 1842), 19. See also Obenzinger, "Holy Land Narrative and American Covenant," 243.

[70] Stidham Rogers, *Inventing the Holy Land,* 31.

[71] In "The Holy Land, an Interesting Field of Missionary Enterprise." This was the sermon that was preached at the Old South Church in Boston, on 31 October 1819, Sabbath evening, just before the departure of the Palestine Mission. Pliny Fisk (1792-1825) may be considered a pioneer of the Near East mission of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. See also Obenzinger, "Holy Land Narrative and American Covenant," 247.

[72] Paul A. Varg, "Motives in Protestant Missions 1890-1917," *Church History*, 23/1 (1954): 81.

[73] Hummel, "The Christian Protestant Presence," 195.

of conversion and missionary work.[74] Following this development, numerous missionary activities were promoted within the Ottoman empire, mainly sponsored by the Basel Mission Society, the London Jews Society, the Church Mission Society and, finally, by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.[75] This form of evangelical modernity expressed the desire of offering to the non-evangelized world the fruits of secular modernity, especially medicine and education, however tempered by spiritual reform and salvation.[76] Quoting the sermon delivered by Eli Smith[77] at the Park Street Church in 1832, the missionary purpose of evangelical modernity was not "to study ancient Greece and Palestine" but "to reform and save the degenerated and perishing people who now dwell there."[78] Therefore, Ottoman Palestine, the Holy Land of the Bible, arose as the main "mission field," merged with the firm conviction that Protestantism was the only salvation. A vast mission field that, according to Schaff,[79] had to be "conquered with spiritual weapons for Christ and Christian civilization."[80] Accordingly, this conviction produced a sort of "transformation" and "transfiguration" from the theological to the political dimension and vice versa, where the "purity" of Protestant Christianity became the means to revive this land under cultural and religious perspectives, interweaving with an imperialist allure.[81] On the one hand, focusing on the case of North American Protestants, representations of the land of Palestine and the East aided the formation of a Protestant-based nationalism.[82] On the other, in the minds of many Protestant missionaries, Jerusalem should have been an outpost of the Reformation within the Middle East, like England had been during the 18th century. Lethaby[83] styled this association imagining "how Methodism and the Church of England may in Palestine be what they might have been in England last century; and how Moab, Edom and Arabia may be more distinctively our own."[84] Accordingly,

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[74] Ibid., 195.

[75] Odeh Issa A, *Les Minorités Chrétiennes de Palestine à Travers les Siècles: Etude Historico Juridique et Développement Moderne International* (Jérusalem: Franciscain Printing Press, 1977), 213.

[76] Ussama Makdisi, "Reclaiming the Land of the Bible: Missionaries, Secularism, and Evangelical Modernity," *The American Historical Review*, 102/3 (1997): 683.

[77] Eli Smith (1801-1857) was an American missionary and Orientalist.

[78] In "Trials of Missionaries: an address delivered in the Park-Street Church, Boston, on the evening of October 24, 1832, to the Rev. Elias Riggs, Rev. William M. Thomson, and Dr. Asa Dodge, about to embark as missionaries to the Mediterranean." See also Makdisi, "Reclaiming the Land of the Bible," 686.

[79] Philip Schaff (1819-1893) was Swiss-born but spent most of his life in the United State. He was a Protestant theologian and Church historian.

[80] Philip Schaff, *Through Bible Lands: Notes of Travel in Egypt, the Desert, and Palestine* (New York: American Tract Society, 1878), 391.

[81] Hummel, Hummel, *Patterns of the Sacred,* 34.

[82] Hilton Obenzinger, "Holy Land Narrative and American Covenant," 242.

[83] William Lethaby was born in Exeter in 1837. He became a lay preacher in the Union Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States. He founded a Protestant missionary in Karak between 1885 and 1892.

[84] Durley, *Lethaby of Moab,* 65.

Lethaby voiced a widespread idea shared by number of key English intellectuals and religious leaders who associated the Holy Land with England and vice-versa.[85]

This wide and complex matrix of overlapping and intertwining socio-political and theological understandings of the relationship between secular and religious domains deeply affected Protestant perception of 19th century Ottoman Palestine and the Levant. Strong in the conviction of the indissoluble bond between the "Land" and the "Book" as styled by Thomson[86] in 1880, Protestant pilgrims and missionaries did not approach Ottoman Palestine to explore a "terra incognita," because this was "their" Biblical and Holy Land. In fact, the indissoluble association between the "Land" and the "Book" was already part of their souls and minds, as Anderson[87] revealed during his travels: "the mind naturally recurs to the impressions of childhood and the Bible as it is I found to be even now the best guide book for all that was to be seen in the place."[88] Nevertheless, once there they felt it no longer recognizable in its contemporary Ottoman shape. As described by Tent[89] in 1857, "I stood in the road, my hand on my horse's neck, and with my dim eyes sought to trace the outlines of the holy places which I had long before fixed in my mind. (...) The more I gazed, the more I could not see."[90] This feeling caused a sort of distancing dynamic which characterized the 19th century Protestant experience in the Holy Land.[91] Integrally part of their spiritual heritage but nevertheless so unfamiliar, the Holy Land became an "idea" to be sought, motivating Protestant wandering among this land to make it speak in the language of their tradition. [92] Only apparently contradictory, distancing themselves from Ottoman Palestine helped Protestant missionaries and pilgrims to better connect to Biblical places and times, entailing a precise process of acquisition and transformation of the land and its inhabitants. Distancing was possible because the land was considered not "holy" *per se*, but the holiness was the consequence of appropriate thoughts, experiences and approaches to the land. Accordingly, in 1885 Rev. Cuthbertson asserted "I pay little attention to what men designate the value of identical places, for the good reason that no merit

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[85] Eitan Bar-Yosef, *The Holy Land in English Culture 1799-1917: Palestine and the Question of Orientalism* (Oxford: English Monographs, 2005), 8.

[86] William McClure Thomson (1806-1894) was an American Presbyterian clergyman and missionary who traveled in the Holy Land between 1880-1886.

[87] Edward Clifford Anderson was a young midshipman on the U.S. Constitution, "Old Ironsides," son of a prominent and wealthy family of Savannah, Georgia. He visited the Holy Land in 1837.

[88] Stanley W. Hoole, "A Visit to the Holy Land in 1837," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 95/4 (1975): 638.

[89] William Cowper Prime (1825–1905) was an American journalist, art historian and travel writer.

[90] William C. Prime, *Tent Life in the Holy Land* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1857), 56.

[91] Makdisi, "Reclaiming the Land of the Bible," 688.

[92] Hummel, Hummel, *Patterns of the Sacred,* 1.

or moral value can belong to the place per se."[93] And similarly, in 1883 Bell[94] explained: "it does not matter if, after all, we are not able to localize the scenes of the greatest event (…) It is not the place which is of importance, but the event itself."[95] Given the role of the Bible as the primary means of God's communication according to Protestants, the Holy Land arose as the crucial "revealer," a channel and a sacrament. The Holy Land was not just a "tableau," an illustration, but was a "memory" which represented God's revelation to those who participate in faith.[96] Accordingly, the relationship between the "Land" and the "Book" elevated the Holy Land to the Fifth Gospel. In fact, "the land of Jesus so harmonizes with the four written Gospels, and so unfolds and enlarges their meaning that it forms around them a Fifth Gospel," as Otts[97] explained in 1893.[98]

Moreover, distancing also meant eliminating and removing any superstitions or idolatrous ideas that arose from the hallowed soil of Palestine.[99] This entailed dismissing traditional Orthodox and Catholic forms of devotion and naturally brought Protestants into Palestine's out-of-doors. It was, in fact, within this dimension that was possible for them to return to and embrace the "most simple, untraveled reflection of the Bible and its geographical sources," as Rogers said.[100] It was within "quiet spots, apart from the city" that Protestant pilgrims, travelers and missionaries were able to find Jesus.[101] Palestinian landscapes became the locus of Protestant pilgrimages and the out-of-doors became the crucial site for meditation and worship, allowing Protestant pilgrims to experience the same sort of feeling that Fisk recalled at the beginning of the 19th century: "I love to reflect as I walk over the plain of Nazareth, and the hills around it, that our Lord and Savior used to walk over the same ground."[102] At the same time, this entitled Protestants to embrace the historical-geographical uniqueness of the Holy Land, because geography not only influenced its history, but was also responsible for its having become "holy."[103]

Performed individually and to a certain extent widely creative in its stance, this

[93] Cuthbertson, *Sacred and Historic Lands,* 61.
[94] Charles Dent Bell (1818-1898) was an Irish-born poet and clergyman.
[95] Charles D. Bell, *Gleanings from a Tour in Palestine and the East* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1883), 89.
[96] Hummel, Hummel, *Patterns of the Sacred,* 27.
[97] John M. P. Otts (1838-1880) was a successful American writer on Scriptural subjects. He was ordained pastor in the Southern Assembly of Presbyterian Churches in 1863.
[98] John M. P. Otts, *The Fifth Gospel: The Land where Jesus Lived* (London: Fleming H. Revell, 1893), 5.
[99] Hummel, Hummel, *Patterns of the Sacred,* 17.
[100] Stidham Rogers, *Inventing the Holy Land,* 127.
[101] Long, *Imagining the Holy Land,* 100.
[102] Bond, *Memoir of the Rev. Pliny Fisk,* 342.
[103] Yossi Ben-Arieh, "Nineteenth Century Historical Geography of the Holy Land," *Journal of Historical Geography*, 15/1 (1989): 76.

out-of-doors wandering culminated in the codification of a Protestant form of pilgrimage. Thanks also to Thomas Cook's organized pilgrimages which opened Holy Land pilgrimages to middleclass Protestants, throughout the 19th century a predictable pattern and path of pilgrimage was defined, passing through Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Hebron, the Dead Sea, Jericho, the Jordan River, Galilee, Nazareth and Mt. Tabor, and a specific Protestant liturgy of pilgrimage was devised with readings of particular scriptural passages, praying special prayers at particular locations and singing appropriate hymns.[104] Consequently, Protestant missionaries and pilgrims, especially the American, focused on building up a rational and readable Palestine out of the concrete Ottoman province,[105] "avoiding the multiple sites inhabited by monks and applying to the local Arab information," as suggested by Robinson.[106] Robinson's experience depicted the 19th century Protestant will to evaluate other sources and fresh observations in order to distinguish between "genuine" and "legendary" Biblical sites, thereby strengthening belief in the Bible's historical reliability.[107]

Their avoidance of Catholic and Orthodox shrines expressed their intimate refusal of what was considered primitive and, at the same time, "over-civilized" in terms of ceremony, religious architecture and liturgy.[108] Moreover, it was also their concerted expression of outright refusal of what they considered to be "idolatry" and "materialism," dissociating and distancing themselves from Catholic and Orthodox imagery to follow their personal spiritual way towards and through the Holy Land.[109] At the same time, trust in "the local Arab information" responded perfectly to their specific geographical mythology and imagination of the local population as the "unchanged" depositary of Biblical message. The quest for the "historical Bible" brought most of them to establish a near-equation of ancient Jews with contemporary Ottoman Arab Muslims, justifiably because the Orient was a-historical and monolithic and the Bible was the repository of contemporary information about it and vice-versa.[110] Descriptions of current inhabitants' practices could convince and prove that life in the Holy Land was to be "trusted as theology."[111]

Nevertheless, while ignoring and distancing themselves from the socio-political, historical and cultural changes occurring in the land of Palestine over

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[104] Stidham Rogers, *Inventing the Holy Land,* 39.

[105] Ibid., 40.

[106] Edward G. Robinson, Eli Smith, *Biblical Researches in Palestine, Mt. Sinai, and Arabia Petrea: A Journal of Travels in the Year 1838,* Vol III (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1841), 345.

[107] Long, *Imagining the Holy Land,* 133.

[108] Stidham Rogers, *Inventing the Holy Land,* 17.

[109] Ibid., 139.

[110] Ivan Kalmar "Arabizing the Bible: Racial Supersessionism in Nineteenth Century Christian Art and Biblical Criticism," in *Orientalism Revisited*, ed. Ian Netton (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 177.

[111] Varisco, "Orientalism and Bibliolatry," 197.

the centuries, many pilgrims and missionaries oscillated between positions of fascination with a population "original" in its essence and remonstrance and contempt for what they considered savage and backward.[112] Accordingly, the 19th century land of Palestine and its inhabitants emerged both as a sort of "baroque in the desert" and as the locus of "evidence" in a trial of faith, as depicted by Shepherd.[113] Within the continuum defined by the different combinations of condemnation with fascination and vice-versa, Protestants referred to the Jews as the symbol and source of the "permanent curse" upon the land of Palestine. Therefore they took a front seat in what can be considered a sort of social cosmogony of the "iniquity," because "the Messiah came 1800 years ago, and your fathers rejected him, and you persist in their course of unbelief; for though the evidence from your own prophets is clear, abundant, you refuse to believe" as Rev. Fisk explained.[114] In another passage, Rev. Fisk recounted that "we felt as though Jerusalem were a place accursed of God, and given to iniquity. The Jews hate the name of Christ, and if you mention it, they will almost gnash upon you with their teeth. The Turks exalt the name of their impious prophet above the name of Jesus, and are pre-eminent for hypocrisy, oppression, and falsehood. The Geeks and Armenians profane the temple of the Lord, and know very little of true Christianity. The Roman Catholics thunder out their excommunication against all, who distribute or receive the Scriptures."[115] At the same time, especially by the 1880s, this approach began to be coupled with another discourse, millennial in its stance. Already in 1842, Elder Orson pointed out that "this land belongs to the Jews; and the present formation thereof shows to me that it is fast working back into the hands of its rightful heirs. God will, in due time, drive out the Canaanites, so that no more a Canaanite shall be found in the land, or in the house of the Lord."[116] Interweaving with a widespread political acceptance of Zionism, 19th century Palestine was increasingly described and promoted as the land that should be "Israel" again, just as it was in the days of the Bible and fulfilling its prophecy.[117] From this standpoint, in 1880 Oliphant[118] explained that "the restoration of the Jews to Palestine has been so often urged upon sentimental or Scriptural grounds, that now, when it may possibly become the practical and common-sense solution of a great future difficulty, a prejudice against it exists in the minds of those who have always regarded it as a theological chimera, which is not easy to remove."[119]

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[112] Stidham Rogers, *Inventing the Holy Land,* 13.

[113] Shepherd, *The Zealous Intruders,* 72.

[114] Bond, *Memoir of the Rev. Pliny Fisk*, 197.

[115] Ibid., 294.

[116] Hyde, *A voice from Jerusalem*, 34.

[117] Stidham Rogers, *Inventing the Holy Land,* 15.

[118] Laurence Oliphant (1829-1888) was a famous British writer, traveler, mystic millenialist and diplomat. See Philip Henderson, *The Life of Laurence Oliphant* (London: Robert Hale Ltd, 1956).

[119] Laurence Oliphant, *The Land of Gilead, With Excursions in the Lebanon* (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1880), xxxiii. Also quoted in Maggy Hary, "The Holy Land in British eyes: sacred geography and the 'rediscovery' of Palestine, 1839-1917," in

As a result, the people of Palestine served the Protestant process of acquiring and transforming the land, allowing them to make the Holy Land more Protestant and Biblical. As a result, issues related to the contemporary native population, as well as to the shape and conditions of the socio-political system, are generally ignored or touched upon solely for the purpose of reconstructing and depicting Biblical images within a contemporary situation.

By the end of the 19th century, Protestants had already created a complex image of their Holy Land, both spiritual and physical, through precise landscapes and a wide matrix of missionary establishments, tourist and pilgrimage routes, schools and archaeological excavations. The landscapes were created not only by paralleling traditional Catholic and Orthodox shrines (e.g. the alternate Golgotha and General Gordon's Tomb), but also by appropriating Palestine's landscapes so they would become their sacred Biblical spaces.[120]

Catholic Pilgrimages to the Holy Land: Reviving a "New" Moral Order

Devoted to the conviction and ideal that pilgrimage served as "a revitalization of spiritual energies drained by involvement in the labors of secular world," as Bowman points out,[121] Catholic pilgrimages as well as the physical presence of Catholic religious establishments within the Holy Land paint a history that passes through the centuries. Therefore, unlike the case of Protestants, the 19th century does not represent the codification of a "tradition," but the revival of ancient "traditions," the reinvigoration of an interrupted commitment to and concern for the Holy Land. A unusual symbol of such a devotion, in 1893 Pope Leo XIII held the eighth International Eucharistic Congress in Jerusalem, granting the Cross of Honor to anyone making the pilgrimage to the Holy Land.[122]

Similarly to Protestant pilgrims and missionaries, for Catholics this territory aroused quite the same emotions and feelings, especially regarding its contemporary Ottoman shape. However, these were not just symptoms of bewilderment towards an unrecognizable landscape, but more of a mixed sentiment of compassion and contempt for the contemporary socio-political situation, in particular when perceived as not respecting the Church and its establishments. Contemporary Ottoman Palestine, especially regarding its Muslim dimension, was almost ignored or, at least, relegated to the picturesque.[123] In fact, the Ottoman Empire and its Muslim subjects were

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Encountering Otherness. Diversities and Transcultural Experiences in Early Modern European Culture, ed. Guido Abbattista (Trieste: EUT Edizioni Università di Trieste, 2011), 348.

[120] Stidham Rogers, *Inventing the Holy Land,* 136.

[121] Bowman, "Contemporary Christian pilgrimage," 157.

[122] Klatzker, "American Catholic Travelers," 60.

[123] Shepherd, *The Zealous Intruders*, 72.

frequently mentioned only in regard to the Holy Places and Church establishments,[124] or as repositories of imaginary legends that aroused their interest because of their accordance with Biblical traditions, as exemplified by De Wandelbourg's work.[125] This imaginary viewpoint was particularly strong when associated with the Bedouins that De Wandelbourg described as living "entirely in the traditions of the past (…) that have not changed by the introduction of European customs,"[126] with their women that are depositaries of a nature "naïve and wild," part of a community characterized by "piety and fervor."[127]

Unlike Protestants and their Millennialist vision regarding the condition and presence of Jews, most of the Catholic pilgrims and travelers were characterized either by aloofness, ignoring Jewish existence or recounting it just to provide a proper memorial of Jesus' life, or by a more bitter contempt and disdain for this community, reinforcing the grievous accusations of deicide and ritual murder.[128] Therefore, not accidental in Catholic travelogues was the revival of ignominious accusations and slanders against the Jews, such as the use of Christian blood for baking unleavened bread for Passover. For example, in 1871 Eugene Vetromile[129] recalled the fallacious case of Father Thomas, a Capuchin, who in 1840 "together with a lay brother, an Arab, were brutally murdered in Damascus by the Jews. (…) The Jews seized them and bled them to death, in order to put their blood, because Christian blood, into their unleavened bread for Passover."[130]

At the same time, this rhetoric of remonstrance was frequently structured by combining a sort of marginalization and underplaying of the Jewish presence within the Holy Land with stress on their "miserable" and "degenerated" condition. In 1857, Father Alessandro Bassi[131] devoted a full chapter of his travelogue (Chapter 10) to the description of Muslims and Jews in Palestine. The author mainly focused on the Muslim presence and Islam, dedicating to

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[124] Haussmann A. De Wandelbourg, *Études Et Souvenirs Sur l'Orient Et Ses Missions: Palestine, Syrie Et Arabie, Visitées Avec Mgr. Valerga, Patriarche De Jérusalem, Vicaire Apostolique D'Alep, Délégat De Syrie*, Tomes I-II, (Lyon: Berche Et Tralin, 1883), 89, 110.

[125] The Baron Haussmann de Wandelbourg was a Mitred Abbot, Canon of the Holy Sepulcher, and a French doctor of Theology of the Pontifical University in Rome. Ibid., p. 262.

[126] Ibid., p. 306.

[127] Ibid., p. 255.

[128] Egal Feldman, *Catholics and Jews in Twentieth Century America* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 33.

[129] Eugene Vetromile (1819-1881) was Italian-born. In 1840, he moved to United States where he was ordained a Catholic priest and became a missionary among the Indians.

[130] Eugene Vetromile, *Travels in Europe, Egypt, Arabia Petræa, Palestine and Syria* (New York: D. & J. Sadlier & co., 1871), 250. See also Moshe Ma'oz, "Changes in the Position of the Jewish Communities of Palestine and Syria in mid-nineteenth century," in *Studies on Palestine during the Ottoman Period,* ed. Moshe Ma'oz (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1975), 146-150.

[131] Alessandro Bassi was Italian-born. Member of the Friars Minor of St. Francis, he was a theologian of the Apostolic Delegation of Arabia and Egypt.

Jews only three pages out of the ten that comprised the chapter. While the author subjectively delineates the main aspects that characterized Islam and Muslim practices, he almost ignores the Hebrew tradition, reducing their history to the revival of their persecutions and expulsions.[132] They are part of the "landscape," but without any accepted "right" and "autonomous" role. The purpose is to reduce them and their conduct to the "irrational" and "obscure," underlining that their presence in the land of Palestine is almost totally composed of foreigners, as Bassi recalls: "a strange force binds them there: a mysterious attraction dragged them from the most remote districts, not as the Christian pilgrims, to visit going through their ancient homeland, but to settle down, and prepare the grave. In Palestine they are about eight thousand, but all of them are foreigners or descendants of foreigners. You would say that they are forever condemned to witness the fulfillment of the prophecies of Christ who was killed there, and the fierce curses, pronounced by their fathers in the act of killing Him, *His blood be on us, and on our children.*"[133]

The relationship with local Eastern Christianity, on the contrary, presented a more nuanced allure, between admiration and blame. On the one hand, Orthodoxy came to represent the "inacceptable" in the Holy Land, a voice within the larger group of "heretics," "schismatics" and "enemies" of Catholicism[134] that was rhetorically employed to assert the inherent rightness of the Catholic presence in the Holy Land and the Levant. As Vincenzo Vannutelli[135] explained in 1879, "there is only one issue that the Protestants share with the schismatics of the East: they hate the Roman Church (…) like Herod and Pilate who, despite being enemies to each other, agreed to condemn to death the Divine Redeemer."[136] On the other hand, especially after the second half of the 19th century, as a consequence of the development of the Catholic presence within Ottoman Palestine and the Levant and the progress of the Uniatism movement, Orthodoxy was increasingly regarded with interest for its possibility of achieving "the union between the Christians of the Orient and the West (…) the most beautiful day in the history of the Church," as Vanutelli said.[137]

Therefore, similarly to Protestants, Ottoman Palestine inhabitants were generally subservient to a specific Catholic landscape of the Holy Land, understood and depicted according to both the Bible and Christian history, and to the most recent developments of the Roman Church in Ottoman Palestine

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[132] Alessandro Bassi, *Pellegrinaggio storico e descrittivo di Terrasanta,* Vol I (Torino: Tip. Subalpina di Artero e Cotta, 1857), 115.
[133] Ibid., 116.
[134] Kalman, "Going Home to the Holy Land," 363.
[135] Vincenzo Vannutelli (1836-1930) was Italian-born. He spent most of his life in the Vatican Secretariat of State. In 1892, he became Prefect of the economy of Propaganda Fide and held that position for the following ten years.
[136] Feldman, *Catholics and Jews*, 144.
[137] Ibid., 99.

and the Levant.

Therefore, the land of Palestine was seen as a sacred and holy territory due to its Biblical history, and it was inspected and checked for "evidence" of the accuracy of the Bible,[138] according to the conviction that "in order to better understand the Bible, it would be advantageous to study in Palestine, even nowadays (…). In the Old, and in the New Testament there is no description of Jewish customs, as far as they are dissimilar from our own, that cannot find a real validation" as described by Father Alessandro Bassi.[139] Simultaneously, Ottoman Palestine was understood to be a land that needed to be revived and rescued from neglect,[140] because "no country was more glorious then Palestine, none was more wretched," as again stated by Bassi.[141] Nevertheless, according to numerous Catholic pilgrims, travelers and missionaries, Holy Land landscapes went beyond the limits of Biblical revelation connecting sacred and profane history, permeating them with a romantic allure. According to Bassi, this was the land that saw "the greatest men of the centuries, David and the Maccabees, Alexander and the Lagidis, Christ and his Apostles, [and] Godfrey and his crusaders consecrated by the muse of Tasso."[142] Furthermore, the Holy Land was a site where "every ruin that one finds there recalls some extinguished people: every mountainside repeats the echo of a prophetic poem: each stream recounts a miracle: every valley witnessed scenes of fierce battles, defeats and triumphs."[143] Whereas "America is named the *new world* (...) Palestine, Syria and the rest of the Orient may be named the *old world*, since almost nothing is new; on the contrary, everything is ancient," as Vannutelli wrote in 1879.[144]

At the same time, far from being a solely religious phenomenon, the reinvigorated Catholic involvement in the Holy Land was deeply influenced by the political interests of the Great Powers, especially as to French Catholics. More than a simple consequence of or adaptation to a colonial project, French Catholics saw in the Holy Land and the Levant the site in which to pour their concern about their role and position within the 19th century French nation and state. Accordingly, the Holy Land gained the attribute of "refuge" for Europe's faithful.[145] Differently from what Chateaubriand wrote in 1806, believing himself to be probably "the last Frenchman to leave my country to travel to the Holy Land, with the ideas, the goals, and the sentiments of an old pilgrim,"[146] during the 19th century French Catholic pilgrimages increased and

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[138] Shepherd, *The Zealous Intruders,* 71.
[139] Bassi, *Pellegrinaggio storico e descrittivo di Terrasanta*, XIII.
[140] Shepherd, *The Zealous Intruders*, 73.
[141] Bassi, *Pellegrinaggio storico e descrittivo di Terrasanta*, X.
[142] Ibid., IX.
[143] Ibid., X.
[144] Vannutelli, *Uno sguardo alle missioni d'oriente*, 52.
[145] Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism*, 18-19.
[146] François-René de Chateaubriand, *Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem* (Paris: Gallimard, 2005), 75–76.

developed as an expression of attachment to a specific "imagined" notion of Frenchness and as a reaction to the turbulent century that the Church was experiencing within the country.[147] Bewildered by the difficult political circumstances occurring during the first half of the 19th century – which saw continued monarchical successions followed by the Second Republic and then the coup d'état of Napoleon III in 1851 and, finally, the Third Republic in 1870 – pilgrimages represented one of the voices of a wider revival of religious practice and popular piety.[148] Accordingly, pilgrimages to the Holy Land, along with other popular pilgrimages, became a means and signifier for recreating, reinvigorating and protecting the vitality of the Catholic community within contemporary France.[149]

A quite similar picture may be drawn from memoirs and accounts written by missionaries, clerics and travelers of Italian origin. During a century that saw the unification of Italy under the Savoy monarchy and the consequent loss of secular power by the Vatican, Italian Catholics tended to be silent about their contemporary country. Italy entered their narrative only in relation to the Church, as Vannutelli said at the end of his account. "Here we are in Italy, this beautiful country at the centre of the Mediterranean, from which the Church radiates throughout the world, and which is severely under the attack of a large number of its degenerated sons."[150] Accordingly, the "Orient" with the Holy Land at its heart became not only the "archive of world history"[151] or a safe place in which to take refuge, but the "stronghold" from which Catholics could "assure the Church a great future not only within these regions (…) but all over the entire world."[152] Vannutelli made a clear invitation to Catholics to commit themselves to the "Orient," reacting against "the ambitious aims of human politics" in the name of Catholicism and the Church.[153]

Similarly, during the 19th century and in particular after the Civil War, American Catholics flocked to the Holy Land because of their personal experiences at home. However, the Holy Land was not understood as the "refuge" of American Catholicism, but the site expressing the vitality and progress of the American Catholic community. Sharing with their Protestant compatriots the desire to visit Europe and the Near East and benefiting from progress in means of transportation and the development of mass tourism companies, American Catholic pilgrimages gave voice to and manifested the advancement of the American Catholic Church in North America. Through

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Also quoted in Kalman, "Going Home to the Holy Land," 335.

[147] In 1853, the Society of Saint-Vincent-de-Paul organized the first caravan departing from Marseille; 53 would be the total amount of caravans between 1853 and 1973. Ibid., 335, 352.

[148] Ibid., 341.

[149] Ibid., 335.

[150] Vannutelli, *Uno sguardo alle missioni d'oriente*, 181.

[151] Ibid., 181.

[152] Ibid., 29.

[153] Ibid., 29.

their travels and pilgrimages, they gave a public show of orthodoxy.[154] Essentially inspired by Catholic incarnationalism and sacramentalism,[155] American pilgrimages served a conservative function and memoirs and accounts of them aimed at providing American Catholics with the information ignored in Protestant travel books, as Vetromile explained. "Catholics of this country (…) have no books of travel other than those written by Protestant tourists, who frequently misrepresent, perhaps unintentionally, the real custom of Catholic countries, and sneer at the practices, manners, religion, etc., of Catholic nations."[156]

Despite the growing interest in the Holy Land, during the 19th century the number of American Catholic pilgrims to the Holy Land never equaled that of American Protestants. On one hand, the American Catholic Church was still much concerned about the consolidation and development of its presence and structure in the country.[157] The first organization in charge of managing a pilgrimage to the Holy Land was in fact created only in 1880, performing the first pilgrimage in 1889.[158] On the other hand, up to the second decade of the 20th century American Catholics did not refer specifically to the "Holy Land," preferring to speak of "Holy Places," thereby referring to different destinations for pilgrimages around the world, including Rome.[159]

Clearly, different interpretations and rhetorical images were employed in voicing this wide and shared sentiment of religious fervor mixed with nostalgia and romantic allure. More secular in his stance, Chateaubriand offers an example of the intertwining and overlapping between the attachment to and pride in France, and the myth of the Crusades and the Kingdom of Jerusalem: "French chevaliers (…) re-established the Kingdom of Jerusalem (…) [and] at the Calvary you can see the sword of Godfrey of Bouillon, which, in its ancient sheath, seems still to guard the Holy Sepulcher."[160] This particular version of Catholic nationalism, which supported the legitimacy of French interests in the Holy Land and the Levant through the "nationalization" of the Crusades, was followed by the expansion of ecclesiastical institutions and religious orders.[161] This second attitude, not completely detached from the former, analyzed and evaluated the interaction between politics and religion from the sole perspective of the Church and Catholicism. In 1851, for example, Mgr. Jacques Mislin[162] decided to introduce his *Les Saint Lieux, Pèlerinage à Jérusalem* by

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[154] Klatzker, "American Catholic Travelers," 65.

[155] Ibid., 66.

[156] Vetromile, *Travels in Europe, Egypt, Arabia Petræa*, 13.

[157] Klatzker, "American Catholic Travelers," 74.

[158] Ibid., 63.

[159] Feldman, *Catholics and Jews,* 31.

[160] de Chateaubriand, *Itinéraire,* 301. In Kalman, "Going Home to the Holy Land," 348.

[161] Kalman, "Going Home to the Holy Land," 341.

[162] Mgr Jacques Mislin (1807-1878) was born in Alsace. He was ordained a Catholic priest in 1830. Member of numerous academic societies, he wrote a number of historical and religious

noticing that during the publication of his work "two events of highest importance happened, which were connected to objects treated [in his book]: the freedom given to the church in the Austrian monarchy, and the claim to the Holy Places made by the Catholic powers."[163] Similarly, Bassi intertwined politics and religious dimensions associating his personal defense of the Franciscan Custody and hope for the Holy See's decision to revive the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem (1847) with the role of France "once again strongly Christian,"[164] exhorting this country to "finally remember [the Franciscan Custody], and (…) tie again the chain of its traditional protection, begun with Louis the Holy, followed by Francis I, Henry IV, and by Louis XIV and XV, despite their being so different."[165] Different in tone, but similar in its rationale, in 1883 De Wandelbourg gave voice to a milieu that was deeply attached to the Roman Church. In fact, during the last decades of the 19th century he entered into debate with European Catholic powers when perceiving that their politics were manipulating religious issues to forward their own interests. This was the case of France, which according to De Wandelbourg was choking the "real" French nation, Catholic in its essence, with atheism, secularism and modernism.[166] Therefore, the Holy Land was seen as a "refuge"[167] and "stronghold" thanks to the immanent presence of the Divine and to the successful revival of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem (and consequently of the Roman Church) that was more powerful than the transient temporality of secular politics.[168] Accordingly, Catholic descriptions of travels and pilgrimages to the Holy Land and the Levant gave voice to conflicting sentiments. On the one hand, they sympathized with the difficult political position of the Ottoman Empire, under siege by Western powers, in particular seeing the possibility of increasing the role and presence of the Church among these lands and their Eastern Christian inhabitants. On the other, the intuition of a totally different future for the "Orient" left them disoriented in the face of Western power-plays, reinforcing their attachment to the Catholic Church, the only power that "can save these nations, to whatever government they would be subjected," as stated by Vannutelli.[169]

Although not frequently or openly quoted in Catholic memoirs and accounts of pilgrimages to the Holy Land, the revival of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem well represented the increasing interest of Roman Catholics and the Holy See in Ottoman Palestine and the Levant during the 19th century. Along

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tracts.

[163] Jacques Mislin, *Les saints lieux, pèlerinage à Jérusalem* (Paris: Besaçon, Typographie d'Outhenin Chalandre Fils, 1851), I.

[164] Bassi, *Pellegrinaggio storico e descrittivo di Terrasanta*, 21.

[165] Ibid., Vol. II, 26.

[166] Shepherd, *The Zealous Intruders*, 184. André Latreille, Jean Remy Palanque, Etienne Delaruelle, René Rémond, *Histoire du catholicisme en France* (Paris: Edition Spes, 1960), 408.

[167] Maggiolini, "Studies and Memorabilia from Palestine and Transjordan," 166.

[168] De Wandelbourg, *Études Et Souvenirs Sur l'Orient Et Ses Missions*, 109.

[169] Vannutelli, *Uno sguardo alle missioni d'oriente*, 29.

with issues concerning the Canonical aspect of the institutional controversy with the Franciscan Custody, the inter-faith dimension and the diplomatic repercussions of the enterprise,[170] the resurgence of the Latin Patriarchate exerted a great influence on the religious geography of Palestine. The revival of this ancient ecclesiastical institution integrated with a wider process of "acquisition" and "re-sacralisation" of the Holy Land, where the sacred dimension was involved with and drew meaning from social and political relationships resulting in a new geography of this land.[171] Accordingly, the rediscovery of Palestine, the Holy Land *proprement dite*, became part of the revival process of the Latin Patriarchate, as not only revealed and re-discovered, formed or constructed in its boundaries and geography, but claimed, owned and contested through the development of a wide system of missionary establishments.[172]

In De Wandelbourg's work this particular dynamic is at the heart of his narration, describing the first pastoral visit of patriarch Mgr. Valerga. Similarly to other Catholic accounts and memoirs, to him the landscape was a stage on which Biblical and past events can be played out, a *religio loci*.[173] However, his work is distinctive from other forms of scriptural geography because the Holy Land of the present was not only subservient to the holy landscape's Biblical past,[174] but was also the place where the "revival" of the Latin Patriarchate and the Roman Catholic Church was achieving success. This aspect modified the perception of the territory as unchanging and timeless in favor of a circular dimension of time.[175] Accordingly, the Catholic Holy Land became the site for revitalizing the spirit and remitting sin as well as the locus where the Church revived its role as mediator with God in the land where his redemptive activity was accomplished.

Accordingly, pilgrimage guides, for example the *Guide-indicateur des sanctuaires et lieux historiques de la Terre Sainte* by Liévin de Hamme, were generally less concerned with describing the land and its inhabitants than with providing "the required information for anyone visiting the Nativity and the Calvary, to learn, in a word, how one can accomplish a voyage to the Holy Land (…) [to] draw a more extensive and deeper knowledge of the Places which were the cradle of our religion, and (…) revive one's faith in and love for Our Holy Jesus Christ."[176] Liévin de Hamme's work was eminently a guide for pilgrims that

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[170] Paolo Pieraccini, *Il Ristabilimento del Patriarcato Latino di Gerusalemme e la Custodia di Terra Santa, la dialettica istituzionale al tempo del primo patriarca Mons. Giuseppe Valerga (1847-1872),* (Cairo, Jerusalem: The Franciscan Centre of Christian Oriental Studies, 2006), 4.

[171] Lily Kong, "Mapping 'New' Geographies of Religion: Politics and Poetics in Modernity," *Progress in Human Geography*, 25/2 (2001): 213.

[172] Maggiolini, "Studies and Memorabilia from Palestine and Transjordan," 166.

[173] Edwin J. Aiken, *Scriptural Geography, Portraying the Holy Land*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 2009), 99.

[174] Ibid*.,* 73.

[175] Maggiolini, "Studies and Memorabilia from Palestine and Transjordan," 169.

[176] Liévin de Hamme, *Guide-indicateur des sanctuaires et lieux historiques de la Terre Sainte*, Quatrième

focused on giving useful information about prices, means of transportation and catalogues of "Sanctuaries of first class" and "Sanctuaries of second class," thereby instructing priests about where and what kinds of celebration were allowed.[177] Nonetheless, similar aims and sentiments normally embraced and motivated Catholic travelers and pilgrims who wrote accounts and memoirs. Aimed at fulfilling the requests of many Catholic clerics and monks to gain new and useful insights into the ancient and modern East, Biblical archaeology, interpretations of the Holy Texts and the socio-political conditions of the Near East regarding Catholic interests,[178] Catholic memoirs and accounts (such as *Etudes et Souvenirs de l'Orient* or *Pellegrinaggio storico e descrittivo di Terrasanta*) appear to be an accumulation of literary genres on Palestine. In these works, scriptural-geographical apologetics coalesced with travelers' and pilgrims' tales creating a "structure of feeling"[179] between the author and his readers deeply circumscribed within the specific cultural and institutional environment[180] of the Vatican and Catholic Europe. Accordingly, as for example Bassi stated in his introduction, the main objective of these works was to "sketch on purpose, not Palestine properly, but the Christian Sanctuaries which still endure, and to act as a guide to mine countrymen, who will go on pilgrimage."[181]

Therefore, these guides, accounts and memoirs, which often contained journal entries, letters, essays and even semi-fictional material, were mainly concerned with describing the religious meaning of the land and frequently were didactic and sentimental in their stance.[182] Moreover, given the fact that most of the Catholic travelers were priests and laymen belonging to the aristocracy or haute bourgeoisie,[183] their authors were not simply individuals or independent travelers, and were often supported by institutions or governments.[184] Accordingly, although their individual freedom and ability to represent, portray, characterize and depict have to be respected, the "what" and the "how" in their representation of "things" was inevitably circumscribed and socially regulated[185] by their membership and role in the Roman Catholic Church. This remark is not only necessary to the analysis of these sources, but was implicitly embedded by the same authors, often including at the beginning or in the appendix either the official imprimatur, or a statement of pilgrimage that gave

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Édition (Jérusalem: Imprimerie des PP. Franciscains, 1897), 2

[177] Ibid., 34-36.

[178] De Wandelbourg, *Études Et Souvenirs Sur l'Orient Et Ses Missions*, 2.

[179] Said, *Culture,* 14.

[180] David N. Livingstone, "Oriental Travel, Arabian Kinship, and Ritual Sacrifice: William Robertson Smith and the Fundamental Institutions," *Environment and Planning: Society and Space*, 22/5 (2004): 639.

[181] Bassi, *Pellegrinaggio storico e descrittivo di Terrasanta*, XIII.

[182] Klatzker, "American Catholic Travelers," 66.

[183] Kalman, "Going Home to the Holy Land," 352.

[184] Goren, "Sacred, but Not Surveyed," 87.

[185] Said, *Culture*, 95.

solidity and legitimacy to the work itself and to its sketched landscapes.[186]

Similarly to the case of Protestants, the 19th century Holy Land Catholic landscapes looked like a mosaic composed of different intertwined *tesserae* representing the distinct socio-political backgrounds and sensibilities of pilgrims, missionaries and travellers who headed for this land. The resulting Catholic image of this land became the locus helping to internalize the particular Biblical texts relating to the life of Jesus.[187] The notion of holiness was therefore tied more to the internal dimension of each person's own consciousness than to a fixed location.[188] Catholics regarded the holy sites as the means through which to "compose the place;"[189] whereas Catholic pilgrimages developed as a dynamic of confirming and reviving a world already "created" and "existing," not the means of its creation.[190]

Conclusions

The very notion of the Holy Land could be understood as the product of a fictionalized history of Biblical events and the continuous transformation of memory and souvenirs through the centuries. As a result, the sacredness of the Holy Land is not just metaphysical, but profoundly of this world, subjected to the progression of history and styled by the paths through which it is experienced, performed and understood. From this standpoint the Holy Land emerges as a place and site of encounter where different manifestations of the sacred may be pursued according to the traditions and culture of the societies travelers and pilgrims belong to. Accordingly, similarly to all holy lands and holy places, this expression of the geographic significance of religion lay at the intersection of sacred and secular forces. The result is that Jerusalem and the Holy Land do not appear to exist as a unique and individual "holy land" and "holy city," but as a "multitude" of "holy lands" and "holy cities,"[191] from which it is possible to trace a multiplicity and variety of different and often conflicting local and "universal" practices of appropriation and dynamics of semantization of and through its places.

During the 19th century the combination of the Orientalist interpretation and

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[186] The duty of asking for a pontifical license for pilgrimage in the Holy Land to the Sacred Congregation *de propaganda fide* had endured until modern times, although, probably, it had progressively lost compulsoriness. Rostagno, "Pellegrini italiani," 88.
[187] Micael P. Prior, "You Will be my Witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the Ends of the Earth. A Christian Perspective on Jerusalem," in *Palestinian Christians: Religion, Politics and Society in the Holy Land*, ed. Anthony O'Mahony (London: Melisende, 1999), 120.
[188] Kalman, "Going Home to the Holy Land," 346.
[189] Prior, "You Will be my Witnesses in Jerusalem," 120.
[190] Kalman, "Going Home to the Holy Land," 346.
[191] Glenn Bowman, "Christian Ideology and the Image of a Holy Land: The Place of Jerusalem in the Various Christianities," *Contesting the Sacred: The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage*, eds. Michael J. Sallnow, John Eade (London: Routledge, 1991), 98.

the missionary programs supported by the Protestant institutions and the Roman Catholic Church produced a specific representation of Ottoman Palestine and Jerusalem with important consequences in terms of power and knowledge. The Holy Land arose as a liminal space into which travellers, pilgrims and missionaries from different countries and religious affiliations poured their expectations and concerns in order to reinforce and develop a sense of communion and comradeship within the different constituencies to which they belonged. At the same time, this space revealed its ability not only to signify and sustain cooperation and solidarity, but also to act as terrain for the formation of competing discourses, where each traveller, pilgrim and missionary could impose personal and "group" significances and meanings, both religious and political.[192]

Unlike the Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant pilgrimages were not strictly regulated by a liturgical calendar. Both expressions of Western Christian tradition and sensibility, Catholics and Protestants were different from the Orthodox in their interpretations of the significance of the Holy Land. At the same time, all developed their attachment to the land because of its historical and sacramental significance and value. Accordingly, despite their respective differences and peculiarities, Catholics and Protestants headed for the Holy Land due to its Biblical associations.[193] The land performed the theological function of renewing and corroborating the authority of the Bible, confuting the attacks and objections raised by historical and scientific criticism. At the same time, the encounter with the land, between history and the Bible and science and Bible, was also interpreted as a necessary experience to deepen the faith rather than to destroy it. Catholics concentrated on the sites, the holy places of the traditions, whereas the Protestants styled their idea of the Holy Land through and within the land itself, which frequently became their "Fifth Gospel." The Protestants focused on the Holy Land as whole, as the association between the "Land" and the "Book" demonstrates. The Catholics concentrated on the sites and the historical connections between them, the Bible, and the Church's presence within the Holy Land. Although Catholics expressed a strong affiliation with shrines, both dissociated from the image of the Holy Land as a "massive" icon, as it was for the Orthodox. At the same time, a number of Protestants headed for the Holy Land to recapture the historical Jesus. They preferred to "freely" wander among the Holy Land, to encounter the "unmediated" Christ in its out-of-doors, such as Galilee, shunning the Catholic and Orthodox shrines. On the contrary, Catholics had a great regard for the "sites" associated with the life of Jesus, but were less concerned with the "sites" *per se* than with the significance associated with them.[194] Literalism, regarding the former, and incarnationalism, for the latter,

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[192] Ibid., 352.

[193] Hummel, Hummel, *Patterns of the Sacred,* 65.

[194] Michael P. Prior , "Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Yesterday and Today," *Christians in the Holy Land*, eds. Michael P. Prior, William Taylor (London: World of Islam Festival Trust, 1994), 188.

were therefore the extremes of a continuum that characterized different manifestations of a shared attraction towards the land.

At the same time, both Catholics and Protestants saw in the Holy Land the space in which to deal with a complex set of anxieties and expectations concerning their country of origin and their religious communities. In the development of this process of semantization through the land, both Catholics and Protestants did not only draw new meanings or revive traditional imaginary and forms of devotion regarding the Holy Land to meet their expectations and satisfy their needs. In fact, combining with the ongoing political and diplomatic dynamics within and outside the Ottoman Empire, they contributed to reinforcing the perception of Ottoman Palestine, the Christian Holy Land, as a singular geographical and cultural unity.

Moreover, during the 19th century, this desire to affirm, develop and revive their respective presences and roles through the Holy Land took on a characteristic look. Partially thanks to the development of organized pilgrimage caravans that allowed numerous people of the same origin to simultaneously share the same experience, European and American travellers and pilgrims began a sort of open competition to show and impose their physical presence in Ottoman Palestine, "politically" emphasizing their travels through the Holy Land not just through "religious" markers, but also displaying their national flags and "large banners."[195] This symptomatic interweave between sacred and profane well represents, probably in an unusual shape, how the 19th century encounter between Europeans and Americans and the Holy Land involved this land, Ottoman Palestine, in the wider history of the process of "accumulation of knowledge."[196] In this site of colonial encounter, religious and political interests overlapped and intertwined not just as a prelude to and precursor of imperialism, but as the confirmation and consequence of a pre-existing psychological claim to the "land" by the West.

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[195] Klatzker, "American Catholic Travelers," 64. Long, *Imagining the Holy Land,* 135.
[196] Bar-Yosef, *The Holy Land in English Culture*, 8.

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Travels of Russians to the Holy Land in the 19th Century

by *Simona Merlo*

Abstract

This article focuses on three main aspects: the presence of the Holy Land in the Russian literature of pilgrimage, the creation in Palestine of Russian institutions, and the representations of the Holy Land in Russian architecture. By doing that, this article aims at analyzing how personalities of the Russian cultural, literary and religious world spoke about the Holy Land in the 19th century (the so-called 'Russian Palestine'), while pointing out the value of pilgrimage to the Holy Land for the Russian Orthodox tradition and also recalling the important element of the representation of 'Jerusalem outside Jerusalem'.

- **Introduction**
- **Russia, the Holy Land and its Representations**
- **The Holy Land of Writers**
- **'Russian Palestine'**
- **Conclusions**

Introduction

The link between Russian Orthodoxy and the Holy Land is of ancient origin, dating back at least to the XII century when a new literary genre, the *palomničeskaja literatura* [literature of pilgrimage], appeared in Russia. It was also refereed to as "literature of palmists," from the palm branch, symbol of peace, which the pilgrims who went to Jerusalem used to take with them. Most of the early Russian writings on Palestine were descriptions of the pilgrimage, as Derek Hopwood pointed out in his classic *The Russian Presence in Syria and Palestine*, over forty years ago.[1]

The first example of this genre is Daniil's Diary.[2] Daniil, "hegumen of the

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[1] Derek Hopwood, *The Russian Presence in Syria and Palestine 1843-1914. Church and politics in the Near East* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), 10.

[2] *Žit'e i chožen'e Daniila, Rus'kyja Zemli igumena. 1106-1108 gg.*, ed. Michail A. Venevitinov, "Pravoslavnyj palestinskij sbornik" Vol. I, Issue 3, Book 3 (1883) and Vol. III, Issue 3, Book 9 (1885). The diary has been recently published again by Gelian M. Prochorov, with a commentary and a parallel text in modern Russian: *«Choženie» igumena Daniila v Svjatuju zemlju v načale XII v.* ed. Gelian M. Prochorov (Sankt-Peterburg: Izd. Olega Abyško, 2007). See also the *Introduction* to Daniil Egumeno, in *Itinerario in Terra Santa*, ed. Marcello Garzaniti (Roma: Città Nuova, 1991), 9-59. By the same author, on the historical development of the Byzantine and Slavic model of pilgrimage, see Marcello Garzaniti, "Viaggio dell'egumeno Daniele in Terra santa. Un pellegrino della Rus' in Palestina nel XII sec.," *Studi e ricerche sull'Oriente cristiano*, 2 (1985): 93-135; Id., "Modelli di culto e devozione nella Rus' medievale attraverso le

Russian land," as he called himself, made a travel to the Holy Land at the beginning of the 12th century. But it was only starting from the 19th century that the phenomenon of Russians' travels to that region increased considerably. Personalities of the Russian cultural, literary and religious world spoke about and represented the Holy Land in works that contributed to spread the image of the holy sites among an ever increasing public.

In fact, pilgrimage to the Holy Land had a deep historical value for the Russian Orthodox tradition: traveling to the sources of Christianity was a vote expressed not only by clergy, but also by many secular people. According to the historian Vasilij Ključevskij, the practice of pilgrimages was considered one of the distinctive elements of Russian national character.[3] Jerusalem, for its unique religious and spiritual values, constituted in this sense the destination par excellence. An effective representation of the meaning of the Holy Land for Orthodox pilgrimage was given nearly thirty years ago by Michel Evdokimov:

> Pilgrims who go to the holy sites realize a meeting on three different levels. First of all with ancient Jerusalem, the antique center of the world where the holy temple once was; then with the city over which Jesus cried, and where He had to go, after coming down from Mount Tabor, to accomplish all things; finally with the heavenly Jerusalem, the eternal city of which the earthly one is a model or copy in this world.[4]

Russia, the Holy Land and its Representations

The central role of Jerusalem for Russian Orthodoxy was such as to justify the building of the magnificent monastery of *Novyj Ierusalim* [New Jerusalem], planned at the end of the 17th century by Patriarch Nikon on the Istra River, near Moscow's territory. It was a copy of the main monuments of the Holy City and, above all, of the Holy Sepulcher, thus reproducing the model of

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testimonianze dei pellegrini a Gerusalemme e a Costantinopoli," in *L'età di Kiev e la sua eredità nell'incontro con l'Occidente*, eds. Gabriele De Rosa, Francesca Lomastro (Roma: Viella, 2003), 113-134; Id., "Il pellegrinaggio medievale nella Slavia ortodossa. L'Itinerario dell'egumeno Daniil in Terra santa" (XII sec.) and "Libro Pellegrino di Antonij (Dobrynja Jadrejkovič), arcivescovo di Novgorod (XIII sec.)," in *L'Europa dei pellegrini*, ed. Luciano Vaccaro (Milano: ed. Centro Ambrosiano, 2004), 441-457; Id., "Alle origini della letteratura di pellegrinaggio della Rus': modello bizantino o modello latino?," *Itineraria*, 5 (2006): 171-200; Id., "Il pellegrinaggio nel mondo bizantino-slavo," in *La bisaccia del pellegrino: fra evocazione e memoria. Il pellegrinaggio sostitutivo ai luoghi santi nel mondo antico e nelle grandi religioni viventi*, eds. Amilcare Barbero, Stefano Piano (Ponzano Monferrato: Centro dei Sacri monti Calvari e Complessi devozionali europei, 2010), 249-256.
[3] Quoted by Tomáš Špidlík, *L'idea russa un'altra visione dell'uomo*, translated from French by Stella Morra (Roma: Lipa, 1995), 236.
[4] Michel Evdokimov, *Pellegrini russi e vagabondi mistici*, translated from French by Giovanni Ferrero (Milano: Paoline, 1990), 27.

Jerusalem both in terms of measures and topography. (Figure 1, 2)[5]

Fig. 1: The monastery of Novyj Ierusalim, 1912

Fig. 2: The monastery of Novyj Ierusalim, 1912

The foundation of such a complex was based on the vision of Moscow as a New Jerusalem. In the popular consciousness, Moscow was perceived as a

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[5] Figure 1, 2: The monastery of *Novyj Ierusalim*, 1912.
In http://www.n-jerusalem.ru/photo/text/30602.html (accessed 1 December 2013)

Russkij Ierusalim [Russian Jerusalem], the city that rose on the mountain "between land and sky." The realization of sites that copied Jerusalem's sacred topography was not an exclusively Russian prerogative; however, it is significant to note that in this case such a tendency was combined with the notion of a holy nation, attributed to Russia.

The idea of Moscow's holiness – connected with that of New Jerusalem and its complementary town, Moscow, as being the 'Third Rome' – was present all over the 19th century and was strengthened by the direct experience of those pilgrims who were coming back from their travel to the Holy Land.[6]

The building of *Novyj Ierusalim* offered to Russian people who could not go to the Holy Land the chance to do a pilgrimage to a 'represented' Jerusalem at only 45 kilometers from Moscow. The historical Jerusalem, located in far Palestine, was not to be exalted except for its symbolic value, which recalled the heavenly Jerusalem. As Rosanna Casari observed, "as Russia abounded, in a certain way, of 'Jerusalems' that referred to the archetype (always represented as the historical city and at the same time as the heavenly one) and that were tied to the model through *upodoblenie* [similarity], the concept of 'Russian' Jerusalem was privileged (…). [And] between the two components of Jerusalem as a powerful symbol and archetype, that of the historical, ancient and contemporary city, and that of otherworldly prototype, (i.e.) the heavenly Jerusalem, realization of God's Kingdom, there was the tendency to privilege the latter," and this explains why a copy of Jerusalem was built close to Moscow.[7]

The author herself pointed out how the symbolic reference to Jerusalem vaunted an old and consolidated presence in the Russian tradition. The archpriest Lev Lebedev stated on this subject:

> The idea the Russian land was an image of the Promised Land, of the Kingdom of Heaven, of the New Jerusalem, and the development and incarnation of such idea in visible architectonic forms and in toponyms, constitute the most amazing characteristic of religious, theological, popular Russian consciousness from the X to the XVIII century.[8]

The title of 'Russian Jerusalem' belonged to Moscow – the 'Third Rome' and the 'New Jerusalem' – but afterwards it was also applied to Saint Petersburg and to the monastery of Valaam, 'the Northern Jerusalem', placed on an island

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[6] On the topic, see Rosanna Casari, *La montagna, i bassifondi, la bohème. Letteratura, arte e vita quotidiana a Mosca nel XIX secolo*, in Rosanna Casari, Silvia Burini, *L'altra Mosca. Arte e letteratura nella cultura russa tra Ottocento e Novecento. Introduction* by Gian Piero Piretto (Bergamo: Moretti e Vitali, 2000), in particular 19-64. See also Daniel B. Rowland, "Moscow. The Third Rome or the New Israel?," *The Russian Review*, 55/4 (1996): 591-614.

[7] Rosanna Casari, "Pietroburgo – una Gerusalemme 'sul sangue'," in *Pietroburgo – capitale della cultura russa*, ed. Antonella d'Amelia (Salerno: Università di Salerno, 2004), I, 80-81.

[8] Quoted ibid., 77.

of the homonymous archipelago in Ladoga lake. Between the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century in the southern part of the archipelago the hermitages of the Resurrection and of Gethsemane were added to the first monastery, dedicated to the Transfiguration, built between the 10th and the 12th century. Their toponymy referred to the places of the Holy Land: Mount Zion and Mount of Olives, the Kidron Valley, Getsemani, Jerusalem.[9]

As to Saint Petersburg, in the second half of the 19th century, when the Church of the Savior on Spilled Blood was built on the site where in 1881 the emperor Alexander II had been killed, once again the reference model was Jerusalem. As a consequence of the comparison between Alexander II and Christ, the site of the murder became Jerusalem thanks to the potent symbology applied to this church.[10]

However, the site that best presented Russia both as the image of the Promised Land and as another Holy Land was the already mentioned complex of *Novyj Ierusalim*. On its large territory, around the Cathedral of the Resurrection, located in the center on a hill called Zion, several hermitages and churches dedicated to different episodes of Christ's life were set up: the Mount of Olives, the Church of the Ascension, the Monastery of the Virgins called Bethany. Some other holy sites were created in the surroundings: Galilee; the valley through which the Istra river flew, renamed Jordan; Mount Tabor; the Nativity Church. The conformity with the Holy Land archetype was considered fundamental. In 1820 the landscapist Maksim Vorob'ëv went to Jerusalem in order to reproduce the views of the Holy Sepulcher. He was sent there by the Grand Duke Nikolaj Pavlovič, who wanted to restore the main Cathedral in Novyj Ierusalim making it more similar to the original one.[11]

In his speech concerning his travel to Palestine – it will be widely addressed in the next pages - the writer Andrej Murav'ëv referred to this "Jerusalem outside Jerusalem" by stating:

> Russia retains in its borders the precious model of this temple [the Church of the Resurrection], and Novyj Ierusalim (…) is a priceless treasure for the believers, who are glad to find in their motherland the copy of the sacred objects they saw in Palestine. Even those who have not visited Jerusalem might have a clear idea of the Holy Sepulcher, so often described, in Voskresensk.[12]

Murav'ëv followed up his account concerning the Holy Land with a new work

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[9] Giovanna Parravicini, "La Città Santa nell'arte e nella cultura russa," Paper presented at the 34th European week of Euro-Mediterranean Religious History (III), *Una Città fra Terra e Cielo. Gerusalemme le Religioni – le Chiese*, Villa Cagnola, Gazzada (Varese), September 3-7, 2012 (unpublished).

[10] On this issue, see Casari, "Pietroburgo – una Gerusalemme 'sul sangue'."

[11] Parravicini, "La Città Santa nell'arte e nella cultura russa."

[12] Andrej N. Murav'ëv, *Puteśestvie ko Svjatym Mestam v 1830 godu* (Moskva: Indrik, 2006), 187.

dedicated to Russian holy places,[13] where it was possible "to find again the holiness and grace characteristic of the archetypes." Actually, he made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in order to "comfort his heart with the sacred similarity."[14]

The theme of Jerusalem crossed the Russian literature of the 19th century, not only as a memory of the real city, its historical events and holy sites, but also as a reminder of its existing representations on the Russian territory. The Holy Land also constituted a reference not only for those who concretely went there on a pilgrimage, but also for those who did not have the chance to visit it. According to Russian Orthodox authors, the Holy Land value was so meaningful because it was the crib of Biblical history, the land where Jesus of Nazareth was born, lived and died. In this sense, an example of this literary representation of the Holy Land is provided by the great Russian poet Michail Jur'evič Lermontov who frequently used biblical images in his works, even though he had never visited the Holy Land. The most famous poem on this subject, entitled *Vetka Palestiny* [The Palm Branch of Palestine], starts with a palm branch given to him by the writer Andrej Nikolaevič Murav'ëv after his return from the Holy Land. Palestine, Lebanon, "Jordan's silver billows," Jerusalem are the places sung by the poet.[15] The religious objects evoked and the atmosphere of prayer and meditation that emerge from his poetry create a feeling of "peace and consolation" [*vsjo polno mira i otpady*] that pervades the entire poem.

Lermontov's lines are here recalled for the literary fortune they had among Russian writers who, starting from the 19th century, concretely visited the Holy Land. Among them there are several famous authors, such as Dmitrij Vasil'evič Daškov, Nikolaj Vasil'evič Gogol', Andrej Nikolaevič Murav'ëv, Avraam Sergeevič Norov, Ivan Alekseevič Bunin. Their writings offer a precious point of view concerning perceptions, representations and narrations of Russian pilgrims to Palestine, and contribute to pointing out common themes, words and images on the Holy Land.

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[13] Andrej N. Murav'ëv, *Putešestvie po svjatym mestam russkim* (Sankt-Peterburg: Tipografija III otd. Sobstv. E. I. V. Kanceljarii, 1836).

[14] In Casari, "Pietroburgo – una Gerusalemme 'sul sangue'," 81.

[15] "Palm branch of Palestine, oh tell me, / In that far distant home-land fair, / Wast rooted in the mountain gravel / Or sprung from some vale garden rare? / Once o'er the Jordan's silver billows / Fond kissed with thee the Eastern sun? / Have the grim gales 'neath starry heavens / Swept over thee from Lebanon?" Michail Ju. Lermontov, "Vetka Palestiny," *Stichotvorenija* (Sankt-Peterburg: tipografija Ilja Glazunova, 1840), translated from Russian by Martha Dickinson Bianchi, "The Palm Branch of Palestine," *Russian Lyrics* (New York: Duffield and Company, 1916), 54.

The Holy Land of Writers

The first Russian writer who went to Palestine as a pilgrim was Dmitrij Daškov, a fine diplomat who was second counselor of the Russian Embassy in Constantinople. He travelled to the Holy Land and in Greece in 1820. Just before the Greek revolution in 1821, he was in charge of collecting detailed information on the political, military and religious situation of those lands, first of all Jerusalem, where the Czarist government was willing to open its own consulate.[16] The results of his travels were two essays: *Afonskaja gora. Otryvok iz putešestvija po Grecii v 1820 godu* [Mount Athos. Extracts of his travel across Greece in 1820] and *Russkie poklonniki v Ierusalime. Otryvok iz putešestvija po Grecii i Palestine v 1820* [Russian pilgrims in Jerusalem. Extracts of their travel across Greece and Palestine in 1820], both published on the literary journal *Severnye cvety* [North Flowers], respectively in 1825 and in 1826. Daškov was reviewer, translator, polemist, and was among the founders of the literary club *Arzamas*, which counted among its members poets such as Aleksandr Puškin, Vasilij Žukovskij and Pëtr Vjazemskij.

Daškov's travel presents a characteristic that is common to other 'cultured' pilgrims: besides the private reasons to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, they also had an official task to fulfill, either for the state or for the Church. But even when they had no particular task, at least in the Near East they were considered representatives of the Czarist state.[17] The essay *Russkie poklonniki v Ierusalime* represents an example of Russian travel literature, written by an educated traveler. In fact Daškov was able to quote passages from Virgil's, Milton's, Petrarch's and Chateaubriand's works either translated or in their original language.[18]

As Peter R. Weisensel and Theofanis G. Stavrou pointed out,

> Russian travelers to the Near East enjoyed a certain cultural affinity and sensibility about the Orthodox East oftentimes lacking among their Western counterparts. Understandably, they focused their attention on phenomena to which they could relate culturally, and the saw things through the Orthodox prism, a dimension conspicuously absent from Western accounts.[19]

In this sense it is possible to speak of a 'Russian Orthodox' literary model for travels that were carried out to the Near East, in which

> Russian travelers (…) frequently referred to the region as the Christian or Orthodox East

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[16] Viktor M. Guminskij, *Norov v Svjatoj Zemle*, in A. S. Norov, *Putešestvie po Svjatoj Zemle v 1885 godu* (Moskva: Indrik, 2008), 279.

[17] Ibid., 277.

[18] Ibid., 279.

[19] Peter R. Weisensel, Theofanis G. Stavrou, *Russian Travelers to the Christian East from the Twelfth to the Twentieth Century* (Columbus, Ohio: Slavica Publishers, 1986), XXVIII.

despite that from the seventh century onwards it had become gradually Islamized and Eastern Orthodoxy was a minority religion in the area. This rather romantic appellation, the Orthodox East (…), underscores a fundamental and enduring cultural link between Russia and the region under consideration.[20]

According to Daškov, the Holy Land was "important in history of humane genre, rich in miracles and in great events, (…) [the] crib of Christian faith, (…) [the] land where the traditions of the New and the Old Testament live together, where every hill, every valley, every ruin talks of Prophets' and well-known Heroes' works."[21] As others would comment later on, he pointed out the deep gap between the Christian Holy Land's past greatness and its miserable present condition:

> You cannot image anything sadder than the surroundings of Jerusalem: mountains, cliffs, bulks without grass, almost without trees, everywhere covered by round stones; a rain of stones seemed to have fallen down from the sky on this criminal land. At midday, exhausted because of the heat, we went up, and we saw in front of us a series of walls and embattled towers (…). At first glance close to these ancient walls – David's, Herod's and Geoffrey's town – thousands of memories, one more alive than the other, one more sacred than the other, crowded in my soul. Rational peoples may laugh at believers' enthusiasm! Here, at the foot of Zion, everyone is a Christian, everyone a believer, who has but retained an ardent heart and a love for the majestic![22]

Comparison between Holy Land's past and present also emerges in *Putešestvie ko Svjatym Mestam v 1830 godu* [Travels towards the holy sites in 1830] by Andrej Murav'ëv, a work that resembles Dmitrij Daškov's book a lot. It is not by chance that Aleksandr Puškin, in his unfinished review of the first edition of Murav'ëv's work, referred to Daškov, even though without mentioning him. Puškin spoke of "another Russian traveler" and cited the final part of his over-quoted and already mentioned passage "Here, at the foot of Zion, everyone is a Christian, everyone a believer, who has but retained an ardent heart and a love for the majestic!"[23]

Murav'ëv was a religious writer, a poet and a playwright, and he visited the Holy Land twice. *Putešestvie ko Svjatym Mestam* – a milestones of the Russian literature concerning the Holy Land – is the report of his first travel, made in 1829-1830; the second one, that took place exactly twenty years later, brought him to the Holy Land, as well as to Greece, Mount Athos, Asia Minor, Constantinople and Syria.

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[20] Ibid.

[21] Dmitrij V. Daškov, "Russkie poklonniki v Ierusalime. Otryvok iz putešestvija po Grecii i Palestine v 1820," *Severnye cvety* (1826): 216-217.

[22] Ibid., 225-226.

[23] This episode is reported in Guminskij, *Norov v Svjatoj Zemle*, 280.

Why did Murav'ëv visit the Holy Land? According to Puškin, the young writer had made his pilgrimage "neither for the vain desire to acquire colored emotions for a poetic romance, nor for the restless interest of a tired and weakened heart to find violent emotions. He visited the holy sites as a believer, as a humble Christian, as a simple crusader longing to bow down in the dust in front of Christ the Saviour's grave."[24] The "crusader" image would later be adopted by Murav'ëv himself in his memoirs, where he presented himself as being "imbibed with crusaders' spirit."[25]

Actually, besides what was asserted by Puškin, political and literary interests were not unknown to Murav'ëv. According to Puškin, it was during the war between Russia and the Ottoman Empire that Murav'ëv, who at that time was a 24 years old soldier, "became interested in the keys of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, forgotten by Christian Europe." [26] Just after the Treaty of Adrianople, he didn't go back to his homeland, but decided to visit the Holy Land, traveling through Constantinople, Syria and Egypt. A contemporary scholar of the Holy Land, Nikolaj Lisovoj, remarked how "in the East Murav'ëv discovered his authentic vocation and identified a fortunate creative niche: being both a knight and a cantor of the Holy Land."[27]

He came to Jerusalem on the fifth Sunday of Lent, on the eve of the Holy Week. The description of his arrival is probably one of the most suggestive pages of his entire work:

> Who will be able to express all the feelings that move somebody's heart as the Holy City suddenly appears? (…) Suddenly, as if emerging from the ground, it appears to one's troubled eyes on the slope of the same mountain whose surface people have just climbed (…). The Mount of Olives with the clear rays of the evening and the desert of the foggy Dead Sea limited the sacred horizon behind it, and I remained silent, in ecstasy, losing myself in my sad memories. I entered the city, I looked around and the enchantment disappeared.[28]

In the Holy City the young writer was treated almost as if he were an official messenger of the Russian government and he was offered the chance to become acquainted with the most relevant personalities of the political and ecclesiastical world living in Jerusalem. Such a network of relationships would allow him, in the following years, to be considered one of the greatest Russian experts of Near Eastern affairs and to become a reference point for both the

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[24] Aleksandr S. Puškin, "Putešestvie ko Svjatym Mestam A. N. Murav'ëva," *Polnoe Sobranie sočinenij*, XI (Moskva, 1949), 217.

[25] Note of November 30th 1827. In Andrej N. Murav'ëv, "Moi vospominanija," *Russkoe obozrenije*, 5 (1895): 67.

[26] Puškin, "Putešestvie ko Svjatym Mestam A. N. Murav'ëva," 217.

[27] Nikolaj N. Lisovoj, Introduction to Andrej N. Murav'ëv, *Putešestvie ko Svjatym Mestam v 1830 godu* (Moskva: Indrik, 2006), 10.

[28] Murav'ëv, *Putešestvie ko Svjatym Mestam v 1830 godu*, 144.

Russian government and the Synod[29]. On this regard, the above mentioned Lisovoj stated: "If at the beginning Murav'ëv's travel was transformed, despite his own desire, into a *political event* now, when he writes about his pilgrimage, it becomes part of the Russian literature. Now he is the author of a renowned book, which has become an event (…). In a short time, A. N. Murav'ëv's work has become the *document of a historical period*."[30]

Actually Murav'ëv's work was very successful and became considerably widespread not only among Russian educated audiences, both secular and religious, but even among common people, so that the Russian literature referred to him as "Murav'ëv phenomenon." In this respect it is worth quoting the account of the Pëtr Simonovič Kazanskij, professor at the Moscow Theological Academy: "I clearly remember what a great impression this book produced on me. The liveliness of its language, the expressiveness of its images, the ardent feelings of devotion (…). Since the time I had this book, I couldn't sleep at night unless I had read it."[31]

Another example confirms how much Murav'ëv's work was known not only within religious clubs, but also among secular elites. In 1892 Vasilij Nikolaevič Chitrovo wrote a novel, *K Životvorjaščemu Grobu Gospodnju. Rasskaz starogo palomnika* [Towards the Life-giving Holy Sepulcher. Novel by an old pilgrim], pretending that its author was Vasilij Nikitič, a farmer. According to the novel, before starting his pilgrimage to the Holy Land, the main character Vasilij (Vasja) goes to the pope of his village, Father Ioann, in order to get recommendation for books concerning the Holy Land. The pope suggests him to read Murav'ëv's book and tells him: "Vasja, look at the book I am giving you: the entire Holy Land is described; Mr. Murav'ëv was there, and whatever he saw, he has described it». Afterwards, Vasja says: "I took the book; I read it in a week and, after reading it, I decided, without further delay, that I would go to Jerusalem."[32]

The Holy Land that Murav'ëv describes was part of a larger 'East', dominated by the Ottoman Empire, with an increasing Russian influence. "Our name – he writes – has never been so powerful and glorious in the East as it is now."[33] On his way to the Holy Land, he notes that "Car'grad [Constantinople] too in

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[29] Lisovoj, introduction to Andrej N. Murav'ëv, 11-13.

[30] Ibid., 14 (Emphasis in the text).

[31] Ibid.

[32] Vasilij N. Chitrovo, *K Životvorjaščemu Grobu Gospodnju. Rasskaz starogo palomnika*, V ed., Sank-Peterburg 1892, now in V. N. Chitrovo, *Sobranie sočinenij i pisem*, vol. 1, *Pravoslavie v Svjatoj Zemle*, ed. N. N. Lisovoj, (Sankt-Peterburg: Izd. Olega Abyško, 2011), 279.

[33] Murav'ëv, *Putešestvie ko Svjatym Mestam v 1830 godu*, 73. For the notion of "Christian East" referred to "those areas associated in Russian thinking with the origins of Christianity, Orthodox culture, and the geographic jurisdiction of the Eastern Patriarchates of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem," see Weisensel and Stavrou., *Russian Travelers to the Christian East*, X.

1830 had the real aspect of Russia's southern capital; (…) it seemed to me that the future of the Ottoman Empire would not be decided in the deserted great buildings of Ramis-Ciflik, where the sad Sultan was hidden, but in the yard of the Russian embassy."[34] The expectations towards Russia, according to Murav'ëv, had increased even in Jerusalem, where he was received "as the chief of a powerful platoon, sent to conquer the Holy Land." Most probably, the main reasons for such an attitude were both "the fear for the name of Russia, (…) increased by the glory of our victories on the Ottomans," and the opinion, "ingrained in the people," that one day Russia would free Jerusalem.[35]

As Daškov had already done before him, Murav'ëv highlighted the contradiction between the holiness of the visited sites and the condition of Palestine under the Sublime Porte: "Everything has disappeared, everything has changed in Jerusalem, but the mission itself of the places."[36] Along the 'Way of the Cross' he was resentful not only because of the aloofness with which Arabs and Jews went along the roads that saw Jesus' last hours, but above all because of the attitude of Christians themselves: "What hurts my heart the most is that nowadays thoughtless Christians walk up and down this big street with indifference as if it had not been covered with His blood; and extraneous, selfish thoughts distract their mind, while their unworthy foot tramples the footprints of Our Saviour's sufferings!"[37]

The Holy Sepulcher is the symbol of the contradiction between the Holy Land deep spiritual values and the hardness of its current reality. This is how the writer describes his arrival to the Holy Sepulcher:

> Here I embraced the stone over which the body (…) of the Son of God made man laid down; I remained on the rock that had been entirely enlightened by the rays of His resurrection (…). Tears of tenderness and gratitude started to flow out of my eyes. But they were transformed into bitter tears when (…) I remembered the shame of the Holy City and of all its eminent places; the shame of the Holy Sepulcher itself, which was once redeemed with the blood of thousands of people, and today has remained alone, forgotten in the wild deserts of Palestine, due to Christians' disagreements and Muslims' persecutions, like the stone that builders rejected![38]

Murav'ëv draws on the old literature of pilgrimage, starting from hegumen Daniil's diary, and his work resembles Daniil's emotions for visiting the places of Christ's earthly life and the hegumen observations concerning the Holy Land current conditions. It is not by chance that Murav'ëv doesn't use the word "pilgrimage" [*palomničestvo* or the older *choždenije*], but refers to his journey

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[34] Murav'ëv, *Putešestvie ko Svjatym Mestam v 1830 godu*, 73.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid., 152.
[37] Ibid., 154.
[38] Ibid.

as a "travel" [*putešestvie*]; therefore, he makes comments on political and social issues, in addition to spiritual and ecclesiastical reflections. As Evgenija Ju. Safatova pointed out, "Murav'ëv gives a new interpretation of the theme of pilgrimage, since it combines both the spiritual tradition of pilgrimages and the secular tradition of 'travels.' The deepest religious feeling, which permeates his work, is conjugated with the analysis of a secular observer, who minutely examines and values what he observes."[39]

Thus, in Murav'ëv's work spiritual reflections are strictly connected to those dealing with political and diplomatic aspects; for example when he regrets Europe's lack of interest in the fate of the holy sites, and in the meantime exalts the providential role reserved to Russia in the region:

> Who has never been to Jerusalem as a pilgrim is not able to imagine the disastrous conditions of its holy places. Whoever has been there and has prayed on the Saviour's Sepulcher among the infamy and dishonor (…) cannot understand Europe's indifference concerning the founding stone of its salvation. (…) The days of blood have passed, the time of treaties has come, and the Western powers have given up Jerusalem, while Russia, chosen by Providence for the Islamic downfall, has intervened (…). It is the only country that can relieve the destiny of the Holy Land.[40]

The reason why I have dwelt upon Murav'ëv is the literary success he obtained both in terms of audience and critics: he was greeted as the "Russian Chateaubriand" and his work became a milestone of Russian literature on travels to the Holy Land. Subsequent narrations about the Holy Land were somehow forced to keep into account Murav'ëv *Putešestvie*, sometimes expressly quoting it, some others only referring to it.

It is the case of another Russian traveler, Avraam Sergeevič Norov, statesman, historian and writer. In his *Putešestvie po Svjatoj Zemle v 1835 godu* [Travel across the Holy Land in 1835] Daškov and Murav'ëv influences are clear: the pilgrimage time framework, the itinerary chosen to reach the Holy Land, the places visited and the people met are quite similar. However, there are deep differences in the way the Holy Land is represented, depending on these authors' diverse point of view and personalities.

As Viktor Guminskij has observed, Daškov was first of all a diplomatic and a scholar, while Murav'ëv was first of all a romantic writer and only secondly a pilgrim, and Norov was a cultivated pilgrim, "who believed that the Holy Land had provided him with answers to the questions he was worried about both as a scholar and as an Orthodox."[41] Norov's Holy Land was the Biblical one and

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[39] Evgenia Ju. Safatova, "Tradicii palomničeskoj literatury v tvorčestve A. N. Murav'ëva," *Vestnik Tomskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta*, 356 (2012): 39-43.
[40] Murav'ëv, *Putešestvie ko Svjatym Mestam v 1830 godu*, 201.
[41] Guminskij, *Norov v Svjatoj Zemle*, 287.

quotations from the Bible were numerous, reported exclusively in Church Slavonic. On the contrary, Murav'ëv poetically paraphrased passages from the Old and the New Testament, while allusions to the Holy Scriptures were absent in Daškov's work. According to Vasilij Chitrovo, Norov's text is better than the one by Murav'ëv "for his culture, for his, so to speak, soft and gentle style, and for his sincerity."[42]

Norov opens the Introduction to his book with Dante's famous quotation "In the middle of the journey of our life," thus explaining the reasons for his travel to the Holy Land: his interest in a personal and spiritual meeting with places, specifically Jerusalem, where Jesus had spent his earthly life. The period he chooses for his travel is not accidental; it takes place during the Holy week, as it had already happened with Murav'ëv's travel. Another similarity is that also Norov does not use the religious term "pilgrimage" [*palomničestvo*], but the secular one *putešestvie* [travel]: "The idea of traveling to the Holy Land was hidden in me for a long time; I was quite curious of seeing the splendid East, but Jerusalem strengthened my firmness: the consolation of kissing the Saviour of the world footprints in the same places where he fulfilled the mystery of humanity's redemption made me overcome many obstacles."[43]

He explicitly refers to Murav'ëv's work by stating that many readers had already known Palestine thanks "to the beautiful pages of Mr Murav'ëv's book (…) [that] had put them in contact with the Holy Land and, of course, had driven many people's hearts towards the Church of Jerusalem, which was suffering under the [Ottoman] yoke."[44] Apart from the spiritual reasons that have brought him to the Holy Land, Norov points out other explanations, such as his archaeological interests: comparing the geography and topography of Palestine to the text of the Holy Scriptures in order to "facilitate (…) the reading of many passages of the Old and New Testament." Even though the list of the authors he presents in his text is relevant (among them, Francesco Quaresmi, Johann Ludwig Burckhardt and François-René de Chateaubriand), the main source is the Bible itself: "The Bible is the most reliable guide to the Holy Land, and I consider myself lucky that I had only the Bible with me for the greater part of my travel."[45]

His arrival to Jerusalem represents the culminating moment of his pilgrimage, the strongest of several intense emotions, since he is meeting the Holy Land, the origin of Christianity, where every Christian feels as if he were at home:

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[42] Vasilij N. Chitrovo, *Egipet i Sinaj. Bibliografičeskij ukazatel' russkich knig i statej osvjatych mestach Vostoka, preimuščestvenno palestinskich i sinajskich* (Sankt-Peterburg, 1876), now published in Chitrovo, *Pravoslavie v Svjatoj Zemle*, 55.

[43] Norov, *Putešestvie po Svjatoj Zemle v 1885 godu*, 15.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid., 16.

> Going up from mountain to mountain, I was in the restless expectation of discovering Jerusalem (…). I started to feel discouragement because I hadn't seen the Holy Land in the daylight (…). I kept walking, and suddenly Jerusalem appeared! I abandoned my horse bridles and threw myself on the earth with tender tears. I also recognized the Mount of Olives (…); my sighs closed my breast (…). Despite being a son of the far North, I entered Jerusalem as if I was entering my own homeland.[46]

Norov's Holy Land is that of the Holy Scriptures, from the prophets to the Revelation up to John, with the Holy Sepulcher at their own center. Hence the pain for such a sanctuary being in non-Christian hands, but also the conviction – which distinguishes him from Murav'ëv - that behind such a circumstance there must be a providential meaning.[47] In the same way, he perceives the division among Christians: "almost more painful than the Muslim yoke"; yet, rather than limiting himself to simply condemn it, he perceives such a situation as a challenge to the faith until they reach unity.[48]

Norov's descriptive capacity makes the readers soak in the atmosphere of Palestine at Jesus' time. For instance, he focuses on the 'Way of the Cross': "here there is the Garden of Getsemani; there the road from Bethany starts, and the climb towards the Mount of Olives starts here;" he describes the places where Jesus spent his last hours with a great number of details, starting from the Gospel itself.[49]

The representation of the Holy Land the end of his work synthesizes his perception about the places he has just visited. Despite the decadence to which they are exposed, they recall the image of the Promised Land:

> Jerusalem; the wild, destroyed and pastoral Bethlehem; Nazareth, forgotten in the mountainous fog; the scattered loads of Israelite towns; the deserted streets of the Promised Land fulfilled all my hopes! After seeing the Holy Land, I knew all the vanity of what I had seen so far, and had I started my travel to the East from Palestine, I would have not visited the colossal magnificence of the ancient Egyptians![50]

The theme of the difference between the Holy Land past and present is crucial also in other authors. For instance, Nikolaj Gogol' – who traveled to the Holy Land in 1848 – asked himself how it was possible to recognize "the land flowing with milk and honey," when "you can hardly notice five or six olive trees on all the slope of a mountain (…), when only a thin layer of moss and occasional spots of grass appear in this bare and bumpy field of stones."[51]

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[46] Ibid., 43-44.

[47] Ibid. On this subject see Guminskij's reflections, *Norov v Svjatoj Zemle*, ibid., 290-291

[48] Ibid., 69.

[49] Ibid., 56.

[50] Ibid., 254.

[51] Letter by Nikolaj V. Gogol' to Vasilij Žukovskij, 28 February 1850, *Sobranie sočinenij i pisem v*

Gogol' did not dedicate a specific work to his travel to the Holy Land, but his impressions and perceptions are traceable in many of his novels, in particular in *Mërtvye duši* [Dead Souls], and above all in the letters addressed to his friend, the writer Vasilij Žukovskij. In this correspondence it clearly appears the great writer difficulty to juxtapose the representation of Palestine in the Gospel to the desolation of the places he has visited. For example, this is what he writes to Žukovskij who was asking for some descriptions of Palestine in order to include them in his work *Stranstvujuščij žid* [The Wandering Jew]:

> What can those places, which the Savior step on during the 'Way of the Cross' and have now been collected under one Church roof, tell us today (…)? What can current Judaea, with its monotonous mountains, similar to endless grey sea tides, tell the poet and the painter? (…) Imagine Jerusalem in the middle of such a desolation; Jerusalem, Bethlehem and all the eastern towns [are] similar to loads of stones and bricks put together in confusion; imagine the Jordan, dry in the middle of bare mountainous, covered here and there with little bushes of willows.[52]

As Guminskij noted, Palestine appeared to Gogol' differently from the way he had imagined it while reading the Gospel, just as Jordan was different from the river surrounded by a luxuriant vegetation represented by painter Aleksandr Andreevič Ivanov in *Javlenie Christa narodu* [The Apparition of the Messiah to the People]. Gogol' had that image in mind, since his friend Ivanov had included him among the characters who were close to Christ in the painting. Moreover the landscape reproduced Rome surroundings, where Ivanov had conceived his work.[53]

Due to the "desolation" of Palestine, only the faith eyes could see what the Gospel pages described: "What can I tell you about these places, if you do not see with your mind's eyes the stars over Bethlehem; the dove that descends from the skies wide over the trickles of Jordan; the awful day of the death on the cross over Jerusalem walls when all around it became dark and [there was] an earthquake; or the bright day of the Resurrection, whose brightness would cover all surroundings, the present and the past?"[54]

Some decades later, also Ivan Bunin would point out the contrast between the glorious Biblical past of this region and the present situation, marked by poverty and decline. Jerusalem, "sung by David and Solomon, once shining with gold and marble, surrounded by the gardens of the Song of Songs," now lies in a state of "Arabic indigence."[55] "The place of Jesus' grave is overcome

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17 tomach (Moskva – Kiev: Izdatel'stvo Moskovskoj Patriarchii, 2009), XV, 303-304.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Viktor M. Guminskij, *Putešestvie Gogolja po Svjatoj Zemle v kontekste razvitija palomničeskoj literatury*, http://www.voskres.ru/literature/critics/guminskiy1.html (accessed 3 December 2013).

[54] Letter of Nikolaj V. Gogol' to Vasilij Žukovskij, 28 February 1850.

[55] Ivan A. Bunin, "Iudeja," *Ot Solovkov do Svjatoj Zemli. Palomničeskie očerki russkich pisatelej*,

by temples with black domes,"[56] while Judaea recalls images of death: "In Zion, behind David's sepulcher, I saw a grave that had disappeared, thickly covered by poppies. All of Judaea is like this grave."[57] What remains of the Promised Land is only a memory: "Besides Bethlehem there is the desert (…). Yet this is really the Promised Land, a land that today merely produces wild poppy."[58]

The Biblical Holy Land, the "promised land" and the "birthplace of Christianity," on one side, and contemporary Palestine, a desolated land in the hands of the Ottoman sultan, on the other, are therefore the poles between which, despite different tones and nuances, it is possible to include Russian authors representations and narrations of the Holy Land across the 19th century.

'Russian Palestine'

Pilgrimages constituted only one aspect of Russian presence in the Holy Land in the 19th century. A network of ecclesiastical, political and diplomatic relationships connected Russia and the Holy Land starting from the 1840s giving birth to the idea, developed by literature and press, of a 'Russian Palestine.'

In those years, all the great and most powerful European countries turned their attention towards Jerusalem and the Near East, often hiding their political aims under a religious cover. The reflection on the need of a Russian orthodox presence in Jerusalem had been stimulated by other Christian Churches' activities: an Anglican bishop in charge of the Jerusalem diocese was appointed in 1841, and the Latin patriarchate was re-established in 1847.[59]

'Russian Palestine' was of course a literary concept, but also a concrete reality made up of a series of places – churches, monasteries, representative buildings – planned and carried out by personalities of the ecclesiastical, cultural and governmental world, with the intention of strengthening the Russian and Orthodox presence in the Holy Land.[60] Russians' participation in the life of the

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edited by the Publishing Council of the Russian Orthodox Church (Moskva: Artos Media, 2012), 596.
[56] Ibid., 598.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid., 600.
[59] On this topic see Paolo Pieraccini, *Gerusalemme, luoghi santi e comunità religiose nella politica internazionale* (EDB: Bologna, 1997) and Giorgio Del Zanna, *I cristiani in Medio Oriente (1798-1924)* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2011).
[60] On the formation of 'Russian Palestine', see among others: *Russkie učreždenija v Svjatoj Zemle i počivšie dejateli Imperatorskogo Pravoslavnogo Palestinskogo Obščestva. 1882–1907 gg. (Illjustrirovannyj podaročnyj al'bom)* (reprint Moskva: Meždunarodnye otnošenija, 2003); Ritta B. Butova, Nikolaj N. Lisovoj, "Formirovanie sakral'nogo prostranstva Russkoj Palestiny (po materialam dnevnika archimandrita Antonina Kapustina)," *Religii mira. Istoria i sovremennost'*, 2008; Aleksej A.

Holy Land contributed to the creation of an 'Orthodox image' of Palestine in the Czarist empire through a network of state and ecclesiastical structures. Institutions, journals, newspapers inspired by political personalities and members of the Church acted as amplifier of the 'Russian Palestine' fame in Saint Petersburg. The first institution was the *Russkaja Duchovnaja Missija v Ierusalime* [Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem], established by Nicolas I in 1847 as a permanent delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church to the Eastern Patriarchies. Its first members reached the Holy Land in February 1848.[61] In the second half of the 19th century other institutions followed: the Committee for Palestine (1859-1864), the Committee for Palestine by the Department for Asia of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1864-1889); the Orthodox Palestine Society (1882-1917, which replaced the Committee in 1889, adding title of 'Imperial'.

The Society driving force was its secretary, the already mentioned Vasilij Nikolaevič Chitrovo. He was one of the main inspirers of the Czarist policy in the Near East and in 1881 he opened the journal that would later become the Society official publication, *Pravoslavnyj Palestinskij sbornik* [Orthodox Palestine Digest]. Issued in Saint Petersburg once or twice a year, it collected accounts of pilgrimages, but also historical essays on the Holy Land. Chitrovo was an ardent expert of the Holy Land, particularly of Jerusalem, which he describes as the "City of Judah," and "the ring of conjunction between earth and heaven, between God and the human beings."[62] However, this did not prevent him from feeling "a sort of disappointment" when he entered the Holy Sepulcher: "I expected to see a piece of heaven; on the contrary, in front of us there was nothing more than a work made by human hands."[63]

'Russian Palestine' was strictly connected to the activity of the Romanov House, both from an ideal point of view and in terms of concrete actions, i.e. the creation of a Russian space within the Holy Land. In fact, since its first contacts, the Orthodox presence in the Holy Land – as in general in the whole Near East – was conceived first of all as an engagement of the ruling dynasty (and consequently of the state) even before it became a project of the Church. The link between Russia and the Holy Land was considered "a matter of heart" for the Romanov family, as the emperor Alexander II explained to Prince Dmitrij Aleksandrovič Obolenskij, president of the Committee for Palestine. This behavior was an element that would characterize Russia's action

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Dmitrievskij, *Dejateli Russkoj Palestiny* (Sankt-Peterburg: Izd. Olega Abyško, 2010).

[61] On the history of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission since its foundation, see Nikodim (Rotov), *Istorija Russkoj Duchovnoj Missii v Ierusalime* (Moskva: Serpuchovskij Vysockij mužskoj monastyr', 1997).

[62] Vasilij N. Chitrovo, *Russkie palomniki Svjatoj Zemle. 39-oe čtenie. Ierusalim i ego bližajšie okrestnosti (I)*, Sankt-Peterburg 1900, now in Chitrovo, *Sobranie sočinenij i pisem*, vol. 2, *Stat'i o Svjatoj Zemle. Iz istorii Russkoj duchovnoj missii v Ierusalime. Iz istorii Russkogo polomničestva v Svjatuju Zemlju*, 331.

[63] Ibid. 340.

in the Holy Land in the long term.

The Romanov travels to the Holy Land contributed to strengthen and promote the image of 'Russian Palestine' thanks to the attention that these pilgrimages received in the press and literature. In 1859 the first members of the imperial family visited the holy sites: the Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaevič Romanov, czar Alexander II's brother, together with his wife Aleksandra Iosifovna and his son Nikolaj. They could see the Russia-owned properties that formed the first core of 'Russian Palestine'. In particular, they visited the site in Jerusalem, not far from the Holy Sepulcher, where the Church of Saint Aleksandr Nevskij would later be built, and the area in the north-west of the Old City where the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission had been set up. Around this place, in is still called *Moskobija*, some guest houses for pilgrims would also be built.

Other Romanovs followed, among whom Grand Duke Nikolaj Nikolaevič Romanov, in 1872.[64] His travel details are known thanks to several memoirs: those written by his aide-de-camp Dmitrij Antonovič Skalon, who escorted him along the tour in the Near East;[65] the writings of Grand Dukes Sergej Aleksandrovič and Pavel Aleksandrovič, emperor Alexander III's brothers, published in May 1881; and those of Grand Duke Aleksandr Michajlovič issued in January 1889.

Sojourns of imperial family's members in the Holy Land, above all in Jerusalem, were characterized by inauguration ceremonies of new churches and buildings, which reinforced the Russian presence. As Skalon wrote in his memoirs, in October 1872, during Grand Duke Nikolaj Nikolaevič Romanov's visit, the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity was solemnly consecrated by the Greek Orthodox patriarch of Jerusalem, Cyril II. It was the main place of worship inside the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission and the most important church of the entire 'Russian Palestine'.[66] It is interesting to note that, both in its structure and in its internal decoration, it was meant to become the symbol of the Russian imperial presence in the Holy Land, in order to corroborate the idea of a universal mission, by stressing the continuity between the Christian history of the Holy Land and that of the Holy Russia. On the Cathedral columns both Fathers of Eastern monasticism (Anthony the Great, Theodosius the Cenobiarch, Sabbas the Sanctified, Gerasimos of Jordan) and saints of the Russian Orthodox tradition (ranging from the founders of the Caves Monastery in Kiev, Antonij and Feodosij, to Saint Serge of Radonež, Dimitrij of Rostov, Tichon of Zadonsk) were represented, one next to the other, thus

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[64] Nikolaj Nikolaevič Romanov is called 'the Elder' [*Staršij*] not to be confused with his son, Nikolaj Nikolaevič himself, referred to as 'the Younger' [*Mladšij*].
[65] Dmitrij A. Skalon, *Putešestvie po Vostoku i Svjatoj Zemle v svite Velikogo knjazja Nikolaja Nikolaeviča v 1872 godu* (Moskva: Indrik, 2007).
[66] Ibid., 146.

creating an ideal and spiritual bridge between the two realities, the Holy Land and the Holy Russia. As Nikolaj N. Lisovoj noted, "this close-knit platoon of 'personalities' from the universal and Russian Orthodoxy on the columns of the main Ecclesiastical Mission temple was the best way to mirror the idea of the indivisible unity between the Holy Russia and the Holy Land."[67]

Under the archimandrite Antonin (Kapustin), head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission for about thirty years (1865-1894), other important estates were bought in different corners of the Holy Land.[68] Among them, the site on the Mount of Olives where the Russian female monastery of the Ascension would later be built; a spot in the ancient village of Ein Kerem, where the Gorny Monastery, tied to the memory of Mary's meeting with Elizabeth, would later arise; some land in Hebron, that according to the tradition hosted the biblical Oaks of Mamre, where the Monastery of the Holy Trinity would be established; and finally sites in Jaffa, Jericho and other places of religious interest.

'Russian Palestine' was visited every year by thousands of pilgrims coming from all over the Czar's Empire. In 1857, just after the Crimean war, over 500 people came to the Holy Land, going up to nearly 800 the following year. The number of Russian travelers would increase year by year, amounting to a total of over 75.000 in the period between 1865 and 1899.[69]

Conclusions

The period between the second half of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century can be considered as a sort of 'Golden Age' in the history of the Russian Orthodox presence in Jerusalem in the pre-revolutionary period. The great flow of pilgrims coming from different corners of the Russian Empire; the ownership of sites of great biblical and spiritual value; the long presence of the Mission in the center of Jerusalem; the building of churches and monasteries; all of that allowed Russian Orthodoxy to play a relevant role in the Holy Land compared to the other Christian communities, including the Greek Orthodox one. At the same time, there was the deep attraction that the Holy Land exerted upon Russian Orthodox Christianity, an interest that strictly depended on images and representations conveyed by writers and travelers.

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[67] Nikolaj N. Lisovoj, "Chramy Russkoj Palestiny," *Rossija v Svjatoj Zemle. Dokumenty i materialy*, (Moskva: Mežnunarodnye otnošenija, 2001), II, 593-594.
[68] In the first four years Antonin directed the Mission as a temporary administrator [*upravljajuščij delami*]; only in 1869, on Filaret's death (the metropolitan of Moscow who was defensor of Leonid's prerogatives), he was officially called chief of this organism. On him, see the biography of the archimandrite Kiprian (Kern), *Otec Antonin Kapustin, archimandrit i načal'nik Russkoj Duchovnoj missii v Ierusalime (1817-1894)* (Moskva: Krutickoe podvor'e, 1997).
[69] Petr V. Stegnij, "O rossijskom konsul'skom predstavitel'stve v Svjatoj Zemle," *Rossija v Svjatoj Zemle*, I, 7-8.

All this would face a deep crisis soon after the dissolution of the Russian Empire. The 1917 overthrow of the Czarist power and the consequent collapse of the imperial system would have a direct effect also on the survival of these structures that had worked as a spiritual, religious, cultural, political and diplomatic bridge between Russia and the Holy Land. The Holy Land disappeared from the Russian (now Soviet) cultural and literary horizon. While Russia entered a new painful and tormented page of its history, the experience of 'Russian Palestine' was closing down, at least temporarily.

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An Unusual Traveler:
Ida Pfeiffer's Visit to the Holy Land in 1842

by *Jennifer Michaels*

Abstract

In 1842 the middle-aged Austrian Ida Pfeiffer (1797-1858) set out for the Holy Land. To counter protests from her family, horrified by her plan to travel alone, Pfeiffer, who became a well-respected travel writer, disguised this journey as a pilgrimage. Her travel diary, which appeared as Reise einer Wienerin in das Heilige Land (1844; A Visit to the Holy Land, 1852), gives immediacy to her perceptions and conveys the excitement she felt despite the many hardships of the journey. In it she presented herself as a religious woman eager to visit sacred sites, but she also relished the freedom of traveling and she commented on life in the Holy Land at that time, views that were widely disseminated because of the book's popularity in Europe. Her diary vividly depicts her own perceptions of being a "pilgrim," presents a picture of life in the Holy Land, as she experienced it, and reveals the difficulties she encountered as a woman traveler.

- Introduction
- Negotiating and Flouting 19th Century Gender Expectations
- Orientalist and Colonialist Perceptions of the "Other" in Pfeiffer's Time
- Pfeiffer's Itinerary in the Holy Land
- Conclusions

Introduction

In 1842 the Austrian Ida Pfeiffer (1797-1858) set out for the Holy Land.[1] To counter protests from her family, horrified by her plan to travel alone, Pfeiffer, who became a well-respected travel writer, in fact in Europe she was one of the most celebrated travel writers of her time, disguised this journey as a pilgrimage. Her travel diary, which appeared as *Reise einer Wienerin in das Heilige Land* (1844; *A Visit to the Holy Land*, 1852) gives immediacy to her perceptions and conveys the excitement she felt despite the many hardships of the journey. In it she presented herself as a religious woman eager to visit sacred sites, but she also relished the freedom of traveling and she commented on life in the Holy Land at that time, views that were widely disseminated because of her book's popularity in Europe.[2] Suzanne Marchand suggests that Pfeiffer "was

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[1] Pfeiffer refers to the Holy Land frequently as Syria, sometimes as Palestine.
[2] In the decade after she wrote her account, four German editions appeared and it was

valued because she brought home not just religious experiences but new knowledge, new objects, and facts rather than feelings."[3] Her travel account, shaped to some extent by the Orientalist and colonialist views of the time, was popular not only for its representation of the Holy Land, but also for its vivid depictions of the other countries she visited such as Turkey, Egypt and Italy. It also gives insights into how Pfeiffer negotiated and flouted 19th century gender expectations. As the emphasis on "Wienerin" (Viennese woman) in the German title suggests, travel accounts by German-speaking women were unusual at that time, and it was even more unusual for such women to travel alone.[4]

From the 4th century on, Jerusalem, long considered by Christians as "the spiritual center of the world," had inspired pilgrimages.[5] In the decade prior to Pfeiffer's journey, visits by Westerners to the Holy Land had increased, partly because advances in transportation such as steamships had made the journey there less difficult and partly because under Muhammad Ali, the ruler of Egypt, who occupied the region from 1831 until 1840, travel within the Holy Land had become if not safe then somewhat safer, a situation that continued under the resumption of Ottoman rule in 1840-41. The majority of these travelers were men, but women sometimes accompanied their husbands. Lady Francis Egerton, for example, visited the Holy Land in 1840 with her husband, her son, and an entourage that included her maid, other servants and a "medical gentleman."[6] Travel literature of any kind was popular throughout the 19th century in Europe, especially in German-speaking areas where "the number of armchair explorers participating vicariously in travels skyrocketed."[7] As a result of increased visits to the Holy Land numerous travel accounts of these journeys began appearing in the 1830s and later, many of which were primarily

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translated into seven languages. See Eka Donner, *Und Nirgends eine Karawane: Die Weltreisen der Ida Pfeiffer (1797-1858)* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1997), 73.

[3] Suzanne L. Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire: Religion, Race, and Scholarship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 147. This comment applies to Pfeiffer's entire oeuvre since the "new knowledge" and "new objects" are particularly relevant to her later works when she sent home natural-scientific collections, but it also sheds light on her first journey.

[4] While travel by British women to various countries at this time was more common, it was more unusual for German-speaking women. Prominent British women travelers in the 18th century include Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1689-1762), Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797), and Ann Radcliffe (1764-1823). In the 19th century more British women continued to travel extensively, for example, Maria Graham (1785-1842), Isabella Bird (1831-1904) and Mary Kingsley (1862-1900). In the mid-19th century travel by German-speaking women began to increase. For instance, a year after Pfeiffer's journey, the German Countess Ida Hahn-Hahn (1805-1880) also visited the Holy Land and left an account of her travels in *Orientalische Briefe* (1844).

[5] Nina Berman, *German Literature on the Middle East: Discourses and Practices, 1000-1989* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011), 26.

[6] Lady Francis Egerton, *Journal of a Tour in the Holy Land, in May and June, 1840* (London: Harrison, 1841), 1.

[7] Susanne Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies: Conquest, Family, and Nation in Precolonial Germany, 1770-1870* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 32.

interested in the region for its biblical sites.[8]

Negotiating and flouting 19th century gender expectations

Pfeiffer (Figure 1) was born as Ida Reyer into a bourgeois family in Vienna, the only girl in a large family of boys. Her father raised and educated her like her brothers, allowed her to wear boys' clothes, and fostered her interest in active outdoor pursuits, which, as her travel writing makes clear, remained with her throughout her life. When she was nine her father died and her mother took over her education, and tried over Ida's vehement protests to prepare her for being a "lady." She had to discard her boys' clothes, wear dresses, and take piano lessons. Ever since she was young, she was eager to travel, and the travelogues she read helped her escape for a while from the confines of her upbringing. When she was 17, she fell in love with her tutor, a feeling he reciprocated, but her mother, who wanted a better match for her daughter, opposed the relationship. At age 22, she married the middle-aged lawyer Pfeiffer, a widower who held an important position in the Austrian government. They had two sons. After her husband later lost his position, Pfeiffer gave music and drawing lessons to earn some money, but her family finances were very tight. When her mother died in 1831, she left her daughter a small inheritance that just covered living expenses and her sons' education. Pfeiffer separated from her husband in 1835. By 1842, both sons had their own homes and she decided to follow her long-desired dream of traveling.

At that time if a woman traveled alone it was viewed as improper and eccentric. "Respectable" women travelers were expected to have male chaperones and only few traveled alone. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, for example, set out with her husband for Turkey in 1716 where he had been appointed ambassador, and Mary Eliza Rogers traveled with her diplomat brother, the Vice-Consul of Haifa, to Palestine in 1855.[9] Some, like Montagu or Egerton, were aristocrats, and others, like Rogers, were respected because of a male family member's profession. Some traveled in luxury.[10] In contrast, Pfeiffer traveled with very little money, few possessions, and no patronage.[11]

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[8] One example is the American biblical scholar Edward Robinson (1794-1863) who visited the Holy Land in 1838 and published his three volume *Biblical Researches in Palestine and Adjacent Countries* in 1841. For an account of other American visitors see Brian Yothers, *The Romance of the Holy Land in American Travel Writing, 1790-1876* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).

[9] On her, see the essay of Guy Galazka published in this issue.

[10] In an appendix Egerton presents a long list of indispensable items for a journey to Palestine that included tents, carpets and portable bedsteads. Egerton, *Journal of a Tour in the Holy Land*, 137-38. She terms this "roughing it." Ibid., 14.

[11] Other women, before Pfeiffer, had of course traveled without male chaperones. One such pioneer was the artist-naturalist Maria Sibylla Merian who went with her daughter to Suriname in June 1699 "to study and paint the insects, butterflies and plants." See Natalie Zemon Davis, *Women on the Margins: Three Seventeenth-Century Lives* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 140.

Fig. 1: Ida Pfeiffer, Photograph by Franz Hanfstaengl, 1856.
Bildarchiv der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek, Vienna

Pfeiffer was not deterred by bourgeois expectations that women confine themselves to the domestic sphere. For Pfeiffer, as for other 18th and 19th century women, among them Montagu, Graham, and Rogers, travel was liberating since it freed them from such stifling conventions and gave them independence.[12] Pfeiffer's visit to the Holy Land was her first major journey.[13] Inspired by its success she then explored Iceland,[14] traveled around the world

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[12] While in Constantinople, Montagu often wore Turkish attire since the veil allowed her to explore the city freely without being recognized. See *The Complete Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*, vol. 1, ed. Robert Halsband, (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), 397, 405. Graham refused to return home after the death of her husband and stayed in Valparaiso, traveled extensively in Chile, and recorded the country's post-independence years. See *Journal of a Residence in Chile During the Year 1822, and a Voyage from Chile to Brazil in 1823*, ed. Jennifer Hayward (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003). Rogers' travel account, published in 1862, demonstrates that she took an active role in her diplomat brother's duties. She mingled freely with people of different religions and classes, almost enjoying the freedom of a man. See Mary Eliza Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine* (London and New York: Kegan Paul, 1989).

[13] Pfeiffer, one of the first German-language female explorers and travel writers, was elected to honorary membership in geographical societies in Berlin and Paris, an unusual honor in her time for a woman.

[14] *Reise nach dem scandinavischen Norden und der Insel Island im Jahre 1845* (Pest: Heckenast, 1846); *Journey to Iceland and Travels in Sweden and Norway*, translated from the German by Charlotte Fenimore Cooper (London: Richard Bentley, 1852).

twice,[15] and visited Madagascar.[16] She set out on 22 March 1842 at the age of 45.

In her travel account Pfeiffer alludes to the strong disapproval of her family who tried to dissuade her by pointing out the many dangers she would encounter: "To think of a woman's venturing alone, without protection of any kind, into the wide world, across sea and mountain and plain – it was quite preposterous."[17] To allay such fears and to make her travels "respectable" Pfeiffer disguised her journey as a pilgrimage. Traveling for "religious edification" provided her with "an appropriate motivation or cover,"[18] but as her itinerary, which included present-day Turkey, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Malta, Sicily and Italy suggests, she was eager to see not only the Holy Land, but also many other countries and learn about their different customs and people. By calling her journey a pilgrimage Pfeiffer placed herself within the centuries-old tradition of religiously motivated travels by women. This was one of the few forms of travel open to women, and some female pilgrims left accounts of their experiences.[19] Early pilgrim accounts had typically focused on practical and religious matters: "It was the education of the soul that was the text's first concern," and such narratives were often "little more than a compilation of passages from the Bible."[20] From the late 15th century on, however, pilgrims' accounts included broader depictions of different religions, customs, architecture and geography.[21]

Egerton, for example, comments on landscape features and other religions, but of paramount importance to her were biblical sites and she frequently quotes

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[15] *Eine Frauenfahrt um die Welt* (Vienna: Gerold, 1850); *A Lady's Voyage Round the World: a Selected Translation*, translated from the German by Mrs. Percy Sinnett (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1851); *Meine zweite Weltreise* (Vienna: Gerold, 1856). The English translation appeared before the German version as *A Lady's Second Journey round the World; from London to the Cape of Good Hope, Borneo, Java, Sumatra, Celebes, Ceram, the Moluccas, etc., California, Panama, Peru, Ecuador and the United States*, translated from the German by Mrs. Percy Sinnett (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1855).

[16] *Reise nach Madagaskar. Nebst einer Biographie der Verfasserin, nach ihren eigenen Aufzeichnungen* (Vienna: Gerold, 1861); *The Last Travels of Ida Pfeiffer Inclusive of a Visit to Madagascar*, *with a Biographical Memoir of the Author*, translated from the German by H. W. Dulcken (London: Routledge, 1861).

[17] I read the travel account in the original German, but I quote here from the English translation. Ida Pfeiffer, *A Visit to the Holy Land*, 2nd edition, translated from the German by H. W. Dulcken (London: Ingram Cooke, 1853), 18. EBook available at http://archive.org/details/visittoholylande00pfeiiala (accessed 1 September 2013).

[18] Helga Schutte Watt, "Ida Pfeiffer: A Nineteenth-Century Woman Travel Writer," *The German Quarterly* 64/3 (1991): 342.

[19] One such example is as early as the fourth century when the nun Etheria visited Palestine, Constantinople and Egypt and in detailed letters reported about her journey to her fellow nuns at home. See Gabriele Habinger, *Ida Pfeiffer: Eine Forschungsreisende des Biedermeier* (Vienna: Milena Verlag, 2004), 59-60.

[20] Carl Thompson, *Travel Writing* (London: Routledge, 2011), 38-39.

[21] Berman, *German Literature*, 67.

biblical passages. As she traveled, she relates, "a thousand passages of Scripture are hourly elucidated."[22] She disparaged Jews who, she thought, should be converted to Christianity and interpreted the condition of Palestine through a Christian worldview.[23] For example, she argued that the desolation and barrenness she perceived there had been predicted "in almost every page of the Bible."[24] Pfeiffer lacked Egerton's missionary zeal and she blamed Palestine's condition on Ottoman rule. On the first page of her travel account she refers to her upcoming journey as a "dangerous pilgrimage,"[25] revealing mixed motives for her travel. Her journey was in part a pilgrimage since she was eager to see Jerusalem and visit holy sites, but, as mentioned earlier, she had long dreamed of traveling so her motivation was not primarily religious. As her use of "dangerous" suggests, her account contains elements of the secular heroic explorer tradition of travel literature by men.[26] In all her works, Pfeiffer was intensely curious about the different cultures she encountered and throughout her life continued to be excited and enthusiastic about traveling.

Disparaging attitudes to women traveling alone were widespread in mid-19th century society, including among male travelers. On the ship from Constantinople to the Holy Land Pfeiffer became acquainted with an Englishman, Mr. Bartlett, the only other Frank (the name used for Europeans) on board, and they decided to travel to Jerusalem together. This was the artist William Henry Bartlett (1809-1854), renowned for his steel engravings of scenes from his extensive travels in North America and the Middle East. Bartlett would later publish his own account of his visit to the Holy Land in which he would refer to Pfeiffer rather dismissively as "a German lady, who had accompanied me to Jerusalem; if that conventional term may be applied to one, who, on account of some religious motive, and with an insurmountable wish to tread the scenes of Biblical story, travelled without any attendant, or any protector from the risks of such a journey, but such as chance turned up."[27] He would condescendingly acknowledge her religious motivation, but would imply that a woman traveling alone cannot be considered a "lady."

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[22] Egerton, *Journal of a Tour in the Holy Land,* 94
[23] Ibid., 22.
[24] Ibid., 94.
[25] Pfeiffer, *A Visit to the Holy Land*, 17.
[26] A later famous example of the popular male heroic explorer tradition is Henry Morton Stanley's *Through the Dark Continent* (1878). See Thompson, *Travel Writing*, 140.
[27] W. H. Bartlett, *Walks about the City and Environs of Jerusalem* (London: Arthur Hall, Virtue, and Co., 1844), 227. In her travel diary, Pfeiffer mentions him by name as soon as she becomes acquainted with him, describes conversations with him and their subsequent travels together. She, however, remains invisible in his account until page 227. He does acknowledge that she gave no one any trouble, "enjoyed everything in silence, and never uttered a murmur during the heat and fatigue of our journey" and was not nervous about staying the night alone in the tower at Mar Saba. Ibid., 227. Bartlett's work proved useful to future travelers. On her arrival in Jerusalem, Rogers notes, for example: "Mr. Bartlett has made the streets of the Holy City so familiar in his 'Walks about Jerusalem'." Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine*, 25.

Women travel writers had to overcome even more challenges than women travelers. By publishing their works they stepped from the domestic into the public sphere and often encountered criticism and ridicule. At that time travel writing was considered a typically masculine genre. Women "were caught in a 'double-bind situation,' unfavorably judged and trivialized if their texts were construed as feminine, and questioned for the legitimacy and truth value of their work if they chose masculine adventure-hero forms."[28] They were not considered capable or qualified to discuss "serious" issues such as politics, art, or science.[29]
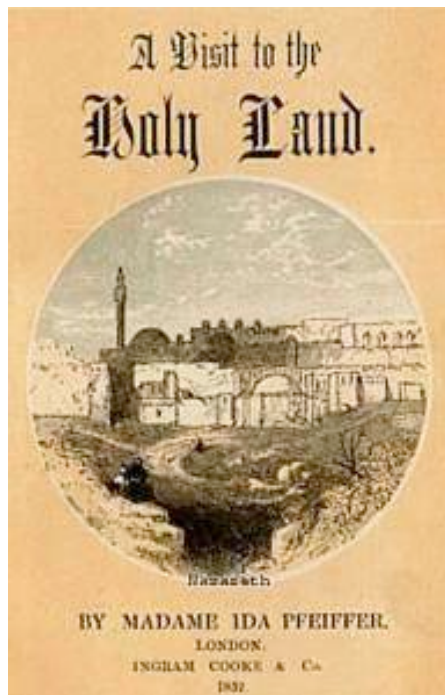
Fig. 2: Pfeiffer, "A to Visit to Holy Land"
London, 1853 (Cover).

The publishing history of *A Visit to the Holy Land* presents an example of their difficulties.[30] When Pfeiffer set out on her journey she did not intend to publish a travel account.[31] Throughout her travels, she kept a diary, intended to

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[28] Ravina Aggarwal, "'Point of Departure': Feminist Locations and the Politics of Travel in India," *Feminist Studies* 26/3 (2000): 554.

[29] Tamara Felden, *Frauen Reisen: Zur literarischen Repräsentation weiblicher Geschlechterrollenerfahrung im 19. Jahrhundert* (New York: Peter Lang, 1993), 2.

[30] Lady Montagu's family, for example, opposed the publication of her letters. Montagu wanted her Turkish letters published after her death but "her family were in terror lest they should be" and objected strongly. Her daughter thought it "unseemly for Lady Mary to be an author." See Robert Halsband, *The Life of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu* (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), 287-89.

[31] Women travel writers often used disclaimers about their intentions to publish their accounts and modesty about the quality of their work as strategies to circumvent society's expectations

convey her experiences and impressions to her family and friends. Pressured by the Viennese publisher Jakob Dirnböck, however, she consented to publish it. (Figure 2) In *A Visit to the Holy Land* she notes her initial reluctance. Worried about how her readers would perceive her views she stresses that she is no "authoress" and has previously written only letters. Her diary is "a simple narration, in which I have described every circumstance as it occurred; a collection of notes which I wrote down for private reference, without dreaming that they would ever find their way into the great world." [32] Concerned about the propriety of her publishing her diary and fearing that it might damage its reputation, Pfeiffer's family determined to have a say in the matter.

In one of her few letters still existing from this period, presumably written in 1843, she writes to the bookseller Bauer in Vienna, Dirnböck's former partner, asking him to send her the fourteen notebooks of her diary, explaining that her husband, from whom she had long been separated, as well as her siblings insisted that several points needed to be clarified. Such family involvement suggests that the independence she had won for herself on her travels did not carry over into her life in Vienna, where she was forced back into the norms and conventions of patriarchal society, a reason why she stayed at home so briefly between her travels. [33] During her first journey around the world, she wrote to her sister Marie from Tiflis in August 1848 expressing concerns about returning home and likened herself to a schoolboy who had to return to the yoke after the vacation was over. [34] Since Pfeiffer's original diary has not been found, it is not known if passages were cut or changed. Whether by her own choice or as a concession to her family the first edition of the diary appeared anonymously: twelve years later, in the fourth German edition in 1856, her name finally appeared as the author. [35]

Negotiating an acceptable female persona
Like other women travel writers, Pfeiffer adopted strategies to conform to "accepted notions of womanhood" while protecting her independence. [36] In his

of women's proper role. In Pfeiffer's case, it is likely that she did not set out with the intention of publishing her diary, but on her return home she quickly saw the advantages of publishing. The profits from her travel account supported her next journey to Iceland. She intended her four subsequent travel accounts for publication.

[32] Pfeiffer, *A Visit to the Holy Land*, 328.

[33] See Hiltgund Jehle, *Ida Pfeiffer: Weltreisende im 19. Jahrhundert: Zur Kulturgeschichte reisender Frauen* (Münster/New York: Waxmann, 1989), 27.

[34] Gabriele Habinger, ed., *Ida Pfeiffer: 'Wir leben nach Matrosenweise': Briefe einer Weltreisenden des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Vienna: Promedia, 2008), 60. Other women travelers expressed similar reservations about returning home, as, for example, Montagu in a letter to her husband on 9 April 1718, in *The Complete Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*, vol. 1, 394.

[35] Habinger, *Wir leben nach Matrosenweise*, 36-38. Her name appeared earlier in the English translation.

[36] Patricia Howe, " 'Die Wirkichkeit ist anders': Ida Pfeiffer's Visit to China 1847," *German Life and Letters* 52/3 (1999): 326.

introduction to *A Visit to the Holy Land* her publisher, aiming his remarks at potential readers and future sales, underscores her womanly qualities, while at the same time praising her achievement, noting that he found it almost incredible that a "delicate lady (…) should have the heroism to do what thousands of men failed to achieve."[37] In her private life, however, she remained the "most simple and unaffected, the most modest, and consequently also the most agreeable of beings." He writes that Pfeiffer's simple and unadorned facts and her candor, combined with strong sound sense "might put to shame the bombastic striving after originality of many a modern author." In his view "strict truth shines forth from every page, and no one can doubt but that so pure and noble a mind must see things in a right point of view."[38] He stresses that Pfeiffer did not crave publicity, considered an undesirable trait in women. On the contrary he had to persuade her to let it be published because of his wish to provide readers, particularly women, "with a very interesting and attractive, and at the same time a strictly authentic picture of the Holy Land."[39]

On the surface Pfeiffer conformed to this modest, self-effacing persona described by her publisher; and by adopting it she succeeded because men perceived her as unpretentious and non-threatening. This "delicate lady," however, had the stamina and will power to ride through miles of desert, and despite the difficulties of this and her later travels she was determined to continue exploring. Helga Watt observes that Pfeiffer demonstrates "what a woman, relying almost solely on her own determination, can and did accomplish." She praises her for daring "to imagine and pursue the virtually impossible: a mid-nineteenth-century middle-class older woman exploring the remotest corners of the world—and doing it alone."[40]

In her travel diary, a genre then considered typically female, Pfeiffer seeks to authenticate her experiences and to underscore the reliability of her eyewitness account. She stresses on several occasions that she strives "to represent every thing as I found it, as it appeared before my eyes; without adornment indeed, but truly."[41] Before setting off for the Holy Land she read extensively reports of other visits there and talked with a man who had previously visited the Holy Land.[42] It is likely that she was familiar with Lady Hester Stanhope's

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[37] Pfeiffer, *A Visit to the Holy Land*, viii.

[38] Ibid., ix.

[39] Ibid., x.

[40] Watt, "Ida Pfeiffer," 339.

[41] Pfeiffer, *A Visit to the Holy Land*, 30.

[42] Ibid., 17. No list has been found of which travel accounts she read. In the 18th century there were at least fourteen original accounts in German about journeys to Palestine, "a number that was to rise exponentially in the nineteenth century" (Berman, *German Literature*, 125), as well as translations from other languages. One can speculate that Pfeiffer might have read Montagu's letters, translated into German by the painter Henry Fuseli in 1763. The letters were well received and continued to be available in German editions. Unlike Montagu, however, who

archaeological excavations and her subsequent life in the region because she refers to seeing her house on the way to Beirut.[43] She distances herself, however, from some previous accounts, considering them inaccurate and fanciful. In her opinion some travelers described "dangers which they have *not* experienced, in order to render their narrative more interesting."[44] When visiting the hot springs near the Sea of Galilee she is not impressed by the bathhouse and thought that in previous descriptions of the baths "poetry or exaggeration had led many a pen far beyond the bounds of facts." In contrast she endeavors "to see every thing exactly as it stands before me, and to describe it in my simple diary without addition or ornament."[45] As Carl Thompson warns, however, "a degree of fictionality [is] inherent in all travel accounts." Even writers, who like Pfeiffer, seek "to record faithfully their experiences" are selective in what they record and need to "edit, reconstruct, and so subtly distort, those experiences in the process of fashioning their narrative."[46]

Orientalist and Colonialist Perceptions of the "Other" in Pfeiffer's Time

Pfeiffer had traveled before, mostly within the Habsburg Empire, but this journey was her first real encounter with the "other." Although she was receptive and accepting of different cultures she nevertheless saw them through the eyes of a woman shaped by European, specifically Habsburg, value systems and stereotypes and in her diary she participates in, but also challenges, Orientalist and colonialist discourses of the time. As postcolonial critics have shown, representations of the "other" are inevitably political or ideological acts. For Edward Said, for example, Orientalism is "a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient,"[47] and Mary Louise Pratt points out that cross-cultural encounters or "contact zones" are often characterized by "highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination" that stem from colonial ideology with its "accounts of conquest and domination."[48] The Habsburg Empire had no overseas colonies, but, like other European powers, it sought to expand its political and economic influence in the Middle East.[49] Travel writing, a genre "within which imperialist

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took issue, for example, with Paul Rycaut's *Present State of the Ottoman Empire* (1668), in all her travel accounts Pfeiffer never named the writers she criticized. Taking issue with previous, unnamed travel accounts has long been a feature of both fictional and actual travel accounts, as in Jonathan Swift's satirical *Gulliver's Travels*, published in 1726.

[43] By not explaining who Lady Stanhope was, Pfeiffer shows that she expects her readers will be familiar with her.

[44] Pfeiffer, *A Visit to the Holy Land*, 194.

[45] Ibid., 158.

[46] Thompson, *Travel Writing*, 28-29.

[47] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1979), 3.

[48] Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes. Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), 4, 7.

[49] See Berman, *German Literature*, 187.

knowledges are produced,"[50] often reinforced the colonialist discourse of the time, particularly its stereotypes of the "other."[51] Images of the Ottoman Turk in German-speaking areas, for example, ranged from "religious enemy to noble heathen, from debauched, violent, and hypersexed Arab to wise and amiable Oriental."[52] Turks were admired for their religious tolerance and sense of public welfare, but were also commonly seen as sensual, violent, despotic and indolent.[53] Even when travel writers attempt to engage honestly with another culture, they inevitably participate in othering, "since every travel account is premised on the assumption that it brings news of people and places that are to some degree unfamiliar and 'other' to the audience."[54] Although Pfeiffer was not directly involved in the colonial expansion of the time, her travel account reflects to some extent such colonialist and Orientalist discourses.

Pfeiffer's Itinerary in the Holy Land

Pfeiffer arrived in the Holy Land on 27 May and left on 18 June 1842. At the time of her visit the region was sparsely populated and largely rural. There were outbreaks of plague, which prevented her visiting some cities, and robberies and assaults, while less than in the earlier party of the century, were still frequent. Her travels included Caesarea, Jaffa (she calls it Joppa), and Jerusalem, where she remained for two weeks. Her original plan was to visit Jerusalem and then return to Jaffa, but she became acquainted with other travelers, four Habsburg counts, whom she accompanied to Bethlehem, the Dead Sea and the River Jordan. She then traveled with this group to Nablus, Nazareth, Tiberias, which she calls Tabarith, Haifa and Acre, continuing on to Beirut. Attaching herself to a group was a strategy that enabled her to widen her travels. Without this opportunity she would have been forced to remain only in Jerusalem because it was too dangerous for both men and women to travel alone in other areas. Traveling with a group meant, however, adhering to the group's timetable, and she sometimes regretted not being able to linger longer at some places, such as the convent on Mount Carmel, and on the way to Nazareth she was compelled to travel when she felt quite sick, hiding her condition for fear she would be left behind. (*Fig. 3*)

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[50] Sara Mills, "Knowledge, Gender, and Empire," in *Writing Women and Space. Colonial and Postcolonial Geographies*, ed. Alison Blunt, Gillian Rose (New York: Guilford Press, 1994), 30.

[51] Indira Ghose, *Women Travellers in Colonial India. The Power of the Female Gaze* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 160.

[52] Berman, *German Literature*, 16.

[53] Such stereotypes were widespread in Austria. In 1829, for example, the Austrian Orientalist Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall referred to the first Ottoman siege of Vienna as "the hooved invasion of Turkish barbarism and Ottoman tyranny." Cited in Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 26.

[54] Thompson, *Travel Writing*, 133.

Fig. 3: Ida Pfeiffer, Traveling costume adopted for later travels. Lithograph by Adolf Dauthage, 1858

Religious Reflections

During her stay in the Holy Land Pfeiffer pays little heed to Islam and does not discuss Judaism. In her earlier stay in Constantinople, where she could visit mosques, and later in Egypt she comments approvingly and in detail on Islam and Islamic customs and challenges negative European stereotypes of Turks as barbarous, stressing instead their sense of social responsibility, such as the kitchens near the mosques where poor Muslims were fed, and their tolerance of other religions. She approves of Islam's prohibition of alcohol, the overindulgence of which led in her view to misery in Europe. In Jerusalem, however, she thinks the Turks are more fanatical than those in Constantinople since she is not allowed access to the mosques.[55] She has little to say about the Jews in Palestine except when she stayed at the house of a Jewish doctor in

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[55] Pfeiffer often uses "Turk" and "Arab" as synonyms. Sometimes she distinguishes Bedouins, but at other times refers to them as Arabs, an example of the generalizing tendency of Orientalist discourse. Generalizing is also true of writers such as Egerton.

Tiberias, the only Jew she records talking to.[56]

As a "pilgrim" her first focus is on sacred sites associated especially with Christianity, but also with the Old Testament. At this time there was already an established itinerary of holy places associated with the life and passion of Christ, especially in Jerusalem, the most significant site for Western visitors to the Holy Land, but also in Bethlehem, Nazareth and other towns. Pfeiffer remarks that previously pilgrims were charged for visiting some of the holy sites, until Muhammad Ali stopped this practice. Pfeiffer visits numerous places of religious significance such as the Via Dolorosa and is shown many objects of veneration, including a footprint of the Savior and footprints of the Virgin Mary. She vividly depicts the interior of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, in particular the small chapel containing the tomb of Christ built in the center of the nave. Pfeiffer finds the church confusing. With its many niches belonging to different Christian sects and its many sacred objects the church seems to her like a labyrinth. In her opinion, the church's architect deserved praise for managing to unite the many holy places under one roof. On several occasions in her diary Pfeiffer notes that holy sites belonged to a particular denomination. The chapel with Christ's tomb belonged, for example, to the Catholics, but the Greeks had the right to celebrate masses there alternately and the church in Bethlehem belonged to the Catholics, Greeks and Armenians.

Like pilgrims such as Egerton, Pfeiffer is overwhelmed with emotion at seeing religious sites in Jerusalem and other towns and being where Jesus had lived. In Caesarea, which she was warned not to visit because of the danger of Bedouins and snakes,[57] she is overcome with a "feeling of awe hitherto unknown to me that I trod the ground where my Redeemer had walked."[58] On first seeing Jerusalem, her "sacred goal,"[59] her voice becomes lyrical. For her "the most beauteous morning of my life dawned" and she searches for words to describe her feelings: "My emotion was deep and powerful; my expression of it would be poor and cold."[60] Spending the night in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher she notes that these "were the most blissful hours of my life" and reflects "he who has lived to enjoy such hours has lived long enough."[61] On leaving

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[56] Omitting any discussion of Judaism is puzzling. However, Pfeiffer tends to report on what she herself had actually seen or heard. It is quite likely that, given the group she traveled with, she did not have any contact with Jews until she was in Tiberias. In contrast, Egerton became acquainted with some missionaries whose negative views of Jews can be detected in her narrative. For example, see Egerton, *Journal of a Tour in the Holy Land*, 22.

[57] Pfeiffer notes that this warning came from the boat's captain and was meant to deter Pfeiffer and Bartlett from landing since the captain, despite prior agreement, did not want to waste time stopping there.

[58] Pfeiffer, *A Visit to the Holy Land*, 97.

[59] Ibid., 108.

[60] Ibid., 109.

[61] Ibid., 116.

Jerusalem she writes: "A calm and peaceful feeling of happiness filled my breast; and ever shall I be thankful to the Almighty that He has vouchsafed me to behold these realms."[62] She reflects on what she has seen and experienced: "The remembrance of these holy places, and of Him who lived and suffered here, shall surely strengthen and console me wherever I may be and whatever I may be called upon to endure."[63]

Skepticism about 'Holy' Sites

Despite her awe, however, Pfeiffer doubted the authenticity of some of the sacred sites, using exclamation marks and words such as "supposed" or "asserted to be" to express her skepticism. Such skepticism was not unusual at the time. Egerton, for example, expressed her doubts that the Church of the Holy Sepulcher was the site of the crucifixion.[64] Pfeiffer describes the chapel containing Christ's tomb in which there was a stone that was "vehemently asserted" to be the one on which the angel sat when announcing the Lord's resurrection. She is shown footsteps of the disciples (she puts an exclamation mark after this) and a building supposed to stand on the site where the wood was felled for the Savior's cross (also an exclamation mark). In Nazareth she sees the grotto thought to be where Mary received God's message from the angel. Three small granite pillars could still be seen, the lower part of one, broken off by the Turks, was only fastened from above. This pillar was said to hang miraculously in the air. She observes sarcastically: "Had these men but looked beyond their noses, had they only cast their eyes upwards, they could not have had the face to preach a miracle where it is so palpable that none exists,"[65] an example both of her outspoken style and her challenge to the accuracy of the male gaze.

Criticism of Christians

Pfeiffer was quite critical of her fellow Christians. Shortly after she arrived in Jerusalem, she attended services at the church in the Franciscan convent.[66] As in mosques, men and women worshipped separately. In the women's section she thought there was little devotion since they talked a lot and prayed very little. Used to Viennese Catholicism Pfeiffer was disturbed that the services seemed to be a social occasion and that children ate their breakfasts during the service and jostled each other. She decided to pray in her room rather "than among people who seem to attend to any thing rather than their devotions."[67] Another unfavorable impression of Catholics was shaped by their practices

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[62] Ibid., 144.

[63] Ibid., 144-145.

[64] Egerton, *Journal of a Tour in the Holy Land*, 18-19.

[65] Pfeiffer, *A Visit to the Holy Land*, 152.

[66] Pfeiffer does not state the location of what she calls the Franciscan convent. It is likely that it was the Franciscan Monastery on Mount Zion whose church she attended.

[67] Pfeiffer, *A Visit to the Holy Land*, 128. Also protestants such as Egerton and Rogers expressed similar views. See Egerton, *Journal of a Tour in the Holy Land*, 19 and Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine*, especially her comments about pilgrim behavior, 299-306.

when someone died. One day she heard screaming, which turned out to be the wails of mourning women. She requested admission to the room where the dead man lay. If it had not been for pictures of saints and a crucifix she would not have imagined that the man was Catholic. The women wailed, drank coffee, and wailed again. Pfeiffer felt disgusted and left, not, however, reflecting that her own behavior was intrusive and insensitive. During the night she spent in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher the "inharmonious din" of the midnight services disturbed her. In her view: "The constant noise and multifarious ceremonies are calculated rather to disconcert than to inspire the stranger."[68] Pfeiffer particularly regretted the frequent conflicts between the various Christian sects and wondered what the Turks, whom she reminds her readers Christians considered infidels, thought of Christians when they saw "with what hatred and virulence each sect of Christians pursues the other" and she asked when "this dishonorable bigotry" would cease. Conflicts became particularly acute, she was told, when the Greek and the Roman Catholic Easter fell on the same day. Quarreling was so extreme that fights broke out and some were even killed. Generally the Turks had to intervene to restore peace and order amongst "us Christians."[69]

Insights into Pilgrim Life
Pfeiffer's travel diary gives insights into accommodations for pilgrims and describes the food they received. She praises the Franciscan convent where she stayed where the friars welcomed rich and poor Roman Catholics and Protestants. Her room was simply furnished with an iron bedstead, a mattress coverlet and bolster, a shabby table and two chairs. Breakfast was coffee without milk or sugar. Dinner, eaten at noon, consisted typically of mutton broth, pastry prepared with oil or a dish of cucumbers, and roast or spiced mutton. On Fridays, Saturdays and saint days there was fast-day fare, such as lentils, omelets, salt fish, bread and wine. The food was sufficient, but Pfeiffer took a while to get used to the constant mutton and missed having beef. Visitors were allowed to stay for a month at no charge, a practice that Pfeiffer with her limited funds appreciated. A donation for masses was customary, but nobody inquired how much the pilgrims gave, or even if they gave anything, nor if they were Catholic, Protestant or another religion. In contrast to this generosity, she reports, the handsome Greek convent charged pilgrims an exorbitant price for bad accommodations, as did the Armenian convent.[70]

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[68] Pfeiffer, *A Visit to the Holy Land*, 116.
[69] Pfeiffer, *A Visit to the Holy Land*, 115. Other travelers also left critical reports about Easter celebrations. For example, Rogers witnessed fights between Greeks and Armenians during Easter celebrations. Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine*, 302. Egerton was thankful to have missed Easter celebrations, which she terms "a most disgraceful scene of violence, superstition, fraud, and schism." Egerton, *Journal of a Tour in the Holy Land*, 19.
[70] Pfeiffer, *A Visit to the Holy Land*, 120.

Depictions of Landscape

Pfeiffer leaves vivid descriptions of the Holy Land's varied landscape and topography. From her European perspective she was disappointed that there were no lawns or flowers, but she quickly saw beauty in what she perceived as an exotic arid landscape. Around Jaffa she describes the sand and the plains and on her journey to Jerusalem the barren and rocky Judean mountains. On the way to Bethlehem she found the view "as grand as it is peculiar."[71] Everything was stony, yet between the stones fruit trees and grape vines grew. During her journey to the Dead Sea and the River Jordan she depicts the rugged grandeur of the desert. Using popular Romantic tropes of the picturesque she writes: "Majestic rocky terraces, piled one above the other by nature with such exquisite symmetry that the beholder gazes in silent wonder."[72] Arriving at the Dead Sea she did not notice fields of salt or smoke rising and did not find the exhalations from the sea unpleasant. She put her hands in the water and let them dry and experienced no itching, and none of her party experienced the headaches or nausea that she reports several previous travelers, whom she does not name, had mentioned. In contrast to the stark scenery of the Dead Sea the banks of the River Jordan were verdant. She admired the beauty of the Nablus valley and the magnificent views of Mount Tabor and uses again Romantic tropes to depict the scenery around the Sea of Galilee: "a glorious chain of mountains rises in varied and picturesque terrace-like forms."[73] Despite her appreciation of the landscape, European notions of natural beauty shape her gaze, as her following rather dismissive observation indicates: "In a mountain region of Europe, a sight like the one we were now admiring would scarcely have charmed us so much. But in these regions, poor alike in inhabitants and in scenery, the traveller is contented with little, and a little thing charms him."[74]

Comments on Agriculture

David Spurr notes that the "writer's eye is always in some sense colonizing the landscape,"[75] and his observation sheds light on Pfeiffer's account. The supposed inability of native inhabitants to cultivate the land properly and the lack of population were common tropes in colonialist discourse, used to justify the "need" for European interventions. In her account Pfeiffer reports both on agriculture and, expressing colonialist views, also on the potential for agricultural development. She was especially fascinated with plants and fruits that were for her exotic, such as the pomegranate and orange plantations near Acre, and the numerous large gardens in Jaffa filled with trees laden with a variety of tropical fruits and surrounded by hedges of Indian fig trees. On her

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[71] Ibid., 123.
[72] Ibid., 133.
[73] Ibid., 155.
[74] Ibid., 156.
[75] David Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire: Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing, and Imperial Administration* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 27.

journey to Jerusalem she remarked on the large herds of sheep and goats and the fertile and well-populated valley of Sharon. Around Jerusalem she thought the land was desolate and barren, thus criticizing the inhabitants for not improving the cultivation of their natural products, in the process echoing European stereotypes of the indolent and backward Oriental: "If they would but exert themselves, many a plant would doubtless flourish luxuriantly."[76] She also remarked that if people knew how to cultivate the vineyards and prepare the wine it could be excellent.[77] From the summit of Mount Tabor she viewed the valley below, noting that despite the richness of the soil the population was sparse. Throughout her stay she never saw agricultural produce carried by wagons. Because the roads were bad, horses, donkeys and sometimes camels were used.[78] She later blamed, however, the poverty she saw and the lack of agricultural development not on the inhabitants, but on Ottoman policies. In her opinion the inhabitants of Syria were ground down, and the taxes were too high. She learned that the orchards, for example, were not taxed as orchards, but instead each individual tree was taxed, a system that discouraged agricultural development. Since the peasants did not own the land they had little incentive to improve it. At the whim of the local pashas they could be moved to another piece of land or even dispossessed. Although she was overall well disposed towards Turks, she echoes Orientalist notions of the despotic Turk when she criticizes the arbitrary tyranny of the local pashas whose power in the area they ruled was as great, in her opinion, as that of the Sultan in Constantinople.[79]

Impressions of Towns

In her diary Pfeiffer leaves snapshots of the towns she visited. She gives a vivid description of the damage to Acre and its fortifications during the war two years previously (1840). The town seemed to "sigh in vain for repairs,"[80] and looked as if the enemy had only recently left. From her visit to Turkey she considered most Turkish towns ugly, even when, unlike the ruined Acre, they were well preserved. She found Jaffa dirty and crowded.[81] At the time she visited Jerusalem it was, with its 25,000 inhabitants, the largest city in the Holy

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[76] Pfeiffer, *A Visit to the Holy Land*, 130.

[77] Ibid., 131. While this criticism appears to be Orientalist, it was also one she made on her journey to Iceland.

[78] Egerton and Rogers also commented on the lack of wagons and the bad roads. For example, see Egerton, *Journal of a Tour in the Holy Land*, 77, and Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine*, 13.

[79] Since some local Ottoman rulers did, in fact, misuse their powers, her comment could quite well be accurate rather than Orientalist. For an analysis of Ottoman rule in the late 18th and early 19th centuries see Dick Douwes, *The Ottomans in Syria: A History of Justice and Oppression* (London: Tauris, 2000), especially chapter 5 (104-124) and chapter 7 (152-187).

[80] Pfeiffer, *A Visit to the Holy Land*, 96.

[81] Dirt is often mentioned in travel writing, not only about the Holy Land. On her journey to Iceland, Pfeiffer also comments on dirt. Both Egerton and Rogers comment on dirt in Palestine, and Rogers describes an attempted clean up of Haifa: Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine*, 143.

Land. She reports that the houses, many with round cupolas, were built of stone and that the city wall was lofty and well preserved. Among the mosques she thought the mosque of Omar with its lead covered roof was the most handsome.[82] In her opinion, Jerusalem was bustling, but had a poor-looking bazaar and the densely populated Jewish quarter, where the plague typically broke out first, had an offensive smell. When she visited Tiberias the town still lay half in ruins from the devastating 1837 (she mistakenly writes 1839) earthquake in which, she heard, many had perished.

Representations of People
Colonialist discourse tended to homogenize native inhabitants and treat them as backward, and their voices were ignored or silenced.[83] Pfeiffer also generalizes, observing people in Palestine from the outside since she could not communicate with them, except through an interpreter.[84] Overall, she views the inhabitants of the Holy Land quite positively. She undermines, for example, European stereotypes of "cruel," "dishonest" and "barbaric" Turks. Although she sometimes criticizes the Arabs, she thinks that those she met were good-natured and hospitable. She refers to notions of thievish Bedouins, but in her experience they were hospitable and welcoming. Pfeiffer also gives her impressions of individuals she met. She sometimes appears patronizing, but she is nevertheless interested in these people.

One picture she gives is of the honorary (and unpaid) consul of Austria and France in Jaffa, whose family she describes at length. Like other women travel writers, she focuses here on characteristics of the family's domestic life such as clothes and food.[85] She does not say what nationality or ethnicity the consul was.[86] Besides his wife there were three sons and three daughters, all of whom wore Turkish costume. The women wore wide trousers, a caftan and a sash around the waist and on their heads they had small fez caps. They braided their hair, plaiting into it small gold coins, and they also wore necklaces of gold

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[82] Pfeiffer mentions that the mosque "is said to occupy" the site of Solomon's temple: Pfeiffer, *A Visit to the Holy Land*, 119. Egerton, in contrast, notes that the mosque "usurps" the place of the temple, a much less tolerant observation than Pfeiffer's: Egerton, *Journal of a Tour in the Holy Land*, 25.

[83] See Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Can the Subaltern Speak? Reflections on the History of an Idea*, ed. Rosalind C. Morris (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 21-78.

[84] Besides German, Pfeiffer at this time spoke French and Italian. On her later travels she learned languages to avoid needing an interpreter and to communicate directly with the different peoples she encountered. She learned, for example, some English and Danish for her journey to Iceland. When she was in the Dutch East Indies on her second journey around the world she learned Dutch and enough Malay to converse for several hours with a king and she picked up some phrases in the Dyak and Batak languages.

[85] In contrast to men, women travel writers often focused on the domestic sphere, see Thompson, *Travel Writing*, 186.

[86] She mentions only that some of the consul's family spoke a little Italian with a strong Greek accent, suggesting that they were of Greek origin.

coins. Such adornment, she observes, was very popular in Syria, and those who could not afford gold coins used silver or copper ones.[87] The consul and his sons wore Turkish dress, but the consul had an old European cocked hat, strangely mixing Turkish and Western styles. In honor of her visit the family prepared what she calls an oriental entertainment, her first meal in the Holy Land. Sitting on mats on the floor, all except Pfeiffer and the consul, who used knives and forks, ate with their fingers. The food consisted of pilaf with mutton, cucumbers, rice milk flavored with attar of roses, cheese made of ewe's milk, gherkins, and burned hazel nuts. She found the flat bread tastier than she expected. The dishes were not to her taste, but she recognized: "I had still too much of the European about me, and too little appetite, to be able to endure what these good people seemed to consider immense delicacies." Some of the family spoke a little Italian, and the consul supposedly spoke French well, but because of their strong accents she had difficulty understanding and had to guess what they said. She reflects that no doubt they had to do the same with her speech: "Much was spoken, and little understood. The same thing is said often to be the case in learned societies; so it was not of much consequence."[88] She received hospitable treatment later from the honorary consul for Austria and France in Haifa who was Catholic, but lived in "Oriental fashion."[89]

Another individual she reports meeting was a kindly Jewish doctor in Tiberias in whose house Pfeiffer and her party stayed because there were no inns. She reports that numerous Jews lived in the town. They did not wear Greek or Turkish clothes, but dressed like their fellow Jews in Galicia and Poland and most spoke German. She learned that all the Jewish families in the town came originally from Poland or Russia and had moved there because they wanted to die in the Promised Land. The doctor told her about the suffering caused by the earthquake in which he had lost his wife and children and he had only escaped because he was at the bedside of a patient. In her discussion of Jews in Tiberias her comments are factual and descriptive and not judgmental.

Depictions of Women
Like other women travel writers, Pfeiffer commented on her impressions of aspects of women's lives.[90] She describes, for example, a wedding where the bride was beautifully dressed, a costume seen, however, only within the family circle since men not belonging to the family were seldom allowed to view

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[87] Pfeiffer reports that "the costume of the Christians is precisely the same as that of the Syrians". Pfeiffer, *A Visit to the Holy Land*, 109-10.

[88] Pfeiffer, *A Visit to the Holy Land*, 101.

[89] Ibid., 162.

[90] Throughout her account Rogers leaves detailed descriptions of her many positive interactions with women in the Holy Land: Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine*, for example, 102-103, 220-235. Egerton, however, dismisses Palestinian women as being "intrusive and annoying": Egerton, *Journal of a Tour in the Holy Land*, 66.

women in their "gorgeous apparel."[91] After the ceremony the young wife had to sit in a corner of the room and not speak, a silence intended to demonstrate the bride's sorrow at changing her condition. When Pfeiffer and her group were in Acre the women of the pasha's harem invited her to visit them, an invitation she gladly accepted since it offered the opportunity of gratifying her curiosity. Reporting on the harem, which appealed to readers' sense of the exotic, was almost a requirement for women travel writers since only women were allowed access.[92] Pfeiffer thought the women in the harem were ignorant, but inquisitive. They could not read or write, did no work and did not know any foreign languages. Like Montagu before her, Pfeiffer uses the harem to critique the situation of European women. From this and other visits to harems, for example, she had the impression that they might be happier than European women. Since no interpreter was allowed to accompany her, she had only the surface to look at and could not communicate with the women, except through gestures. She could not see any signs of beauty, unless, she remarks, stoutness could be considered beautiful, an observation that reveals her inkling that notions of female beauty could be culturally shaped. She did not think these women "capable of deep passions or feeling either for good or evil," but adds: "I only report what I observed on the average,"[93] recognizing perhaps that her impressions were overhasty and superficial.

Traveling in the Holy Land as a Woman
As Pfeiffer demonstrates, traveling in the Holy Land at that time was difficult for anyone, but especially so for a woman. In Constantinople she was advised to disguise herself as a man, which, showing her independence, she refused to do, noting that although her small stocky frame looked like that of a youth her face would be like an old man's, an example of her frequent humorous self-deprecation. She continued to wear the costume she adopted of a blouse and wide Turkish trousers, and this, she writes, was a good decision because everywhere she went she was treated with kindness, consideration and respect. Pfeiffer was, however, relieved to accompany Bartlett to Jerusalem since she was no longer "unprotected," showing a mixture on this her first journey of both independence and dependence. She calls the group, with whom she later

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[91] Pfeiffer, *A Visit to the Holy Land*, 129.

[92] Male writers had long imagined the harem either as an eroticized space or, like Montesquieu, as confirmation of oriental despotism. Women visitors to the harem were not immune to using it for their own agendas. Montagu, who visited with an interpreter, used the harem to critique the situation of women in England. The harem women were in her opinion freer than women in England: *The Complete Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*, vol. 1, 328. For Egerton, who like Pfeiffer could communicate only through gestures, the harem represented oriental despotism: "Poor things, what a miserable existence is theirs! Living like birds in a cage without apparent occupation or interest of any sort, unless it be their children": Egerton, *Journal of a Tour in the Holy Land*, 50. Rogers, who had learned sufficient Arabic to communicate, gives a more nuanced account of individual women: Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine*, for example, 137-38.

[93] Pfeiffer, *A Visit to the Holy Land*, 166.

traveled, her "gentleman-protectors." [94] In the church a priest, wanting her to conform to accepted attire for women, requested her to exchange her straw hat for a veil to cover her head and face. She discarded the hat and used a handkerchief, but refused to muffle her face. When she visited Mar Saba, she was forced to spend the night alone in a tower since women were not allowed entrance into the monastery. She also had to contend with European notions of women's weakness when, for example, she wanted to accompany her acquaintances to the Dead Sea. Some in the group feared that the journey on horseback would be too strenuous and tiring for a woman. [95] From Jaffa to Jerusalem was a strenuous sixteen-hour ride, which Bartlett wanted to complete in one day. After five hours of uninterrupted riding in the heat, already eleven hours on horseback, Pfeiffer felt giddy, but refused to confess her predicament for fear it would be perceived as a sign of weakness. Long hours of riding in the heat were required for her ten-day journey back to Beirut during which she slept in tents or on the ground. By pointing out the long distances covered and the difficulties of the travel Pfeiffer depicts herself as a hardy and resolute traveler. Pfeiffer, the only woman in the group, was justifiably proud of her accomplishments since she never lagged behind the men, but she reports: "Whoever is not very hardy and courageous, and insensible to hunger, thirst, heat, and cold; whoever cannot sleep on the hard ground, or even on stones, passing the cold nights under the open sky' should not venture farther than from Joppa to Jerusalem." [96]

The Reciprocal Gaze
Observing different cultures, as Pfeiffer and all travel writers did, is rarely neutral or objective, as the title of Pratt's book *Imperial Eyes* underscores. Pfeiffer scrutinized but did not objectify people, and in her experience the gaze was reciprocal. She realized, sometimes with humor, but often with discomfort, that as she was gazing at them, they were gazing back and judging her. In the church of St. Francis she was the object of such curiosity. The women looked at her and touched her, which made her uncomfortable. Other local people were also curious to see Europeans and made them what Pfeiffer calls a "gazing-stock," [97] which annoyed some travelers. On her visit to the harem in Acre, the women were just as curious about her as she was about them. They were fascinated with her clothes, her short hair, which they all came up to touch, and her thinness. Pfeiffer's discomfort at being observed did not, however, lead to self-reflection that her own gaze might be intrusive and

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[94] Pfeiffer, *A Visit to the Holy Land*, 145.
[95] Pfeiffer was new to riding. A few weeks earlier in Turkey she accompanied acquaintances to Bursa, a journey that required her to ride. She had never been on horseback before, but was so interested in seeing the city that she did not confess to this. She managed to keep up with the group without falling off, albeit in an inelegant way, as she recounts with her characteristic self-deprecation.
[96] Pfeiffer, *A Visit to the Holy Land*, 145.
[97] Pfeiffer, *A Visit to the Holy Land*, 148.

offensive to them.

Conclusions

Pfeiffer's travel diary, with its mixture of pilgrim and secular adventure/hero narratives, gives insights not only into religious sites and pilgrimages, but also presents vivid scenes of life at that time. Although hampered by being unable to communicate directly with the inhabitants, her impressions of the Holy Land are nevertheless insightful and unsentimental. With today's hindsight, her Eurocentric biases are clear, but for her time she was open to other cultures and showed that she was able to learn from her experiences. For example, she notes that she had found few things as she had imagined them to be and she recognizes "how falsely I had judged the poor denizens of the East when I took them for the most thievish of tribes,"[98] thereby revising stereotypes she had previously held. In this first journey Pfeiffer sometimes seems naïve and unsure of herself and relies on men to protect her, at least some of the time. Having successfully completed the journey, however, she gained more self-confidence and independence, as her later travels demonstrate. Her journey also taught her the importance of being able to communicate directly with people, rather than relying on an interpreter, the reason why she avidly learned other languages for her future travels. Pfeiffer never lost her enthusiasm for traveling and, as with her later books, she communicates here the excitement and the awe she felt.

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[98] Ibid., 287.

Stillness and Motion:
Depicting the Urban Landscape of Palestine in the 19ᵗʰ Century

by *Guy Galazka*

Abstract

This paper aims at offering valuable insights into the complex encounter between 19th-century Western travelers and the urban landscape of Palestine. The first part shows that, despite their efforts to distance themselves from the religious overtones of their predecessors, visitors tended to shove aside what they considered as 'inauthentic' or the product of acculturation in favor of a more conventional portrayal drawing on biblical imagery. This idealized vision was bound to struggle with disappointment, and the second part of this paper looks at how the representations of the city moved in the course of the 19ᵗʰ century from a purely pictorial transposition to a more practical and informed understanding of otherness. Travel writers began to devote considerable portions of their narratives to various aspects of life in the oriental town, while still predominately focusing on what they viewed as exotic and remote in comparison to European, and to a larger extent, Western culture.

- Introduction
- The Oriental City Viewed from afar: A Mosaic of Reminiscences
- Western Travelers in the Oriental City: An Encounter with a Living Entity
- When the 'Other' Becomes the 'Self'
- Conclusions
- List of Figures

Introduction

The present study aims to explore the complex encounter between 19ᵗʰ-century Western travelers and the urban spaces of Palestine.[1] The first part shows that, looking at the city from a distance, visitors were inclined to resort to descriptions drawing on biblical imagery and pictorial representations of its holy sites and scenes. However, as will be illustrated at length, the mere *marvelous* quickly receded but not vanished altogether as they got a closer view of the settlement. The second part deals with the ambivalence of travel writers towards the beginning of modernization in Palestinian towns and with the widening gap between authenticity and modernism, including the question of Western political intervention in the Holy Land.

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[1] As far as 19ᵗʰ-century Western travelers were concerned, and disregarding the Ottoman administrative divisions at the time, the names Palestine and Holy Land together made up a region bounded on the Northeast by the Golan Heights, on the South by Beersheba, on the West by the Mediterranean Sea and on the East by Bethany beyond the Jordan.

All in all, this paper will try to demonstrate that contrary to the notion of an *absolute* binary division between the West and the East, which has been popularized by Edward Said's *Orientalism*[2] there is no single and homogenous narrative about the 'Oriental city' in the 19th century. Instead, there is a multitude of contradictory, shifting, evolving and sometimes overlapping discourses, which, taken together, serve as a means to create self-identity and define otherness. In this regard, this study converges with some of the arguments developed by other literary theorists who challenge Said's approach to alterity, such as David Kof and Bernard Lewis.[3]

Hundreds of Western travelers reached Palestine in the 19th century. The introduction of faster and cheaper transportation made it possible for obscure clergymen, rootless journalists and audacious women travelers[4] to share the stage with prominent public figures, including the British Premier Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881). Although religious motivations continued to play a major part in their interest in the Holy Land, those forerunners of mass tourism, strongly influenced by the Enlightenment and Romanticism, also attempted to shed light on the physical and human dimensions of the country. Yet, their search for 'truth', after years of idealizing descriptions in spiritual writings and travel literature, generally led to feelings of frustration upon arriving in Palestine: where travelers expected to see the holy city of Jerusalem, they discovered a small Mediterranean town 'polluted' with European buildings and shops; where they contemplated wandering amid the tall trees on the banks of the mighty Jordan River, they found a narrow tortuous stream, impossible to navigate by boat.

Many, upon their return home, published accounts of their excursions in Palestine. This study will present a selection of these sources,[5] representative as

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[2] Edward Said (1935-2003) states that the concept of the 'Orient' is a fabrication, an artifact, an unrefined clay modeled by Western hands in the late 18th century, gaining importance during the subsequent colonial era (and used from then on) and proclaiming the inherent hegemony of the West over the East in terms of cultural, economic and military achievements – a superiority upon which the legitimacy of colonialism rested. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin Classics, 2003), 10, 41.

[3] David Kof, "Hermeneutics versus History," *Journal of Asian Studies* 39/3 (1980): 495-505; Bernard Lewis, *Islam and the West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 99-118.

[4] It is interesting to note that 19th-century travel narratives about Palestine produced by women accentuate the dangers of the voyage – real or fancied – and the subterfuges on which their authors had to rely in order to make their way in patriarchal societies. For example, see Isabel Burton, *The Inner Life of Syria, Palestine, and the Holy Land* (London: Henry S. King & Co., 1876), 223-225. They also offer a deeper, though not necessarily a more compassionate, look on the female inhabitants of the country, whereas male travelers were usually forced to supply the defect of actual observation by hearsay or conjecture. See Cristina Trivulzio-Belgiojoso, *Oriental Harems and Scenery* (New York: Carleton, 1862), 121.

[5] Please note that unless otherwise stated, all quoted passages from non-English or non-American travelogues are my own translations from the original language.

possible of 19th-century Western *notions* about the Holy Land, pushing beyond temporal frontiers and confessional divides, while bearing in mind their subjective nature.[6] Emphasis will be placed on the travelogues of Fredrika Bremer (1801-1865), William Hepworth Dixon (1821-1879) and Laurence Oliphant (1829-1888), which captured a broad readership (running several editions throughout the 19th and the 20th centuries), thence attainting a position of potential influence on the actions and opinions of others, and devoted much room to the blend of excitement, fascination and contempt that visitors held for the Oriental city.

Before turning to the main body of this paper, one last point needs to be stressed. It is of critical importance when examining 19th-century literary representations of the urban landscape of Palestine, that they be placed in the broader context of the advent of Romanticism and Orientalism in the West in which – regardless to some variations between countries – the celebration of nature over the constraints of urban life, the firsthand experience, the emotional, the dramatic, the imaginative, as well as the delight in the Exotic dominated the scene.[7] Artists of the period, especially those of the first half of the 19th century, have indeed been accused of denigrating contemporary Palestine society while glorifying the grandeur of its panorama and the grace of its 'long-dormant, unalterable' biblical sites to satisfy the public's taste.[8]

The Oriental City Viewed from afar: A Mosaic of Reminiscences

In the 19th century, the two major coastal towns in Palestine were Jaffa and Haifa. The first, a green oasis on the doorstep of the Plain of Sharon, was an amphitheatre-shaped city, built upon a hill overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. During the second half of the 19th century, Jaffa underwent a period of significant demographic growth. One of the sources (1860) gives a figure as high as fifteen thousand souls, consisting predominately of Muslims.[9] The second, located at the foot of Mount Carmel, on the Western side of the Bay of Acre, formed in the 1850s a community of less than four thousand people.[10] None of the two seaports had proper docking facilities and rocks made navigating treacherous, forcing ships to anchor a mile off the coast.

While waiting to go ashore, Western travelers enjoyed the opportunity to take a closer look at the Palestinian city. This first impression was usually consistent

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[6] Casey Blanton, *Travel Writing: The Self and the World* (London: Routledge, 2002), 13.

[7] Valérie Berty, *Littérature et voyage, Un essai de typologie narrative des récits de voyage français au XIXe siècle* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2001), 35-50.

[8] John M. MacKenzie*, Orientalism: History, Theory and the Arts* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 47-50.

[9] Charles Berton, *Quatre années en Orient* (Paris: Louis Vivès, 1860), 363.

[10] Liévin de Hamme, *Guide indicateur des sanctuaires et lieux historiques de la Terre sainte* (Jerusalem: Imprimerie des pères franciscains, 1869), 593.

with their *biblical expectations*, since the physical distance from mainland enabled them to momentarily shove aside what they considered as 'inauthentic' details. Indeed, as has been noted in the Introduction, many visitors experienced disappointment when sojourning in Palestine: suddenly reality was separating itself from imagination derived from the Scriptures and centuries-old literature and art. This unfavorable impression drove them, and even more so during the critical disembarkation phase (when the object of their desire was still looming safely and passively on the horizon), to try "to control, manipulate, even to incorporate"[11] what was a manifestly different Palestine from that of biblical times through a discourse relying on a net of textual references and theatricality to create a new image compatible with the spiritual conception of the Holy Land.[12]

Of particular interest is how the British historian William Hepworth Dixon, who traveled in Europe and the East in the early 1860s and helped to establish the Palestine Exploration Fund (1865), describes Jaffa. When the curtain rises, the narrator is on board of a vessel approaching the coast of Palestine: "The light of dawn is opening on a long dark line of hills, standing back about eighteen miles from the shore; the stars are filming out of sight; the sky is paling to a thin blue; and a grey sea goes lapping and parting round the keel with a sullen sough."[13] The houses and minarets of Jaffa begin to appear: "High above the rugged rocks and whitening surge stands a cone of houses – a town, having a low-lying beach, dark walls, and on either side of these walls a clump of wood."[14] From his safe position on the bridge, Dixon puts the emphasis on what he is only too eager to recognize as the *immutability*[15] of Jaffa: "unlike cities which have been made of the toys of kings, it has undergone no change since the remotest times. Destroyed in war, rebuilt in peace, it has remained the same in aspect and in site."[16] At this stage, the modern world is kept at bay: "Though it has always been the sea gate of Jerusalem, it has no docks, no quays, no jetties, no landing-stairs, no lights. No road leads into it,

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[11] Said, *Orientalism,* 12.

[12] On the role of sacred texts shaping expectations for Palestine, see Stephanie Stidham Rogers, *Inventing the Holy Land: American Protestant pilgrimage to Palestine, 1865-1941* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2011), 23-26.

[13] William Hepworth Dixon, *The Holy Land* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1869), 1.

[14] Ibid.

[15] A characteristic of most Western travelers to Palestine at the time was a frantic longing for *primitivism* in the face of a 'ruthless' century of unparalleled materialism and technological advances: their journey into the Holy Land was not just about moving in space from one area to another; they were also toying with the idea of traveling back in time to an *earlier world*, to a supposedly *immutable* society of archaic customs. To put it differently, it seems that through a direct encounter with contemporary Palestine, a large number of visitors thought they could catch a glimpse of how daily life in biblical times might have been. See Guy Galazka, *À la découverte de la Palestine: Voyageurs français en Terre sainte au XIXe siècle* (Paris: PUPS, 2011), 56-83; John McLeod, *Beginning Postcolonialism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 44.

[16] Dixon, *The Holy Land*, 8.

not even by the open ways of the sea."[17] The nature surrounding the ancient town takes an active part in this mythical representation of Jaffa – though the traveler is aware of its fragility, hence his allusion to "mounds and graves":

> On the land side, fields creep close to the walls, and the sand drifts in at the gates. Beyond the line of walls spreads the great plain; a film of creamy-pink sand lying on a bed of black loam, here and there dotted by Bedaween tents and by ruined towns once bright in song and story, though they have passed away, leaving little behind them on the plain except mounds and graves.[18]

This marks the shift of the temporal focus from present-day Palestine to the "land flowing with milk and honey" (Exodus 3: 8):

> It is the Holy Land on which we gaze: – the country of Jacob and David, of Rachel and Ruth; the scene of our sweetest fancies, of our childish prayers, and of our household psalms. Among yon hills the prophets of Israel taught and the Savior of all men lived and died; that stony hillock of a town is the Joppa to which Hiram sent the cedar wood; this roadstead is the port from which Jonah sailed on his tempestuous voyage; down by the shore to the south hides the flat roof on which it is said that Peter slept.[19]

His work done, Dixon can now safely asserts that Jaffa is "the genuine East; a town in which all that is dark and bright in the Syrian genius seem to have met."[20] The arrival to Jaffa of David Austin Randall (1813-1884), minister of the First Baptist Church of Columbus, in 1861, is invested with the same atmosphere of mystery and awe:

> In about half an hour, a long, low, dark line was visible, beneath the great bank of fleecy clouds that skirted the horizon. Some said it was land, some affirmed it to be only a bank of clouds. A field-glass was brought into requisition, and the question settled – it was the *Holy Land*. As we approached it, the outlines became more distinct, the hills assumed shape – the whole line of coast was distinctly seen, and the queer looking stone city of Jaffa – the Joppa of the New Testament – with its fort-like houses, rising tier above tier, upon the hill-side, was fully and clearly in view.[21]

The result is that, once again, the city viewed from the ship is in perfect harmony with the traveler's literary references: "I was about to realize the long anticipated desire of my heart, to walk upon the soil pressed by the feet of patriarchs, prophets and apostles, and visit the localities where they lived and

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[17] Ibid., 9.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid., 1-2.
[20] Ibid., 8.
[21] David Austin Randall, *The Handwriting of God in Egypt, Sinai and the Holy Land*, vol. 2 (Cincinnati: Randall & Aston, 1865), 17-18.

labored, and communed with God."[22] Upon seeing Haifa, Mary Eliza Rogers (1828-1910), sister of the British vice-consul in Haifa, who had lived in Palestine from 1855 to 1859, romanticizes the general appearance of the coastal scenery:

> Haifa is a walled town, in the form of a parallelogram, pleasantly situated close to the sea, on a gently-rising slope. A steep hill, a spur of Mount Carmel, rises immediately behind it, and is crowned by a small castle. (…) On each side of the little town there are fine fruit gardens, where the pomegranates and figs especially flourish. A grove of palm-trees borders the sandy shore on the east of the town.[23]

There can be no doubt, as has already been suggested, that those literary representations were consistent with the pictorial depictions of the urban landscape of Palestine in the first half of the 19th century in which the Bible, the history of the Holy Land and the craving for "far horizons and endless spaces"[24] played a significant role. In *View of Jerusalem from the Valley of Jehoshaphat* (1825) by Auguste Forbin (1777-1841) (*Fig. 1*), *Wilderness of Engedi and Convent of Santa Saba* (1836) by William Turner (1775-1851) (*Fig. 2*) and *Jaffa* (1837) by Antonio Schranz (1801-1864) (*Fig. 3*), the city, a still and calm cluster of white houses, is dominated by the enclosing countryside; the whole is imbued with a sort of scriptural fragrance, helping to bridge the present with the past.

Fig. 1: August Forbin, View of Jerusalem from the Valley of Jehoshaphat.

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[22] Ibid., 18.
[23] Mary Eliza Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine* (Cincinnati: Poe & Hitchcock, 1865), 99.
[24] Gudleiv Bø, "Introduction to Norwegian Romanticism," in *European Romanticism: a reader*, ed. Stephen Prickett (London, New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2010), 45.

Fig. 2: William Turner, Wilderness of Engedi and Convent of Santa Saba.

Fig. 3: Antonio Schranz, Jaffa.

Furthermore, if these engravings are matched to the diaries or travelogues kept by painters during their stay in Palestine, the direct link between literature and visual art is even more explicit, with both media interacting, colliding, adapting

and shaping one another.[25] Two examples seem especially relevant in this respect. The first is that of William Henry Bartlett (1809-1854), born and raised in London, who visited Palestine on six occasions, beginning in 1834, and produced travel books about the region as well as influential paintings. In *Footsteps of our Lord and His Apostles in Syria, Greece, and Italy* (1851), he relates the 'unchanging' character of Nazareth, seasoned with biblical reminiscences, which clearly could serve as the accompanying text to his painting *Vale of Nazareth* (1850) (*Fig. 4*):

> The secluded valet with its white village lay at our feet, possessing, without any peculiar beauty, a character of sequestered tranquility and pastoral abundance, well suited with its associations. (…) While large towns have grown up around the abiding places of medieval saints, the village where Jesus was born has escaped this disfiguring homage (…). This reflection forcibly struck us as we descended the rock by a winding road into the sunny corn-fields, interspersed with grey and venerable olives, amidst which the reapers were at work, as in the days when Joseph and Mary occupied an obscure house in this obscure hamlet, near two thousand years ago.[26]

Fig. 4: William Henry Bartlett, Vale of Nazareth.

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[25] The fundamental relationship between literature and painting in the 19th century is perfectly expressed in Joanna de Groot's article: "Whether one considers the 'literary' quality of orientalist painting, linked as it was to orientalist poetry, travel writing, and fiction, or the strong 'visual' elements in the literary depiction of harems, odalisques, etc., it is clear that the sexual and exotic elements in the Western concept of the Orient rested on both." Joanna de Groot, "Sex and race: the construction of language and image in the 19th century," in *Cultures of Empire: a reader*, ed. Catherine Hall (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 55.

[26] William Henry Bartlett, *Footsteps of our Lord and His Apostles in Syria, Greece, and Italy, A succession of visits of the scenes of New Testament narrative* (London: Arthur Hall, Virtue & Co., 1851), 191-192.

The second example is that of the Scottish David Roberts (1796-1864), who made an extensive tour of the Mediterranean area in the late 1830s. There are many passages in his journal that allude to biblical episodes, metaphors and symbols. This is particularly noteworthy on account of the prominence of such themes in the lithographs created from the sketches that Roberts executed during his voyage. One of these paintings entitled *The Descent upon the Valley of the Jordan* (1843) (*Fig. 5*) features the fertile Jordan Valley. Below, in the fading light of sunset, lies the Dead Sea, barely visible, which stretches its salty waters to the right. A few tents are set up on the banks of the Jordan River. The white houses of Jericho can also be seen in the distance. In the foreground to the right, a string of pilgrims dressed in colorful robes follow the narrow road leading down to the valley floor. When Roberts' drawing is juxtaposed with his journal, the similarities are striking: "Proceeding along the road, which has been all pavemented by the Romans, we first beheld the Dead Sea. Along the whole line, Arab horsemen and Bedouins were stationed. Groups of pilgrims were moving on to the Jordan. On our left is a brawling stream, at the bottom of a deep ravine (…). Farther on is a pool and stream, said to be that sweetened by Elisha. Jericho lies at the base of the hills."[27]

Fig. 5: David Roberts, The Descent upon the Valley of the Jordan.

In other words, the first contact between Western travelers and the Palestinian

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[27] *The Life of David Roberts, complied from his journals and other sources*, ed. James Ballantine (Edinburgh: Adam & Charles Black, 1866), 128.

city is often confined to a *pictorial transposition*,[28] i.e. a selection of elements worth mentioning because deemed to be visually striking and, in this case, also biblically accurate, and therefore "fit to be made into a picture."[29]

Western Travelers in the Oriental City: An Encounter with a Living Entity

Parallel to the efforts of Western travelers to preserve the Holy Land of their faith and dreams, disillusion is already setting in. Here is an example from *Méditerranée* (1896) by the moderate Catholic feminist Lucie Félix-Faure-Goyau (1866-1913), whose Parisian salon was home to the conservative elites: "Jaffa is a curious conglomeration of houses; the first thing it evokes is a sense of permanence."[30] The use of the words "first thing" suggests that despite being far from shore, the narrator is fully aware of the optical illusion emanating from the Oriental city. William Wilde (1815-1876), the celebrated Irish surgeon and father of Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), who in 1837 took an eight-month cruise to Palestine, visiting on the way Algiers and Egypt, is more explicit: "The town of Jaffa stands on a hill that rises abruptly from the sea, from which, at some distance, it has a very picturesque appearance; but, on closer inspection, the streets are found to be dirty and narrow."[31]

Yet it is the act of landing itself that deals a serious blow to the idealized image of the city when travelers find themselves abruptly confronted with a 'sonorous' Holy Land. "Disembarkation is always accompanied by much noise and confusion,"[32] says Brother Liévin de Hamme (1822-1898), a Belgian Franciscan friar, who lived in Palestine for forty years, leading Christian pilgrims to the holy sites. The American journalist William Cowper Prime (1825-1905), a graduate of Princeton who in 1874 was elected the first vice-president of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, declares: "The din of voices was, as usual, intolerable; and it was for a moment quite doubtful

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[28] Pierre Rajotte, "La représentation de l'Autre dans les récits de voyage en Terre sainte à la fin du XIXᵉ siècle," *Études françaises* 32/3 (1996): 100.

[29] *The New Cambridge Modern History: The American and French Revolutions, 1763-1793*, ed. Elliot H. Goodwin, vol. 8 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 106. Malcom Andrews asserts in his book that in the context of the Romantic and Orientalist movements, painters and writers often acted as big-game hunters, "boasting of their encounters with savage landscapes, 'capturing' wild scenes, and 'fixing' them as 'pictorial trophies' in order to sell them or hang them in frames on their drawing-room walls." Malcom Andrews, *The Search of the Picturesque: Landscape Aesthetics and Tourism in Britain, 1760-1800* (Aldershot: Scholar press, 1989), 67.

[30] Lucie Félix-Faure-Goyau, *Méditerranée. L'Égypte, la Terre sainte, l'Italie* (Paris: Félix Juven, 1903), 79.

[31] William Wilde, *Narrative to Madeira, Teneriffe, and along the Shores of the Mediterranean* (Dublin: William Curry, 1840), 168.

[32] Liévin de Hamme, *The Pilgrim's Handbook to Jerusalem and its Neighbourhood*, translated from the French by Wilfred C. Robinson (London: Burns & Oates, 1890), 29.

whether we should be able to effect a landing."[33] Norman Macleod (1812-1872), founder of the Evangelical Alliance (1846) and editor of the *Edinburgh Christian Instructor*, conveys the same feelings of intrusion and helplessness. His Palestinian odyssey opens with the following scene: "On the afternoon of Tuesday we were approaching the Holy Land, and straining our eyes to get a first glimpse of its everlasting hills."[34] The somewhat peaceful atmosphere begins to shift as soon as the boatmen arrive: "The twinkling lights of boats were then seen like stars coming towards us, and soon the port officials stood on deck demanding a clean bill of health; and this being produced, boat after boat came clustering to the ship's side."[35] Later there comes the first physical interaction with the city or, to be more precise, with some of its representatives:

> Then arose an indescribable Babel from the screeching of their crews, (…) until, after a while, amidst the roaring of steam and of voices, we were by degrees carried along over the side and down to a boat in a current of sailors, Turks, Arabs, passengers, portmanteaus, dragomen, and travelers.[36]

Once duties and charges were paid at the Customhouse, the auditory discovery of the urban spaces of Palestine was far from complete. The Palestinian city turned out to be a noisy place, swarming with men and animals, and as a result presenting a significantly different image from the soundless and reassuring visualizations of Palestine in Western paintings of the first half of the 19th century. When he sets his foot on land, the Free Church of Scotland minister Robert Buchanan (1802-1875), a crusading Evangelical who was instrumental in the creation of several parish schools in the Glasgow area and died in Rome while representing his Church, is startled by the confusion of languages, which extends its ravages throughout the Oriental city, serving as a modern equivalent to the biblical story of the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11: 1-8): "The path that runs along the beach, between the sea and the rock on which Jaffa stands, all the way into the town, was like a bee-hive ready to swarm. (…) It was hard work to fight one's way through this motley maze of tribes and tongues."[37] And George Robinson, who, "after passing the summer of the year 1828 amidst the most beautiful provinces of Spain, and the winter of the same year in the south of Italy,"[38] decided to visit Palestine in 1830, bluntly points out: "The females were veiled, but their tongues were not tied; and from their shrill voices and incessant talking, we gathered, that their influence in social life is not quite of the passive nature, we in Europe, are accustomed to believe."[39]

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[33] William Cowper Prime, *Tent Life in the Holy Land* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1857), 26.
[34] Norman Macleod, *Eastward Travels in Egypt, Palestine and Syria* (London: Strahan & Co., 1869), 131.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid., 131-132.
[37] Robert Buchanan, *Notes of a Clerical Furlough, Spent Chiefly in the Holy Land* (London: Blackie & Son, 1859), 82.
[38] George Robinson, *Three Years in the East*, vol. 1 (London: Henry Colburn, 1837), v.
[39] Ibid., 26.

For most Western travelers, landing in Jaffa or Haifa also represented their first acquaintance with the Arab language, which often led to uncertainty and vulnerability, as remarked by the Austrian explorer Ida Pfeiffer (1797-1858),[40] member of the Geographical Societies of Berlin and Paris, whose travelogues – relating her 'adventures' in South America, Tahiti, China, India, Persia, Asia Minor, Greece, Egypt and Palestine – were translated into several languages and were widely read both in Europe and the United States: "I met none but Arabs, whose language I did not understand, and who could, therefore, give me no information."[41] Some, like the renowned French writer François-René de Chateaubriand (1768-1848) who toured the Near East in 1806 and Léonie de Bazelaire (1857-1926), one of the participants in the seventh Pilgrimage of Penitence to Jerusalem (1888), dismiss Arabic as a "harsh, glottal language"[42] or as being "only suitable for angry people."[43] Robert Morris (1818-1888), founder of the first Masonic Lodge in Jerusalem, goes even further: "To whisper a prayer in Arabic to a dying man would be as cruel as the method adopted by Hazael to assist his master Benhadad in securing a sound nap."[44]

Such a perspective of the Arab language was largely rooted in what the American philosopher Norman Daniel calls the "deformed image of Islam"[45] in Western thought, which reached a climax during the Middles Ages. Indeed, the early Arab conquests (637-827), the collapse of the last stronghold of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem (1291) and the fall of Constantinople (1453) all resulted in growing misapprehensions and fear of Muslims in general throughout medieval Christendom. Thus, convinced of their religious superiority, hiding behind their ludicrous interpretations of different verses of the Old and the New Testaments,[46] dreading the propagation of Islam to the four corners of the world, authors like Isidore of Seville (560-636), John of Damascus (675-749) and Peter the Venerable (1094-1156) denounced Muhammad as the 'Antichrist', accusing its disciples of barbarism, violence, heresy, cunning and sexual perversities.[47] This picture must, however, be nuanced: many writers, some already in the late Middle ages, other in the 17th,

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[40] See the essay of Jennifer Michaels published in this issue.
[41] Ida Pfeiffer, *Visit to the Holy Land, Egypt, and Italy*, translated from the German by H. W. Dulcken (London: Ingram, Cooke & Co., 1852), 171.
[42] François-René de Chateaubriand, *Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem* (Paris: Gallimard, Coll. Folio classique, 2005), 330.
[43] Léonie de Bazelaire, *Chevauchée en Palestine* (Tours: Alfred Mame & fils, 1899), 39.
[44] Robert Morris, "Oriental Education," *The Michigan Teacher*, vol. 6 (Niles: Henry A. Ford, 1871), 177.
[45] Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (London: Oneworld Publications, 1993), 24.
[46] The following list is by no means exhaustive and mainly comprises passages about the motivations and fate of false prophets: Genesis 21: 14-19; Deuteronomy 18: 20-22; 1 Samuel 17: 46; Jeremiah 14: 14-16; Daniel 11: 31; Matthew 7: 15-23; Revelation 13: 11-14.
[47] Frederick Quinn, *The Sum of All Heresies: The Image of Islam in Western Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 37-42.

18th and 19th centuries, tried to temper the anti-Islamic arguments of their predecessors (emphasizing the figure of the Arab as the "noble warrior," the "hospitable nomad," the "sage mathematician"),[48] while simultaneously continuing to charge Muslims with countless flaws, mainly "idleness, apathy, pride, ignorance, and sensuality."[49]

Despite the religious tolerance promoted by the ruler of Egypt Muhammad Ali Pasha (1769-1849) during his occupation of Palestine (1831-1841) and the dramatic concessions to minorities duly signed by the Ottoman authorities in the aftermath of the Crimean War (1854-1856), such as granting certain rights of property ownership to *dhimmis* (non-Muslims),[50] the negative medieval perceptions of Islam had persisted, exercising a profound influence on how 19th-century Western travelers portrayed the voice of the Muezzin ringing out of minarets in Arabic. The British Methodist missionary Robert Spence Hardy (1803-1868), for instance, views the daily Muslim call for prayer as a symbol of Islam's illegitimate dominion over a sacred Christian land: "The cry of the muezzin is always affecting, but when heard in Zion, as it passes from minaret to minaret, at the hour of prayer, and comes in loud accents through every part of the city, and is re-echoed from spots where He once taught who spake as never man spake, there is no soul that can listen to it without tears."[51] To reinforce his message, Hardy concludes by quoting a poem by a certain Mrs Bulmer, in which the tears of sorrow continue to flow: "Who but must weep? For where, / Above the bulwarks fair, / Once floated Judah's banners to the breeze, / Shadowing thy fanes and palaces; / Now, with malignant beams, / The lurid crescent gleams, / And chills and blasts the springing sap of life; / O'er hordes of abject slaves, / The bannaret of Mecca's prophet waves, / And holds with truth and virtue ceaseless strife."[52]

Reverend George Fisk, in *A Pastor's Memorial* (1843), remembers hearing the Muezzin summon the people to the mosques: "As the sun was setting, the sound of the Muezzin bid the 'faithful' to prayer; and soon in various parts of the large area, groups of devout Musselmans were seen engaged in their wonted solemnities."[53] Like Hardy, Fisk depreciates the Muslims, although, this time, his heart aches for the Jews, whose imminent conversion to Christianity,

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[48] A. Thomson, "L'Europe des Lumières et le monde musulman. Une altérité ambiguë," *Cromohs* 10 (2005): 1-11.

[49] *All Round the World: an illustrated record of voyages, travels, and adventures in all parts of the globe*, ed. W. F. Ainsworth (London, Glasgow: William Collins, 1868), 783.

[50] Henry Laurens, *La Question de Palestine*, vol 1 (Paris: Fayard, 1999), 59-61.

[51] Robert Spence Hardy, *Notices of the Holy Land, and Other Places Mentioned in the Scriptures, visited in 1832-1833* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1835), 177-178.

[52] Ibid., 178.

[53] George Fisk, *A Pastor's Memorial of Egypt, the Red Sea, the Wildernesses of Sin and Paran, Mount Sinai, Jerusalem, and Other Principal Localities of the Holy Land* (London: Seeley, Burnside & Seeley, 1847), 169.

he believes, would hasten the second coming of Christ:[54]

> How bitter must be the reflection of the thoughtful Jew, when gazing down on the spot in which Jehovah once placed his name; when he beholds on it the symbols of a perverted creed, and knows himself to be banished from its sacred precincts; when he sees the infidel triumphing where his buried fathers once sacrificed and worshipped; and Mahomet completing what Pagan Rome began.[55]

Western travelers who flooded into Palestine in the 19th century also found themselves fascinated by the variety of the ethnic composition in the urban community of the country. We read in *Pilgrimage to the Holy Land* (1835) by the French Romantic poet Alphonse de Lamartine (1790-1869):

> All the costumes of the inhabitants or the travelers who animate the roads are picturesque and strange. For instance, the Bedouins of Jericho or of Tiberias, clothed in immense folds of white linen; Armenians in long robes of blue and white stripes; Jews from all parts of the world, and in the appeal of all nations, characterized only by their long beards and the nobleness and majesty of their features – a royal people, ill accustomed to their slavery, and in whose countenances one reads the remembrance and the certainty of great destinies, under an apparent humiliation of condition and abasement of present fortune; Egyptian soldiers clothed in red vests, (…) Turkish Agas proudly occupying the road mounted on the horses of the desert and followed by Arabs and black slaves.[56]

Inevitably, attention was given to the cultural diversity as witnessed first hand in the bazaar; stalls selling fruits, vegetables, spices, crucifixes, beads and other goods introduced travelers to new sights, smells and tastes, while also connecting them to biblical scenes or verses. Accompanied by one of the sons of a Jewish innkeeper in Jaffa, the Swedish writer Fredrika Bremer, who also traveled to the United States, Switzerland, Italy and Greece between 1849 and 1861, makes an excursion to the *souk* outside the town gate:

> And here, in the general thoroughfare from the harbour to Jerusalem, all kinds of Oriental people seem to have come together. […] You see them of every shade of colour and variety of costume, selling, buying, smoking, walking about, sitting, or lying in the sunshine, or the warm sand or green turf, amidst great piles of golden fruits, sugar-cane, dates, cakes, and many other things, […] Copts, Abyssinians, and Nubians were here assembled with Turks, Arabs, Jews, Russians, Armenians, and Greeks. In the meantime, caravans with camels, asses, and horses pass along

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[54] On the proliferation of Millenarian theories revolving around the restoration of the Jews to Palestine and their ultimate conversion to Christianity within certain Protestant societies in the 19th century, see Yaron Perry, *British Mission to the Jews in Nineteenth-Century Palestine* (London, Portland: Frank Cassn, 2003), 229.

[55] Fisk, *A Pastor's Memorial,* 169-170.

[56] Alphonse de Lamartine, *A Pilgrimage to the Holy Land,* translator unknown, vol. 1 (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1848), 247.

in procession either to or from Jerusalem. It is enough to make one's brain dizzy.[57]

When reading the above quote, the reader can imagine, with fairly little effort, the Ishmaelite caravans that bought Joseph (Genesis 37:25) or the camels loaded with all kinds of goods that Abraham's servant led to the city of Nahor (Genesis 24:10) – an all too understandable retrospective penchant considering the author's intention to present the Orient as the "living embodiment of Europe's childhood,"[58] as the dying spirit of ancient times: "There exists in every western country a memory of an eastern country, as of its childhood and first youth, as well as a yearning towards it as to a primeval home."[59] Elizabeth Finn (1825-1921), wife of James Finn, British counsel in Jerusalem (1846-1863), whose proficiency in Hebrew, Yiddish and Arabic enabled her to work closely with the local population, provides another typical description of the market, in this case the holy city's:

> The shops are a kind of cupboards, built upon a stone ledge three feet from the ground (…). Peasantry in striped cloaks; effendis in fine robes; a Bedawee sheikh smoking as he walked along in immense red morocco boots (…); sellers of sherbet, with a jar under their arm, and chinking brass cups in their hands while they sidled along; pale emaciated Polish Jews in fur caps, and stately rabbis in gray turbans; peasant women with squeaking chickens on their heads, and children riding astride on their hip, or slung in a hammock at their back (…) Jewesses, in their white sheet, purchasing vegetables or a bit of calico print; a Turkish officer, in brass-plated fez and blue uniform, at a tobacco cutter's, followed by a black pipe-bearer dressed in a uniform the caricature of his master's, and exchanging gossip with a grinning woman slave, who was buying sweetmeats at the next stall; (…) some screaming, all talking, some cursing, and some saluting.[60]

The overall impression is that of contemplating through the bazaar a miniature version of the Orient, which, notwithstanding unrelenting claims to reliability and accuracy,[61] is fuelled by such Romantic and Orientalist stereotypes as the Babel of confused cries and noises, the humble Arab shopkeepers and sellers of sherbet, the richly-dressed effendi, the mighty Bedouin sheikh and the merry

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[57] Fredrika Bremer, *Travels in the Holy Land*, translated from the Swedish by Mary Howitt, vol. 1 (London: Hurst & Blackett, 1862), 91.

[58] Michelle R. Warren, *Creole Medievalism: Colonial France and Joseph Bédier's Middle Ages* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), xxvii.

[59] Bremer, *Travels in the Holy Land*, 317.

[60] Elizabeth Finn, *A Home in the Holy Land* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1866), 179-180.

[61] For example, the acclaimed philologist and biblical scholar Edward Robinson (1794-1863) says: "My object throughout has been and still is, 'the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth;' the truth, I mean, as it has come down to us, and is still confirmed to us, through the evidence of recorded history and topography." Edward Robinson, *Biblical Researches in Palestine and the Adjacent Regions: a journal of travels in the years 1838 & 1852* (London: John Murray, 1856), 203. Similarly the French writer and naval officer Pierre Loti (1850-1923) indicates in *Jérusalem* (1895) that his travelogue was written "in a great effort of sincerity." Pierre Loti, *Jérusalem* (Paris: Nelson, 1937), 5.

black slave.

It ought to be pointed out that in the second half of the 19th century, painters also veered in that direction by gradually turning to drawings of the Holy Land bustling with human activity in which the *souk* held a central position. The German artist Gustav Bauernfeind (1848-1904) became famous for his illustrations of Palestinian street scenes, particularly of the bazaar of Jaffa, where one can find some of the clichés, fantasies and assumptions invoked by contemporary travel writers in their accounts, thus reconfirming the fact that the general aesthetic tendencies of the time found mutually dependent expressions both in literature and painting. (*Fig. 6*)
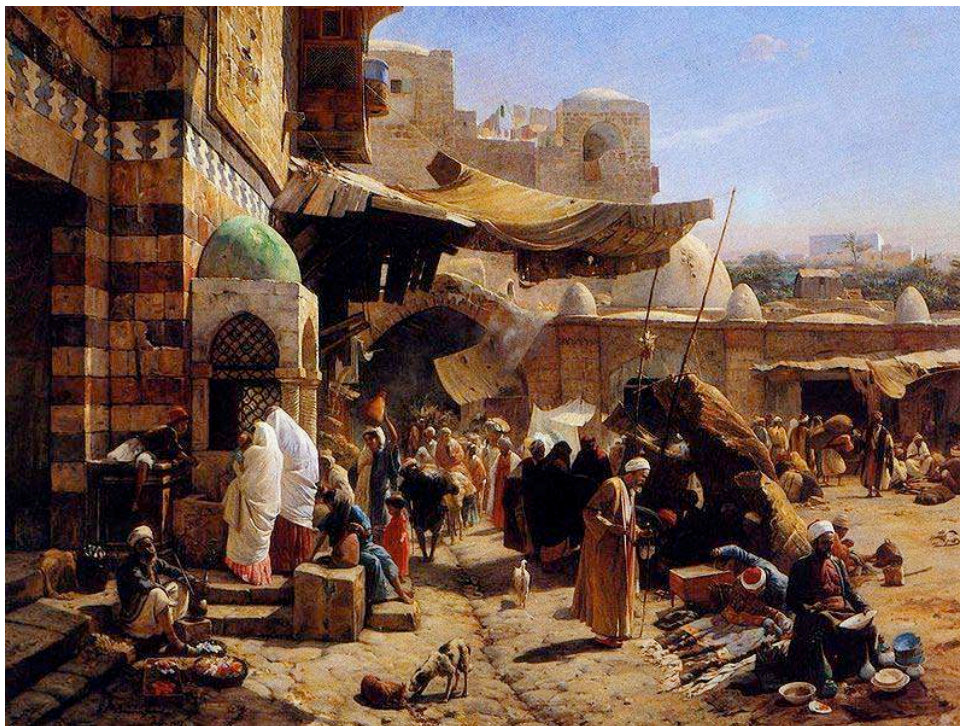

Fig. 6: Gustav Bauernfeind, Market in Jaffa.

Another example would be the combination of eroticism and cruelty glowing on *The Slave Market* (1824) by George Emmanuel Opitz (1774-1841), which adhered to the descriptions of auctions in the travelogues of Baron Frederick Calvert Baltimore (1731-1771),[62] William Hunt[63] and others, and in turn inspired painters such as Stanislaus von Chlebowski (1835-1884),[64] and Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824-1904), author of *The Slave Market* (1866). (*Fig. 7*)

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[62] Frederick Calvert Baltimore, *A Tour to the East In the Years 1763 and 1764* (London: W. Richardson & J. Clark, 1767), 73.
[63] William Hunt, *Travels through France, Turkey, and Hungary, to Vienna, in 1792,* vol. 1 (London: J. White & T. Bensley, 1803), 307-308.
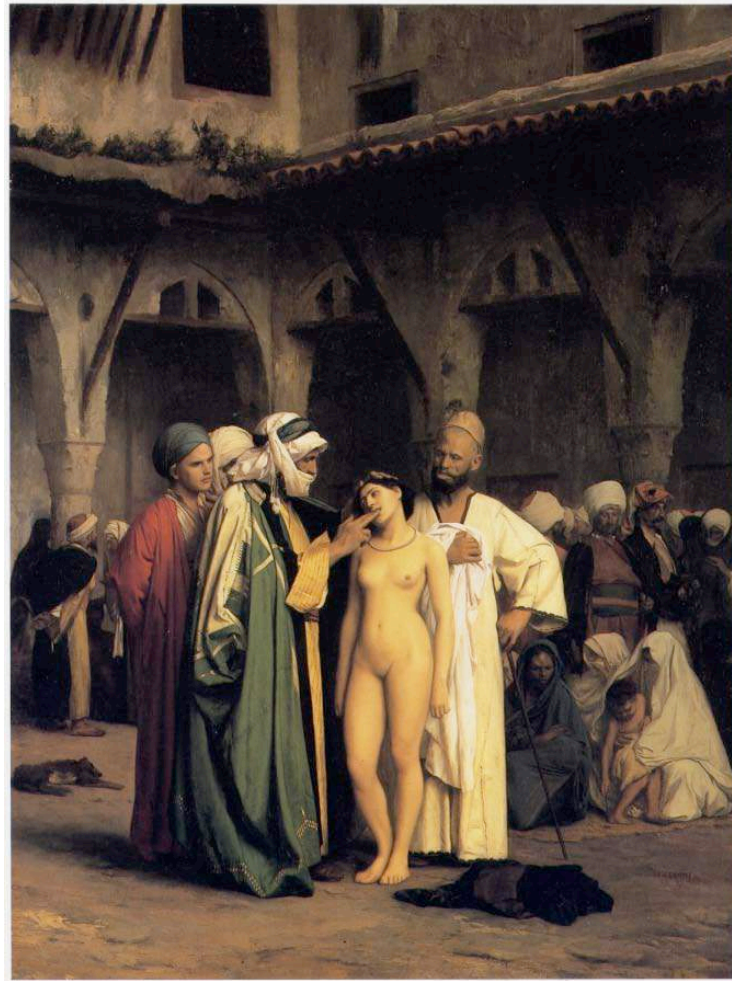[64] *The Appraisal* (1879).

Fig. 7: Jean-Léon Gérôme, The Slave Market.

When the 'Other' Becomes the 'Self'

In choosing to focus their observations almost anecdotally on their biblical expectations of Oriental towns and on the outlandish aspects of the urban environment of Palestine, it is no wonder - as will emerge from the examples below - that many Western travelers displayed a certain ambiguity towards the first rays of modernization[65] in the Holy Land. For indeed from the last third of the 19th century onwards, the Ottoman province of Syria-Palestine started to absorb strong influences from the West and successive waves of European

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[65] On the concept of modernization, see *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*, eds. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, Helen Tiffin (New York: Routledge, 2009), 130-132; E. A. Wrigley, "The Process of Modernization and the Industrial Revolution in England," in *Social Mobility and Modernization: A Journal of Interdisciplinary History Reader*, ed. Robert I. Rotberg (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000), 93-94.

immigrants,[66] which considerably altered its way of life. As the Israeli geographer Yehoshua Ben Arieh indicates, the telegraph was introduced in Jerusalem in 1865, followed four years later by the opening of the first carriage road between Jaffa and Jerusalem.[67] The end of the Crimean War and the implementation of the *Tanzimat* reforms in the Ottoman Empire, which started in 1839, led to further industrial and social development in the Holy Land. From the late 1860s, new suburbs and rural settlements, established by Jewish immigrants and Christian Millenarian groups from the United States and Germany,[68] began to sprawl in the vicinity of Jaffa, Haifa and Jerusalem. 1882 saw the arrival of a thousand Catholic pilgrims, mostly from France, in what has come to be known as the First Pilgrimage of Penitence to Jerusalem.[69] Led by the charismatic Father Picard, superior-general of the Assumptionists, they came to Palestine aboard two steamships (*La Guadeloupe* and *La Picardie*) and used throughout their penitential wanderings the services provided by the travel agency Thomas Cook & Son.[70] With the inauguration of the long-awaited Jaffa-Jerusalem railroad line in 1892, the journey between the coastal town and the holy city was shortened from two days on a horse to five hours in a carriage.

It should first be noted that whether they ultimately rejected or embraced the process of modernization that affected the urban spaces of Palestine, Western travelers were united in condemning the maintenance of buildings, streets and other facilities that had significantly worsened in the eighteenth and the early 19th century before the first noteworthy housing and sanitary measures came into force during the Egyptian rule of Palestine. Not long after arriving in Hebron, Reverend John D. Paxton (1784-1868) remarks: "The town has a very old appearance; the streets are narrow and dirty, and to a great extent arched over, especially the bazaars. Few of the houses look well; they are placed uncomfortably close to each other, and are badly aired and lighted."[71] Samuel Clemens (1835-1910), alias Mark Twain, who in 1867 sailed on the *Quaker City*

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[66] Based on the Ottoman statistics, Justin McCarthy maintains that the population of Palestine at the beginning of the 19th century was 350,000, against 411,000 in 1860 and 600,000 in 1900 (*The Population of Palestine*, [New York: Columbia University Press, 1990], 26).

[67] Yehoshua Ben Arieh, *The Rediscovery of the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century* (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Magnes Press, 1979), 192.

[68] For further information about the establishment of American and German settlements in Palestine during the second half of the 19th century, see Yossi Ben-Artzi, *From Germany to the Holy Land: Templer Settlement in Palestine* (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1996), 47-64.

[69] Galazka, *À la découverte de la Palestine,* 423-505.

[70] In 1869, Thomas Cook & Son (founded in 1841) began to take parties to Egypt, Syria and Palestine. The majority of the participants were English and American, but the Eastern Tours also attracted a great number of French Catholic pilgrims. See "From Pilgrimage to Budding Tourism: the role of Thomas Cook in the Rediscovery of the Holy Land in the nineteenth century," in *Travellers in the Levant: voyagers and visionaries*, eds. Sarah Searight, Malcolm Wagstaff (Durham: Astene Publications, 2001), 155-174.

[71] John D. Paxton, *Letters on Palestine and Egypt, written during two years' residence* (Lexington: A. T. Skillman, 1839), 172.

for a tour of Europe and the Middle East, sharply criticizes in *The Innocents Abroad* (1869)[72] the Galilean village of Magdala: "The streets of Magdala are any where from three to six feet wide, and reeking with uncleanliness. The houses are from five to seven feet high, and all built upon one arbitrary plan – the ungraceful form of a dry-good box."[73] In the same vein, Reverend Albert Augustus Isaacs (1826-1903), British historian and fervent advocator of the return of the Jews to their ancient homeland under the patronage of the London Society for Promoting Christianity Among the Jews (a Protestant missionary organization founded in 1841),[74] gives a negative image of Tiberias: "Tiberias is a miserable town. About five thousand souls are collected within its bounds, of which about half are Jews. Its walls, which bear the appearance of having been substantial and well-built, are now for the most part in ruins."[75] A judgment shared by the American Presbyterian minister William McClure Thomson (1806-1894), whose *The Land and the Book* (1859), boasting numerous illustrations, met with enormous market success: "There is no town in Syria so utterly filthy as Tiberias, or so little to be desired as a residence. (…) Of course it swarms with all sorts of vermin."[76]

This is where one observes a few cracks in the reciprocal relationship between literature and visual art. Whereas coping with immense disappointment 19th-century Western travelers to Palestine did not hesitate to recourse to various scenes of decay or (as will be discussed in the next section) acculturation in their writings, painters – bound to heed the wishes of their patrons and satisfy the pictorial tastes of the day – strove to maintain the aura of the Holy Land by banishing all indication of the neglected state of urban life. Ben-Arieh, who has thoroughly studied hundreds of lithographs, engravings and prints of Palestine, refers to this phenomenon as "the inclination to beautify and enhance the scenery of the Holy Land."[77] This brings him to the conclusion that despite their goal to document "the reality of things witnessed,"[78] "even the accepted academic painters produced 'sterile' works, with none of the prevailing dirt and squalor they witnessed when visiting the Holy Land. (…) Filth and poverty,

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[72] *The Innocents Abroad* was so successful, selling nearly 100,000 copies within the first three years following its publication, that Twain is reported to have said: "It sells right along just like the Bible." William Dean Howells, *My Mark Twain: Reminiscences and Criticism* (New York: Harper, 1910), 8. On *The Innocents Abroad*, see the essay of Milette Shamir published in this issue.

[73] Mark Twain, *The Innocents Abroad* (Hartford: American Publisher Company, 1869), 503.

[74] Victoria Clark, *Allies for Armageddon: The Rise of Christian Zionism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 63-77.

[75] Albert Augustus Isaacs, *A Pictorial Tour in the Holy Land* (London: Wertheim, Macintosh & Hunt, 1862), 135.

[76] William McClure Thomson, *The Land and the Book* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1859), 76-77.

[77] Yehoshua Ben-Arieh, *Painting the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century* (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1997), 279.

[78] *The Christian Examiner and General Review*, vol 24 (Boston: James Munroe & Co., 1838), 31.

they felt, should never be associated with holy sites and places."[79]

For the Dutch cartographer Carel Willem M. Van de Velde (1818-1898), the matter is clear: the manifest signs of urban deterioration are attributable to the country's administration by the Ottoman Empire. "Each day I spent in the Ottoman territory," he writes in his memoirs, "I feel more and more astonished that the Turks should ever have acquired so much power in this part of the world. (…) A nation so enervated, so given up to sensuality, so languid, disorderly, and indifferent as the Turks of the present day."[80] No delay should be suffered in the case of Palestine: Van de Velde claims that it is the duty of the European powers to step in and spread the lights of civilization and Christianity among the inhabitants of those dark regions.[81] This seems to lie directly within the much-debated Said's notion of an Oriental discourse that presupposes the superiority of the West and reads colonialism, whether in its religious (missionary) or secular forms, as a crucial step to redeem the so-called inferior societies.[82] Others join Van de Velde in expressing the same sentiments – their statements strongly tainted by the proselytizing zeal of European missionaries, which most 19th-century Western travelers encouraged. In a chapter entitled "Inspiring prospects," Bremer says: "The state of Syria and Palestine at the present time demands in the most urgent manner the attention of the European nations."[83] She urges the Western world to cease all quarrels and speak with one single voice: "May no petty-minded political views prevent the great European powers from uniting to hasten the deliverance of Asia from barbarism."[84] The Scottish barrister William Rae Wilson (1772-1849), who visited Palestine in 1820, also calls for Western intervention, perhaps with a deeper religious tone:

> Let me further observe how greatly it is to be lamented that the Christian powers of Europe do not co-operate and wrest this country from the hands of barbarians, when the most beneficial effects might be derived not only from an exclusive establishment of the Christian faith, but many important objects accomplished, by the introduction of agriculture, arts, sciences and a discovery of antiquities.[85]

In this "grand march towards Western civilisation,"[86] the urban transformation that occurred in the large towns of Palestine (mainly in Jerusalem) during the

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[79] Ben-Arieh, *Painting the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century*, 279.
[80] Carel Willem M. Van de Velde, *Narrative of a Journey through Syria and Palestine in 1851 and 1852*, translated under the author's superintendence, vol. 1 (London, Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, 1854), 43.
[81] Ibid., 166.
[82] Said, *Orientalism*, 31-73.
[83] Bremer, *Travels in the Holy Land*, vol. 1, 336.
[84] Ibid.
[85] William Rae Wilson, *Travels in Egypt and the Holy Land* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown, & Green, 1824), 190.
[86] Walter Keating Kelly, *Syria and the Holy Land, Their Scenery and Their People* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1844), 53.

second half of the 19th century was regarded as essential to redress indigenous deficiencies. [87] Testimonies in that sense are abundant, each modern commodity – whose growth and distribution were solely attributed to Western determination (therefore excluding all Egyptian or Turkish involvement) – standing out as a positive contribution to the 'old Palestine'. Watching the holy city from the balcony of the English Hotel,[88] Rogers reports in a rather detached manner: "There were a great many new buildings in course of erection outside the city. Large plots of land had been purchased by Russia, France, and Austria, and foreign schools, hospices, and other institutions were being established."[89] Finn is on the lookout for signs of improvement in Jerusalem: "There is now a large suburb of new buildings outside the Jaffa Gate."[90] She further records in 1871: "Schools have been opened by all the chief sects – who have also now hospitals and physicians (…). Comfortable houses and handsome public buildings have risen up."[91] The change is worthwhile, she declares, "a change from the extreme fanaticism to political and religious toleration, and from utter desertion and torpor to busy life."[92] Closing her eyes to the ameliorations already carried out by Muhammad Ali Pasha, Bremer nurtures the same feelings:

> Amongst the many conflicts which are here going forward, one is evidently becoming more general, more increasingly obvious, and that is, between barbarism and civilisation, between the East and the West. Civilization builds hospitals, founds schools and churches, missions and consulates; cultivates fields, and spins silk in the shelter of the fortress-like convents. Yet still the rapacious Arab tribes draw ever nearer to the city, and the inhabitants feel themselves ever more and more insecure.[93]

Nevertheless, it would be hasty to assume that visitors welcomed the expansion of Western influence in Palestine with unconditional fervor. Notwithstanding his appreciation of modern urban life,[94] Louis Lortet (1836-1909), Doyen of the Faculty of Medicine of Lyon, treats the future construction of the railway between Jaffa and Jerusalem with suspicion and

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[87] For a classic source regarding the place of the city in the colonial imagination, see David Hammer, *New Towns in the New World: Images and Perceptions of the Nineteenth-century Urban Frontier* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1990), 328.

[88] "Hotels in Jerusalem present but a choice of evils. The 'Mediterranean,' or 'English Hotel', is the best, but is capable of decided improvement in cleanliness and order." John Brocklebank, *Continental and Oriental Travels: Being excursions in France, Italy, Egypt, Sinai, Palestine, and Syria* (London: Hamilton, Adams & Co., 1865), 196. See also Brian Yothers, *The Romance of the Holy Land in American Travel Writing, 1790-1876* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2007), 115.

[89] Rogers, *Domestic Life in Palestine*, 410.

[90] Finn, *A Home in the Holy Land*, 295.

[91] Elizabeth Finn, "A Month's Sojourn on Mount Olivet," *The Scattered Nation and Jewish Christian Magazine* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1871), 155.

[92] Ibid.

[93] Bremer, *Travels in the Holy Land*, vol. 2, 113

[94] Louis Lortet, *La Syrie d'aujourd'hui* (Paris: Librairie Hachette et Cie., 1884), 170.

disdain: "I grant that my ears would have been unpleasantly affected by calls such as 'Five minutes to Ramallah; change for the Hebron line!' If a country must be spared the vulgarity of the [railway] engine and its whistle, it is definitely this one."[95] A similar perspective may be found in *Haifa, or Life in Modern Palestine* (1887) by the British diplomat and Protestant eschatologist Laurence Oliphant,[96] an active sympathizer of Jewish aspirations in Palestine,[97] who settled from 1882 to 1886 in the German colony founded on the outskirts of Haifa by the Temple society (*Tempelgesellschaft*) in 1868. He gives a thorough description of the Templers settlement:

> Running straight from the beach for about half a mile, and sloping upward for about a hundred feet in that distance, to the base of the rocky sides of Carmel, runs the village street. On each side of it is a pathway, with a double row of shade-trees, and behind them a series of white stone houses, of one and two stories, generally with tiled roofs, each surrounded with its garden.[98]

Oliphant underlines the remarkable results achieved by the new colony: "Some of the colonists are in business, and have stores in Haifa. (…) There is one wind grist, and one steam mill, the latter in process of erection. There is a manufactory of olive-oil soap, the export of which to America is yearly increasing, and now amounts to 50,000 pounds."[99] The author thus seems to accept the emergence of urban modernization in Palestine, provided that it does not spoil the panoramic view harmonized with scriptural geography that he enjoys from his residence in the German colony.[100] It is at least partly for the same reason that Oliphant is strongly opposed to the construction of a railway from Haifa to Damascus by "British ship-owners and capitalists."[101] Its consequence - he believes - would be the submersion of the whole Jordan Valley, which he considers to be of a tremendous cultural significance for the Western world (and whose destruction will put an end to the Palestine of his longings), with waters from the Mediterranean: "Even in England and America there would be a strong objection to the Lake of Tiberias, with the historic sites of Capernaum and the other cities on its margin, which were the scenes of some of the most remarkable ministrations of our Lord, being buried five hundred feet deep beneath the sea."[102]

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[95] Ibid., 360.

[96] For details regarding Laurence Oliphant and more particularly his stay in Palestine, see Anne Taylor, *Laurence Oliphant, 1829-1888* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 187-230.

[97] Leslie Stein summarizes Oliphant's actions by reporting that in 1880 he "had in vain beseeched the sultan to provide what would have amounted to a charter to permit Jewish colonization in a section of Palestine." Leslie Stein, *The Hope Fulfilled: The Rise of Modern Israel* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2003), 16.

[98] Laurence Oliphant, *Haifa, or Life in Modern Palestine* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, 1887), 23-24.

[99] Ibid., 24.

[100] Ibid., 24-25.

[101] Ibid., 204.

[102] Ibid., 207.

One could reasonably argue that the discourse fostered by Lortet and Oliphant reflects the inner conflict that resided in most 19th-century Western travelers to Palestine: on the one hand, they paid a tearful tribute to the period when Mount Carmel was still a *terra incognita*[103] and, on the other hand, in the name of progress they promoted house-building on the Carmel[104] or the establishment of a winter resort for consumptive patients in Jericho.[105] Another traveler equally worth quoting would be the French esoteric writer Edouard Schuré (1841-1929). Although he maintains that he never saw any disembarkation more hazardously performed than the one in Jaffa, he points out: "Once modern industry turns these reefs into a banal port, allowing [ships] to anchor in Jaffa the same way they do in Le Havre or New York, it would be the end, I fear, of the austere beauty of Palestine, already strongly compromised by railroad tracks and travel agents."[106] A few pages later, Schuré produces a dialogue between a camel and a train, which dramatizes the unresolved tension between authenticity and modernism:

> You may run fast and belch forth your worrisome smoke – you iron monster –, you are only filled with curious, bored and helpless people seeking to attain an elusive goal. Whereas we are docile and tireless animals, whose steps are slow but firm; we are the ships of the desert. We brought the patriarchs to the oasis of peace and the prophets to the wells of truth.[107]

Such criticism of the urban alterations and the consequences of mass tourism in the Holy Land is also made by the man of letters and keen traveler Xavier Marmier (1808-1892), born in Pontarlier. While stressing the disastrous effects of the absence of modern industries and agricultural practices on the inhabitants of Bethany,[108] he warns the reader against the changes occurring in Palestine due to the rapid pace of development:

> The speed of communications has taken away more of the prestige of this city [Jerusalem], the prestige of being far away and unknown. For some it is still the holy and wonderful city of God, but for many it is only a city of curiosity of which one has heard so much that it is worthwhile taking five to six weeks during the summer to visit and be able to say that one knows it.[109]

However, it is in the writings of Louis Félicien de Saulcy (1807-1880), French archaeologist and author of notable treaties on biblical antiquities, that hostility

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[103] Ibid., 93.

[104] Ibid., 162.

[105] Louis Lortet, *La Syrie d'aujourd'hui,* 430.

[106] Edouard Schuré, *Sanctuaires d'Orient* (Paris: Perrin et Cie., 1924), 308.

[107] Ibid., 314-315.

[108] Xavier Marmier, *Du Rhin au Nil, Souvenirs de voyage*, vol. 1 (Ixelles Lez Bruxelles: Delevingne et Callewaert, 1852), 110.

[109] Ibid., 90. Jean-Claude Simoën, *Le Voyage en Terre sainte,* translated from the French by Diane Jenkins-Beauroy (Paris: Impact Livre, 2000), 35.

towards the increasing 'Westernization' of Palestine finds its most straightforward, if not necessarily elegant, expression. Although he shamefully admits to rejoice in the comfort of the Hotel Hauser,[110] he deplores the loss of the poetical charms of Jerusalem, as witnessed during a previous visit, in 1850:

> Farewell to the religious and imposing character of the Jerusalem I once saw (…). Again, [modern] innovations have spoiled it all. From the Russian city to the Jaffa gate, the old ways have turned into streets packed with cabarets bearing French or Italian names: *Café du Jourdain. À la mer Morte, on donne à boire et à manger.* Bah! It makes me feel sick.[111]

Conclusions

The materials developed in this paper leads to three conclusions. First, while the present study does not reject the essence of Said's thesis, namely that the representation of the Orient in the West "derives to a great extent from the impulse not simply to describe, but also to dominate and somehow defend against it,"[112] it has highlighted some of the doubts, contradictions, fears, hopes, dreams and fantasies that gripped 19th-century Western travelers, which seriously undermine their supposedly unique (imperial) appreciation of the East. In fact, when one begins to scratch the surface, one notices that many visitors voluntarily distinguished themselves from each other's positions and, occasionally, were willing to take a critical look at various aspects of their own cultures. Thus, the image of a religious community (the Muslims), a city (Jerusalem) and a landscape (the Jordan Valley) may vary based on the author or the period, or even according to specific passages within one travelogue. To put it differently, the discourse (or, more correctly, discourses), about Palestinian otherness in the 19th century consisted of as many languages, stereotypes, personal observations and national considerations as there were travelers, which nevertheless does not prevent the researcher from discerning some major trends.

Another conclusion that could be drawn from this paper is that 19th-century travel texts about Palestine strongly revolved around the gap between imagination and reality. During their peregrinations in the Holy Land, Western travelers often apprehended the various vistas with a sense of *recognition* rather than *discovery*. And how could it be otherwise for men and women steeped in the Bible since childhood, who were familiar with the works of the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus (37-100) and the writings of the Fathers of the Church, and who included in their ranks many ecclesiastics, missionaries and other proselytizing Evangelicals? For those visitors in search of biblical images,

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[110] Louis Félicien de Saulcy, *Souvenirs d'un voyage en Terre sainte* (Paris: Librairie de A. Eudes, 1867), 75-76.
[111] Ibid., 73.
[112] Said, *Orientalism*, 331.

Palestine remained first and foremost associated with the idea of the Divine, even though it largely turned in the 19th century, just as other countries in the region did, into the realm of the Strange and the Exotic. When taken in this context, the ambivalent attitudes of Western travelers towards industrial and technological developments should not be regarded as their rejection of modernization in general, but rather as their fight against its erratic advance in the Holy Land. Indeed, the majority of visitors appreciated and even supported the modern facilities and means of transport resulting from Western penetration of Palestine, if only for colonial and pseudo-civilizing reasons, as long as the Oriental city and its environs went on to provide them with some sort of an *enclosed* space in which the familiar and predictable Holy Land was confined.

Finally, from all of the above, it should be clear that although most 19th-century Western travelers expressed their desire to describe the Holy Land as it really was, "as opposed to the heavenly Jerusalem that inhabited the minds of many [of their countrymen],"[113] they endeavored to employ a series of literary tropes in order to conceal the 'new' in the 'old', to bury the 'profane' in a pile of 'sacred' rubble. Hence, in an era where "methodical doubt, rejection of authority, and insistence on the clarity, precision, and accuracy of an idea"[114] were gaining ground, readers nonetheless found themselves faced with narratives in which the unavowed distortion and embellishment of reality were not only permissible but necessary in an effort to counter the inevitable disenchantment with the Holy Land of the 19th century, paradoxically rendering the journey itself somewhat superfluous.

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Encounters of a Third Kind: Mark Twain, William C. Prime and Protestant American Holy Land Narratives

by *Milette Shamir*

> "Are you pilgrims here?" continued he.
> "Not precisely."
> "Only tourists, perhaps?"
> "Something that way," volunteered the Californian. "Just so, sort of half and half—killing two birds with one stone—blending the performance of a spiritual obligation with the desire of seeing the country."
> Albert Rhodes*, Jerusalem As It Is* (1865)[1]

Abstract

William C. Prime's Tent Life in the Holy Land *(1857) is mostly remembered now as the target of parody in* The Innocents Abroad *(1869), where, eager to promote his own "honest" and "impartial" account of Palestine, Mark Twain mocked the maudlin style of his old-fashioned predecessor. Readers since took their cue from Twain and tagged American Holy-Land narratives as "secular" or "religious," "realist" or "sentimental," "factual" or "fictitious." But an intertextual consideration of* Tent Life *and* The Innocents *shows the limits of such taxonomies. This essay traces the various thematic and stylistic strands shared by Twain and Prime in order to reveal the intricate texture of the 19th-century Protestant Holy Land archive, its resistance to linear narratives of secularization. This methodology also addresses some lingering tensions between poststructuralist and humanistic positions in the study of Orientalism.*

- **Introduction**
- **Said's** *Orientalism* **and Questions of Intertextuality**
- **Classifying Holy Land Narratives**
- **Prime's Pleasures, Twain's Tears**
- **Encounters of a Third Kind**

Introduction

Visiting Jerusalem in 1867 as part of the famous "pleasure excursion" or "new pilgrim progress" he will recount in *The Innocents Abroad*, Mark Twain purchased a handsome Bible for his mother. He chose a volume made of "Balsam-wood from the Jordan," "oak from Abraham's tree at Hebron," and "olive-wood from the Mount of Olives," and asked a book vendor near the Church of the Holy Sepulcher to inscribe it with: " 'Mrs. Jane Clemens—from her son—Mount Calvary, Sept 24, 1867' " adding " 'Jerusalem' around on it loose, somewhere, in Hebrew" (Figure 1).[2]

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[1] Albert Rhodes, *Jerusalem As It Is* (London: John Maxwell and Company, 1865), 58.
[2] Samuel Clemens to Mr. Esais, 24 Sept 1867, Mark Twain Project,

Fig. 1: A replica of the Bible bought by Twain in Jerusalem (original in the Bancroft Library, Berkeley)[3]

Coming from an author whose irreverent and sardonic descriptions of the Holy Land shocked and delighted millions, this sentimental gesture is baffling. Is this the Twain who mercilessly ridiculed his fellow travelers' hunger for cheap souvenirs and pilfered mementos of holy sites? The same Twain who raised doubts over the link between "The Land" and "The Book" and compared his compatriots' outbursts of religious enthusiasm to "emotions of the nursery"?[4]

Buying an olive-wood Bible for one's mother is something we would expect, instead, of William C. Prime. A New York lawyer and journalist, Prime visited Palestine in 1856 and published his account of the trip, *Tent Life in the Holy Land*, in the following year.[5] The book is mostly remembered now as the target of Twain's parody in the Holy Land sections of *The Innocents Abroad*. Masking its title as "Nomadic Life in Palestine" and its author as "Grimes," Twain

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http://www.marktwainproject.org/xtf/view?docId=letters/UCCL00149.xml;query=jerusalem; searchAll=;sectionType1=;sectionType2=;sectionType3=;sectionType4=;sectionType5=;style =letter;brand=mtp#1 (accessed 9 August 2013).

[3] In http://www.shapell.org/exhibitions.aspx?dreamland-american-travelers-to-the-holy-land, picture n. 18 (accessed 9 August 2013).

[4] Mark Twain, *The Innocents Abroad, Or The New Pilgrims' Progress* (Hartford, CT: American Publishing Company, 1869), 557. This essay will use the title as shorthand for the Holy Land portion of the book.

[5] William C. Prime, *Tent Life in the Holy Land* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1857).

attacked *Tent Life* as a specimen of Protestant American Holy Land narratives, a genre he considered mawkish and deceitful. Just as he distinguished his group of straight-shooting "sinner" friends from the self-righteous "pilgrims" on his cruise, so was he eager to elevate his own "honest," "real," and "impartial" account of Palestine above what he regarded as the sentimental conventionalities churned out by former travel writers, represented first and foremost by Prime or "Grimes." Many readers since took their cue from Twain and divided the corpus of Holy Land narratives into, on the one hand, "secular" and "modern" accounts (such as *The Innocents Abroad*) and, on the other, "religious" and "old fashioned" ones (such as *Tent Life*). But the inscribed, olive-wood Bible Twain bought in Jerusalem thwarts such divisions, especially when considered alongside the several moments of religiosity within the text of *The Innocents Abroad.* These start as early as the book's first page. *Innocents* is sentimentally dedicated to the "Aged Mother" on whose knees, Twain said elsewhere, he acquired his "highest and noblest and purest ideals" (Figure 2).[6]
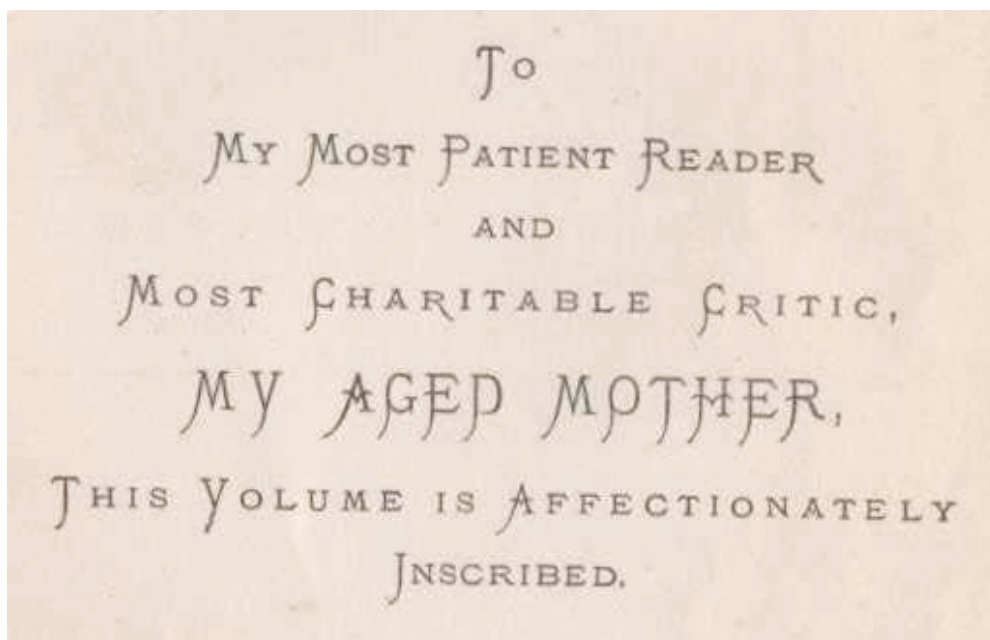

Fig. 2: Dedication of The Innocents Abroad

What is at stake, in other words, is not the incongruity between the (sentimental) historical man and the (cynical) literary narrator, but complexities within the book itself.

In this essay, I will seek out such complexities—moments where religious and secular or sentimental and realist modes intermix—in both *Innocents* and *Tent*

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[6] Typically, Twain was quick to add that "there is seldom any money in them." He is quoted in William E. Phipps, *Mark Twain's Religion* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2003), 10.

Life. In doing so, I will hope to contribute to the fine work of such critics as Hilton Obenzinger, Brian Yothers, and Brooke Sherrard, who have examined Twain's position within the rich corpus of 19th-century American Holy Land narratives.[7] My larger goal—and what I take to be theirs—is to challenge some obstinate binaries that linger in the discussion around these narratives. Not just Prime/Twain, and not just religious/secular, but related oppositions such as fantasy/authenticity, revelation/disappointment, sentimentalism/realism, and pilgrim/tourist. We find such pairs in literary criticism (where the division between "romantic" and "realist" literature is frequently used), among readers of Holy Land literature (some of whom assume that narratives of "disappointment" such as Twain's are more historically sound than those of religious affirmation), among sociologist of travel (those who still adhere to the distinction between the pre-modern pilgrim and the modern tourist), and among historians of religion (those who still uphold the secularization thesis). To be sure, there is by now a rich and diverse scholarship in all those disciplines aimed precisely at questioning and dismantling such binaries.[8] An

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[7] Hilton Obenzinger, *American Palestine: Melville, Twain, and the Holy Land Mania* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Brian Yothers, *The Romance of the Holy Land in American Travel Writing 1790-1876* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2007); Brooke Sherrard, " 'Palestine sits in Sackcloth and Ashes': Reading Mark Twain's *The Innocents Abroad* as a Protestant Holy Land Narrative," *Religion and the Arts* 15 (2011): 82-110.

The list of nineteenth-century American Holy Land narratives is too long to be given here in full. The following are works that have received scholarly attention in recent years: John Lloyd Stephens, *Incidents of Travel in Egypt, Arabia Petraea, and the Holy land* (1837), ed.Victor Wolfgang von Hagen (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971); Edward Robinson, *Biblical Researches in Palestine* (New York: Archaeological Society, 1841); Orson Hyde, *A Voice from Jerusalem, or A Sketch of the Travels and Ministry of Elder Orson Hyde* (Boston: A. Morgan, 1842); William F. Lynch, *Narrative of the United States' Expedition to the River Jordan and the Dead Sea* (Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchford,1849); J. Ross Browne, *Yusef; or The Journey of the Frangi, a Crusade in the East* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1853); William H. Odenheimer, *Jerusalem and its Vicinity* (1855), reprint (New York: Arno, 1977); George William Curtis, *The Hawadji in Syria* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1856); John William DeForest, *Oriental Acquaintance, a Sketch of Travels in Asia Minor* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1856); James Turner Barclay, *The City of the Great King; or, Jerusalem As It Was, As It Is, And As It Is to Be* (Philadelphia: James Challen and Sons, 1858); David F. Dorr, *A Colored Man Round the World* (1858), ed. Malini Jobar Schueller (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999); Sarah Barclay Johnson, *The Hadji in Syrian, or Three Years in Jerusalem* (Philadelphia: James Challen and Sons, 1858); William M. Thomson, *The Land and the Book; or, Biblical Illustrations Drawn from the Manners and Customs, the Scene and Scenery, of the Holy Land, Southern Palestine, and Jerusalem* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1859); Benjamin Bausman, *Sinai and Zion, or A Pilgrimage Through the wilderness to the Land of Promise* (Philadelphia: Reformed Church Publication Board, 1861); William Cullen Bryant, *Letters for the East* (New York: G. P. Putnam and Sons, 1869); Philip Schaff, *Through Bible Lands: Notes of Travel in Egypt, the Desert, and Palestine* (New York: American Tract Society, 1878); S. C. Bartlett, *From Egypt to Palestine: Through Sinai, the Wilderness, and the South Country: Observations of a Journey Made with Special Reference to the History of the Israelites* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1879); and Beverly Carradine, *A Journey to Palestine* (Syracuse: AW Hall, 1891).

[8] This kind of literature is too vast to cite here and any list would be arbitrary. Nevertheless, here are a few good examples: sociologists who question the pilgrim/tourist binary include those included in Ian Reader, Tony Walter, *Pilgrimage in Popular Culture* (New York: Macmillan, 1993) and in William H. Swatos, Louigi Tomasi, *From Medieval Pilgrimage to Religious Tourism*

early and important forerunner was Edward Said, who argued that *all* modes of representing the "East"—fantastic, objective, religious, aesthetic, scientific, and onwards—are part of the discursive formation he called "Orientalism." Declaring at the outset of his seminal book an indifference to "any correspondence, or lack thereof, with a 'real' Orient," Said refused to classify some narratives as more truthful or real than others simply because the writer had been to the East or, like Twain, claimed an objective perspective. He regarded expressions of disappointment with the Holy Land, for example, as no less iterative than the delight over sacred geography about which they were cynical.[9]

But the discussion that *Orientalism* continues to inspire suggests that some of the questions it raised are not yet "resolved." The essay will begin by surveying such questions before considering how an intertextual reading of Twain and Prime can be relevant to them. The main section will analyze *The Innocents Abroad* and *Tent Life in the Holy Land* as composed of a given set of thematic and stylistic strands, found also in many other 19th-century Protestant American Holy Land narratives. This will allow me to rethink questions of sameness and difference within this corpus. It would also help me reexamine some prevalent categories used in the discussion that surrounds it. Like the Californian traveler quoted in the epigraph, who refuses to be interpellated as either a pilgrim or a tourist but wished to "blend the performance of a spiritual obligation with the desire of seeing the country," multi-strand narratives such as Twain's and Prime's undo distinctions between religious and secular sensibilities, sentimentalism and empiricism, revelation and disenchantment.

Said's *Orientalism* and Questions of Intertextuality

An intertextual reading of *The Innocents Abroad* and *Tent Life*—indeed, of any two texts from the Orientalist archive to which they belong— would emphasize differences or similarities according to the critical frame it employs. Twain, in lampooning Prime, directed the reader to notice differences between the two texts. Professional readers too sometimes accentuate difference: literary historians, for example, may be interested in changes in representational techniques from the antebellum Prime to the post-bellum Twain; theorists of literary influence may highlight Twain's "oedipal" rivalry with his predecessor. By contrast, readers informed by Said's theory would look for the *resemblances* between the two works, as they interact within the

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(Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002). Challengers of the secularization thesis include essays in *The Desecularization of the World*, ed. Peter L. Berger (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999) and *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide*, eds. Pippa Norris, Ronald Ingleharts (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2011). A recent challenge to the sentimental/realist binary that considers realism in a religious context is Gregory S. Jackson, *The Word and Its Witness: The Spiritualization of American Realism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).
[9] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1979), 5.

much larger body of texts that constitutes Orientalism. Inspired by Foucauldian thought, Said defined Orientalism as a discursive formation, a dense and formidable mass of representations that produces "the Orient" by seemingly infinite reiteration and citation. True to Foucault, Said professed in the book's introduction a lack of interest in the "brute reality" of that part of the world. His work is concerned, he wrote, "not with correspondence between Orientalism and Orient, but with the *internal consistency* of Orientalism and its ideas about the Orient."[10] In other words, Said advanced a model of intertextual analysis that highlighted sameness, repetition, "consistency."

But at several points in *Orientalism* Said seemed to have retreated from this model. Indeed, his ambivalence over intertextual sameness/difference—linked to his ambivalence about Foucault—explains, at least in part, why the book continues to be debated, thirty-five years after its publication. Consider the debates over Said's historicism. Foucault argued that discursive formations of knowledge/power came into being with the "epistemic break" that led to modernity. Said followed suit by locating the emergence of the discourse of Orientalism at the turn of the 19th century (Napoleon's invasion of Egypt, with his military as well as scholarly apparatuses, provided a convenient starting point). *Orientalism*'s main sections were thus devoted to what Said called the "secular" Orientalism of the 19th and 20th centuries. But as several of his critics have pointed out, in the first sections of the book Said found Orientalist tropes in Ancient Greece and medieval Europe; it follows that "Orientalism is not really a thoroughly modern phenomenon, as we thought earlier, but is the natural product of an ancient and almost irresistible European bent of mind to misrepresent [the East]." It remains unclear, in other words, whether Orientalism is indeed a historical phenomenon—a by-product of modernity—and if it is, what makes it so.[11] One contributor to this debate, political theorist Timothy Mitchell, proposed that Orientalism is indeed modern because it is tightly linked to an apparatus of representation that came into being in the middle of the 19th century. What Mitchell called the "exhibitionary order" was born with the International World's Fair, the museum, the tourist industry, and the commodification of everyday life. The discourse of Orientalism, he argued, is part of a modern epistemological project that strove to endow the world with order and meaning.[12] How would questions of Orientalism, historicism, and modernity enter an intertextual reading of *Innocents* and *Tent Life*? If Orientalism is regarded as a style of representing the East shared across time by Aeschylus, Dante, Chateaubriand, and Henry Kissinger, the differences between Twain and Prime—two small atoms within a centuries-long textual chain—cannot be accorded particular importance. If, on the other hand,

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[10] Said, *Orientalism*, 5 (my emphasis).

[11] Sadik Jalal al-'Azm, "Orientalism and Orientalism in Reverse," in *Orientalism: A Reader*, ed. Alexander Lyon Macfie (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), 219.

[12] Timothy Mitchell, "Orientalism and the Exhibitionary Order," in *Colonialism and Culture*, ed. Nicholas B. Dirks (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 289-317.

Mitchell is correct that Orientalism came into being with the modern "exhibitionary order," then Twain and Prime may occupy opposite sides of a historical "break." One would expect to find crucial differences between the representation of the East by Twain—widely considered to be a harbinger of the age of incorporation, the tourist industry, and modern consumer society—and that penned by the old-fashioned, antebellum Prime.

There is a further ambiguity that stems from Said's use of Foucault - it concerns the status of the individual writer within the discourse of Orientalism. For Foucault, an author exists as an *effect* of a discourse, not as an independent entity that can be credited with that discourse's origination. One implication of regarding Orientalism as a citational discourse is that the individual writer and his/her particular set of experiences or variety of imagination matter very little, since each writer is straightjacketed (if not "produced") by the works of those who preceded him or her. But in *Orientalism* Said refused to fully commit to this premise. Describing himself as a "humanist," he wrote that "unlike Michel Foucault, to whose work I am greatly indebted, I do believe in the determining imprint of individual writers upon the otherwise anonymous collective body of texts constituting a discursive formation like Orientalism."[13] In a section devoted to 19th-century travelers to the Near East, Said presented such "determining imprints" through the differences between the scientific, objective style of Edward William Lane (*An Account of the Manners and Customs of Modern Egyptians*) and the subjective, experiential style of Gerard de Nerval (*Voyage en Orient*). He proposed that "every pilgrim sees things his own way" even if "there are limits to what a pilgrimage can be for, to what shape and form it can take, to what truths it reveals."[14] At a later point in the book, Said even suggested that "personal style" or "individual genius" may "finally supersede the political restraints operating impersonally through tradition."[15] Thus, the relation between two writes such as Twain and Prime would be understood depending on which aspect of *Orientalism*'s theory of authorship is embraced. A strictly "Foucauldian" reading would regard them as effects of highly citational texts within the Orientalist discourse and therefore would minimize the differences between them. A "humanist" reading would highlight each author's distinct subject position, social role, set of experiences, and talents—what Said calls the "strategic position" of the author in relation to the discourse – and trace their effect on each text.

Thirdly, there is the question of the material East—the "brute reality" in Said's phrasing—in relation to Orientalism. Does the fact that a particular writer had been to Palestine and seen it with his or her own eyes introduce intertextual difference in Orientalist discourse? From a strictly poststructuralist perspective, which views reality (like an author) as an effect of the discourse, the answer

[13] Said, *Orientalism*, 23.
[14] Ibid., 168.
[15] Ibid., 273.

would be no. But on this point too Said was equivocal. While he did differentiate scholars, politicians, or men of religion who wrote about the East from afar from travelers who had actually been there—thus implying that the material encounter *does* matter—he simultaneously downplayed the distinction. "The 'real' orient," he wrote, "rarely guided" a writer's vision.[16] Said argued that in cases where the "brute reality" of the East challenged the traveler's Orientalist maxims, the incongruity was either ignored, dismissed as a particular aberration, or quickly pressed in the service of the "truths" it seemed to oppose. 19th-century travelers to the Holy Land "understood their pilgrimages in the order to dispel the mustiness of the pre-existing Orientalism archive" and "their writing was to be a fresh new repository of Oriental experience." But "this project usually (but not always) resolved itself into the reductionism of the orientalistic."[17] Note the parenthetical qualification: Said here as elsewhere seems to teeter between his commitment to the Foucauldian view of reality as a discursive effect and the intuition that a reality "out there" can sometimes, even if only rarely, introduce difference into the discourse.

Given such ambivalences, it isn't surprising that the debates on *Orientalism* never seems to have died down, or that the position that the critique has often taken is either to claim that Said is "too Foucauldian" or that he is "not Foucauldian enough."[18] In the project of relating *Innocents* to *Tent Life*, choosing between a "poststructuralist" and a "humanist" position on questions of modernity, authorial agency, and material reality would lead one either to minimize or maximize the differences between the two authors and texts. In the next sections, however, I will attempt to show these positions are not mutually exclusive. I will trace the several conventions that Twain and Prime share as part of a larger Protestant Holy Land archive and argue for the two works' surprising similarities. But I will also find difference in the way these conventions interact within each text, concluding that a poststructuralist understanding of Orientalism does not necessarily require sacrifice of individual authorship, of material reality, or of historical continuity across modernity's divide.

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[16] Ibid., 22.

[17] Ibid., 169.

[18] Historians of the Middle East as well as Marxist critics have tended to express the former view, critiquing *Orientalism*'s insufficient consideration of material realities. Aijaz Ahmad, for example, worried that Said promotes the notion of imperialism as an intangible discursive effect and asked to restore to the discussion of Orientalism what he called "non-European empirical fact." ("Between Orientalism and Historicism," in *Orientalism: A Reader*, 219).
On the opposite side, James Clifford pointed out that Said's humanism is incompatible with Foucault and lacking in self-consciousness about its own participation in Western discourse (*The Predicament of Culture* [Harvard University Press, 1988], 256-77), while Meyda Yegenogolu critiqued Said's unwillingness to fully let go of the notion of a material Orient beyond the discourse (*Colonial Fantasies: Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998], 14-38).

Classifying Holy Land Narratives

Twain and Prime were hardly unique in choosing to come to Palestine or to write about their trip. In the decades after 1840, the number of Protestant Americans visiting the Holy Land climbed dramatically, reaching the level of a "Holy Land mania" (in Hilton Obenzinger's memorable phrase) after the Civil War. To be sure, Protestant Americans have always been keenly interested in the Land of the Bible as part of their national and religious identity formation. But now a number of factors—material, sociological, political, and spiritual—combined to account for the growing popularity of Palestine as a travel destination. The modernization of bureaucracy and greater tolerance toward non-Muslims that followed in the wake of Mohammad Ali's invasion of Syria made it easier and safer for Westerners to come to the region, as did improvements in transportation and the local government's curbing of Bedouin attacks on foreigners. The Ottoman Empire's growing interest in cultivating diplomatic relations with the West resulted in the opening of foreign consulates in Palestine (the first American consul was appointed in 1844). The growth of modern tourism in the second half of the century—promoted by guidebook publishers (such as the bestselling *Murray's*), travel agencies (led by Thomas Cook), and pleasure cruises (such as Twain's "Quaker City")—whetted the appetite of leisure-class Americans for the pleasures of Eastward travels. At the same time, contemporary challenges to religious worldviews, especially those posed by Higher Biblical Criticism and Darwinism, encouraged Protestants to seek evidence for the truth of the scriptures in "sacred geography."[19] The increase in numbers of American visitors to the East was accompanied by an enormous surge of Holy Land travel narratives. Stephanie Stidham Rogers counted around 500 such narratives written between 1840 and 1941, with the largest number produced in the second half of the 19th century.[20]

How to classify this vast body of texts? Said, we recall, offered a typology based on the author's "strategic location" vis-à-vis Orientalism, positioning, on one end of the spectrum, the "scientific" Lane and on the other the "literary" Nerval. Protestant American narratives too are often classed according to the author's function, as missionary, archeologist, diplomat, settler, explorer, and

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[19] The list of books that discuss America's interest in the lands of the bible during the 19th century includes, besides Obenzinger's *American Palestine*, Lester Irwin Vogel, *To See a Promised Land* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993); Moshe Davis, *America and the Holy Land* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995); John Davis, *The Landscape of Belief* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); Malini Johar Schueller, *U.S. Orientalisms* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001); Bruce A. Harvey, *American Geographics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001); and Burke O. Long, *Imagining the Holy Land* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003). In addition there are several books discussing specific groups of Americans, such as settlers, diplomats, or missionaries.

[20] Stephanie Stidham Rogers, *Inventing the Holy Land: American Protestant Pilgrimage to Palestine, 1865-1941* (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2011), 8.

so forth. But whether it is possible to reduce an author to a single motivation, and whether that motivation necessarily unifies the style and contents of his or her narrative is questionable. Most visitors (like the epigraph's Californian or like his author, the diplomat, amateur scholar, and tourist Albert Rhodes) had several reasons to come to Palestine. Most narratives, moreover, resist being lined up in accordance with Said's polar classification, since they blend an objective, informational mode of writing with a subjective, experiential one. An alternative method of classification involves the level of a writer's religious commitments. Said, I already mentioned, associated 19th-century Orientalism with secularity and distinguished it from older, religious-based views of the East. But 19th-century American narratives are themselves frequently discussed as either "religious" or "secular." Brian Yothers, in his illuminating study of this archive, proposed more nuanced categories. He classified authors as mainstream evangelical Protestants, "unorthodox" Protestants, skeptical romantics, and skeptical humorists. He then argued that different emphases, attitudes, and styles characterize each category. Ultimately, however, Yothers' analysis reveals the overriding *similarities* between texts across categories, the way that, despite varying religious commitments, they share images, plot elements, attitudes, and ideas.

A productive way of approaching this archive, then, is to identify not authorial positions but the main thematic and stylistic strands that appear and reappear in so many narratives.[21] A list of those strands includes: dry-toned, guidebook-style information about Palestine's geography and history; romantic Arabian-Nights-inspired exotica; a recollection of a biblical story or event triggered by a specific Holy Land site; a farcical or patronizing account of an encounter with locals (dragomen and Turkish soldiers are favorite targets); a sentimental outpouring prompted by sacred geography and often tinged with nostalgia; an expression of disappointment by the landscape's small proportions or desolation; a self-critical description of western tourists as boorish or vandalistic; an argument with or revision of an earlier traveler's exegesis of the land; and skepticism over the authenticity of sites or relics held sacred by Catholic or Orthodox Christians. While each of these strands can be dominant in one narrative but marginal in another, many texts contain them all. And since some of these strands are "objective" and some "subjective," some associated with a secular and some with a religious worldview, some with residual and some with modern sensibilities, their confluence in the Holy Land narrative complicates the task of pigeon-holing authors or works, and problematizes Said's claim about the "internal consistency" of Orientalism. If anything, they show the discourse's inherent *in*consistencies.

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[21] Rogers, who has surveyed the largest number of Protestant-American Holy Land narratives to date, uses this method. Rogers, *Inventing the Holy Land,* passim.

Prime's Pleasures, Twain's Tears

To view *Innocents* and *Tent Life* as constituted each by a variety of conventional and often contradictory thematic and stylistic strands is to resist the polarities Twain himself helped instantiate—between "sinner" and "pilgrim," "realist" and "sentimentalist," "new" and "old"—and to highlight instead the elements they share with each other and with many other 19th-century Holy Land narratives. Some overlaps are immediately apparent. Both books, for example, deploy the informational, tourist-guidebook voice extensively. Both also contain surprisingly similar descriptions of the experience of being a modern tourist in the Holy Land, delighting, for example, in the luxurious camping conditions or exhorting the pitiful state of the horses with which they are provided. More surprising to readers who know *Tent Life* only through Twain's parody would be Prime's occasional expression of a modern touristic sensibility. These crop up as early as in the Preface to *Tent Life*. Just as Twain opens his book by scandalously linking the words "Holy Land" with "pleasure excursion" and "a picnic on a gigantic scale,"[22] Prime begins with a brew of devotion and self-gratification:

> I visited the sacred soil, as a pilgrim, seeking mine own pleasure. I went where it pleased me. I acted as it pleased me, yielding, with delicious license, to the whim of every passing hour. I prayed or I laughed; I knelt or I turned my back; I wept or I sang; and when I sang it was now a song of sinful humanity and now a grand old monkish hymn.[23]

Indeed, at several moments in *Tent Life*, Prime sounds distinctly more like Twain and his sidekick "sinners" than like the "pilgrims" with whom Twain allies him. Like Twain, he travels with a group of "boys" who bond over their comic or thrilling adventures (true, Prime also brings a wife along, but she rarely gets to open her mouth). As in *Innocents*, part of fun involves the inanity or duplicity of the local guides. And like in *Innocents*, this ridicule does not preclude *self*-criticism. Prime recalls, for example, "the comical appearance of one of our party," who is caught greedily pawing the oriental delicacies where he should have been listening to a grave lecture by the Greek Bishop.[24] Much as Twain is scandalized by his companions' habit of stealing pieces of historical ruins as souvenirs, Prime complains of the "vandalism that thus destroys relics of the ancient days" which "none can more thoroughly detest and condemn than do I" (though quickly adding, in what could be read—too generously?—as Twainesque self-parody: "I am not so foolish as to refuse to take what I can").[25]

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[22] Twain, *The Innocents*, 19.
[23] Prime, *Tent Life*, n.p. [no page].
[24] Ibid, 34.
[25] Ibid., 120.

Another strand linking Prime with Twain is the abusive depiction of the local population. The most unpleasant aspect of *Tent Life*, without doubt, is its narrator's attitude toward the Turks and the Arabs, one that ranges from the disdainful to the violent. Not two pages into the first chapter, Prime tells how "A party of half drunken Turks nearly rode over us in their carriage, a mishap which cost their driver a swinging blow from the end of my koorbash as he dashed by me."[26] Repeatedly describing the locals as filthy, stupid, or savage, he assumes the right to use his "koorbash" against them whenever it so suits him. This culminates in a particularly off-putting scene where Prime has a family of villagers prosecuted and flogged by the local governor since he suspects them of having stolen his gunpowder. Now Twain was openly irritated by "Grimes" chauvinism, and expressed particular outrage over his lack of pity for the scourged villagers.[27] Mark Woodhouse has recently analyzed the marginalia in the copy of *Tent Life* most likely used by Twain to conclude that he was even more disturbed by Prime's treatment of Arabs than he had allowed himself to express in *Innocents*. Woodhouse then contrasts Twain sensitivity and compassion with Prime's Eurocentric intolerance.[28] But to regard Holy Land narratives not as stable and unified authorial expressions but as a mixture of conflicting attitudes, themes, and styles, is to recall the many places where Twain and Prime sound very much alike in their cruel depiction of Arabs. At one point, Twain describes villagers with such adjectives as "degraded," "nasty," "squalid," "vile," and "pitiable," and expresses a desire to "exterminate the whole tribe," all in the space of ten pages.[29] The point is not to decide whether Prime or Twain are worse; it is that this conventional representation of Palestine's Arabs (and Jews and Turks) crops up in both texts, as well as in dozens if not hundreds of other narratives written by Protestant Americans in this period.[30]

Tent Life overlaps also with those aspects of *Innocents* that seem to evince Twain's modernity. As discussed above, Timothy Mitchell linked Orientalism to modernity through what he called "the exhibitionary order" – an epistemology that arises in the second half of the 19th century with the World's Fairs, department stores, and tourist industry. This epistemology frames, orders, and gives meaning to the East through such apparatuses as the museum exhibit or the tourist guidebook. The exhibitionary order, Mitchell explained, also generates the notion of—as well as a desire for—a "real" orient that lies outside the realm of representation. When the Western subject leaves the exhibition and travels to the Orient, the encounter with that "real" causes a

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[26] Ibid., 14.

[27] Twain, *The Innocents*, 534-535.

[28] Mark Woodhouse, "Rough Compassion and Self-Restraint: Samuel Clemens and *Tent Life in the Holy Land*," *American Literary Realism* 45/1 (2012): 70-7.

[29] Twain, *The Innocents*, 463-473.

[30] For a detailed discussion of Protestant conflicting representations of Holy Land natives, see Rogers, *Inventing the Holy* Land, Chapter 3.

crisis – a sense of chaos and absence of meaning. The Western subject's response, argued Mitchell, is to bring the "real" back into the representational fold. This can be achieved, for example, by seeking, a lofty position from which to gain a controlled, map-like perspective on the landscape, or by creating a frame through which to transform the "real" back into the "pictorial" (the tourist's use of the camera is an obvious example). All this is certainly relevant to Twain. Jefferey Alan Melton has shown that what makes *Innocents* such a precise articulation of a modern, touristic epistemology are the repeated instances where Twain encounters what appears to him as a chaotic, filthy, threatening "real" Orient only to disarm the danger through use of the pictorial. Whether he basks in the distant, dreamlike, panoramic view of Damascus but expresses disgust at the dirty, messy experience of entering that city, or whether he imaginatively transmutes a diseased and flea-ridden human scene into a "perfect oriental picture," Twain typifies the modern tourist who both yearns for and shuns the "real" Orient.[31] What I wish to add is that this modern epistemological drama is played out in Prime as well. Like Twain, Prime experiences his contact with the Orient as a crisis. His entrance into Jaffa sounds very much like Twain's entrance into Constantinople or Damascus: "The din of voices, was, as usual, intolerable. (…) We now worked our way through the crowd, having yielded to the absolute certainty of the effects of that contact with oriental vagabonds. (…) [the streets were] narrow and dirty. (…) [A] terrible confusion of tongues at the landing." And like Twain's, Prime's preference is to view the Orient from a safe distance, restoring it to the safety and coherence of the pictorial: "the appearance of Jaffa from the sea," he writes, "is picturesque."[32]

As Mitchell explains, an important aspect of Orientalism *cum* the exhibitionary order is its commitment to realism. The World's Fair model, the museum exhibit, and the tourist's guidebook are designed to achieve mimesis. All aim to capture the foreign scene with the outmost detail and accuracy. That *Innocents* shares this ambition is clear, not just because Twain explains in the preface that his goal in writing involves the immediacy and transparency of realism—"to suggest to the reader how *he* would be likely to see Europe and the East if he looked at them with his own eyes"—but because the work has since been frequently used to illustrate the shift to realism in post-Civil War American literature. Indeed, just as American literary realists such as William Dean Howells or Henry James defined realism by contrasting it with a residual "romance" mode, so does Twain "offer no apologies for any departures from the usual style of travel-writing that may be charged against me – for I think I seen with impartial eyes, and I am sure I have written at least honestly."[33] His "impartial" "honest" realism will be established in the book precisely through

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[31] Jeffery Alan Melton, *Mark Twain, Travel Books, and Tourism: The Tide of a Great Popular Movement* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2002).
[32] Prime, *Tent Life*, 25-27.
[33] Twain, *The Innocents*, v.

contrast with the romanticism of the likes of "Grimes." What complicates Twain's self-proclaimed originality, however, is that the professing of novelty and realism is itself a convention of Holy Land narratives, and appears also in *Tent Life*. As Yothers points out, "from the most piously conventional to the most comically irreverent," each Holy Land narrative "vigorously asserts its own claim to originality even while adopting some of the core conventions of nineteenth-century Holy Land writing."[34] Prime, too, advertises his realism in the preface, promising that "I have written the book even as I traveled."[35] His claims for unmediated writing and freshness of insight recur later: "He who shall visit Holy Soil with Murray's proposed red book in hands," he pontificates, "will know nothing of the deep pleasure that we experienced (…) the intense delight that flashed across our minds (…) startling because unexpected and wholly original."[36] Sounding much like Twain, he warns a companion not to "let your religion be so absorbing as to forbid your observing the common occurrence of life."[37]

But it is Twain's *disenchantment* with the Holy Land, with the smallness and barrenness of it all, that is most remembered about *Innocents* and frequently cited as evidence of his clear-eyed, secular realism. Indeed, it is precisely at moments of bitter disappointment (say, by the meager size of the Sea of Galilee) that Twain issues his most bitter harangues against "Grimes," accusing him and other travel book writers of falsely beautifying what is clearly a dismal land. But such expressions of disappointment are far from unique to Twain; they are one of the most conventional of Holy Land tropes. As Elliot Horowitz and others have discussed, 19th-century travelers were repeatedly disillusioned and even disgusted by the size and aridity of Palestine.[38] Far from adoring all that he sees, Prime too expresses painful disappointment (at times sounding almost like the master of this trope, Herman Melville): "the general aspect of Jerusalem is very melancholy," he writes; "there is not such thing as cheerfulness about it, even in a sunny, spring day. It is a mass of old houses, cold, somber and sad, presenting only blank walls to the streets, many of them in ruins."[39]

There are several ways, then, in which *Tent Life* resembles *Innocents*. But there are also several ways in which Twain, in turn, resembles Prime. As Brooke Sherrard has persuasively argued, Twain's voice is often precisely that of the reverent—even enthusiastic—pilgrim that he parodied. Consider his excited

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[34] Yothers, *The Romance of the Holy Land*, 1.

[35] Prime, *Tent Life*, n.p.

[36] Ibid., 315.

[37] Ibid., 75.

[38] Elliot Horowitz, " 'Remarkable Rather for Its Eloquence than Its Truth': Modern Travelers Encounter the Holy Land – and Each Other's Accounts Thereof," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 99/4 (2009): 439-64.

[39] Prime, 99.

tone here: "a few miles before us, with not a tree or a shrub to interrupt the view, lay a vision which millions of worshipers in the far lands of the earth would give half their possessions to see - the sacred Sea of Galilee!"[40] Indeed, his expressions of disappointment can themselves be read as a convention of the religious pilgrim. As Sherrard points out, pilgrims accounted for the desolation of the Holy Land either by blaming the corrupting presence of Catholic and Orthodox shrines, or by regarding it as evidence of the divine curse. Both these explanations are to be found in *Innocents*. Twain's disgust with Catholic tradition is everywhere apparent in the book, and his disappointment is frequently dressed in religious-sounding, even biblical, rhetoric. In the description of Palestine's lizards, for instance, "those heirs of ruin, of sepulchers and desolation," Twain's language sounds almost King-Jamesian: "Where prosperity has reigned, and fallen; where glory has flamed, and gone out; where beauty has dwelt, and passed away; where gladness was, and sorrow is; where the pomp of life has been, and silence and death brood in its high places, there this reptile makes his home, and mocks at human vanity."[41] Prime writes that "the curse of God appears to rest on all the country, and the desolation of the land of Israel could scarcely be more total and complete,"[42] and Twain echoes back with "Palestine is desolate and unlovely. And why should it be otherwise? Can the *curse* of the Deity beatify a land?"[43]

The most dominant convention that Twain shares with religious Holy land writers is the reading of the Bible through the land. Edward Robinson (*Biblical Researches in Palestine)* and William McClure Thomson (*The Land and the Book*) were the undisputed masters of this convention, and Twain alludes to both in *Innocents*. His debt to them is evident when he allows the land to inspire him to sermonize on the Bible. While his tone in telling the stories of Joseph and his brothers or the Queen of Sheba is sometimes jovial to the point of irreverence, in other places it is hardly distinguishable from the solemn and awe-filled tone found in Robinson, Thomason, or Prime:

> It seems curious enough to us to be standing on ground that was once actually pressed by the feet of the Saviour. The situation is suggestive of a reality and a tangibility that seem at variance with the vagueness and mystery and ghostliness that one naturally attaches to the character of a god. I can not comprehend yet that I am sitting where a god has stood, and looking upon the brook and the mountains which that god looked upon, and am surrounded by dusky men and women whose ancestors saw him, and even talked with him, face to face, and carelessly, just as they

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[40] Twain, *The Innocents*, 494.

[41] Ibid., 488.

[42] Prime, *Tent Life*, 99.

[43] Twain, *The Innocents*, 608. One attitude where Twain and Prime converge, but in distinction from many other Holy Land writers, is in their appreciation of Catholic monk. Twain practically plagiarizes Prime's appreciation of their hospitality towards pilgrims.

would have done with any other stranger.[44]

Yet another dominant religious convention in the Protestant-American archive is the association of the Holy Land with dreams of one's childhood and mother. This nostalgic, sentimental theme appears even in narratives not considered particularly subjective, such as Robinson's *Biblical Researches*. The scholarly Robinson nevertheless writes: "From the earliest childhood, I had read of and studies the localities of this sacred spot (…) and they all seemed familiar to me, as if the realization of a former dream. I seemed to be again among cherished scenes of childhood, long unvisited, indeed, but distinctly recollected."[45] In *Tent Life* the sentimental reigns supreme. Prime is repeatedly inspired by the land to daydream about how "Lying in my mother's arms, year after year, I had slept peaceful sleep as she sang the songs of Christian story" and how "my mother's hand taught my footsteps their first essays on the sad earth; and lo! Here, what far pilgrimage they had accomplished!" [46] (unsurprisingly, Prime will in future years devote a whole book to the hymn "O Mother Dear, Jerusalem"). This reaches a climax in Bethlehem, at the Cave of the Nativity, where Prime reports literally hearing the "sweet voice" of his mother singing "the Star of Bethlehem" to lull him sleep: "Will you dare to laugh at me," he asks, "when I tell you (…) that at length I sobbed aloud, and, hiding my face in my burnoose, I wept as I lay there in the starlight on the convent roof."[47]

Well, Twain for one did dare to laugh. A particularly funny moment in *Innocents* parodies Prime's tear-soaked journey through the Holy Land: "He never bored but he struck water," writes Twain wryly.[48] This moment is also immortalized in the often-reproduced "I Wept!" by Twain's illustrator, True Williams (*Fig. 3*).

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[44] Twain, *The Innocents*, 472.
[45] Quoted in Yothers, *The Romance of the Holy Land*, 22.
[46] Prime, *Tent Life*, 22-23.
[47] Ibid., 236.
[48] Twain, *The Innocents*, 535.

Fig. 3: "I Wept." Illustration from The Innocents Abroad

The caption, however, renders the picture a little ambiguous: since it doesn't mention "Grimes" by name, but uses, instead, the first person pronoun of the narrative as a whole, a careless reader may assume he is looking at a lachrymose Twain. As I suggested in the beginning, however, such a mistake would not be completely outrageous. The sentimental mode is by no means entirely absent from *Innocents*, beginning with the dedication (it is even typographically kitschy). True, Twain is careful to point out that he did *not* weep when he first saw Jerusalem. But not weeping can also rendered sentimentally: "I think there was no individual in the party whose brain was not teeming with thoughts and images and memories invoked by the grand history of the venerable city that lay before us, but still among them all was no 'voice of them that wept.' There was no call for tears. Tears would have been out of place. The thoughts Jerusalem suggests are full of poetry, sublimity, and more than all, dignity."[49] Twain will end up calling Jerusalem, quite conventionally, "a good home to

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[49] Ibid., 557.

us."[50] And if Prime channels the song of his angelic mother in Bethlehem, Twain hears phantom voices near the Sea of Galilee. Speaking in the third person, he confesses that "The old traditions of the place steal upon his memory and haunt his reveries (…) in the secret noises of the night he hears spirit voices; in the soft sweep of the breeze, the rush of invisible wings." Soon, like Mother Prime's hymn, "the song of old forgotten ages find[s] utterance again" in the pilgrim's ear.[51] Phipps observes that though Twain "considered himself a sinner, he was capable of sensitive expression of pious sentiments" is certainly relevant to such passages in *Innocents*.[52]

Twain's resemblances to Prime transform into direct citation in the climactic (and unusually long) chapter on the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. This chapter includes some of the most sarcastic passages in *Innocents*, such a Twain's serial insults of Orthodox and Catholic relics and his hilarious tears over the grave of his "blood relation" Adam.[53] As the chapter approaches its end, however, Twain shifts dramatically and unexpectedly to a serious tone, and presents an argument for the authenticity of the spot that marks the Crucifixion, based on the idea that such an important location would have surely been passed down from generation to generation. The grand finale is Twain's impassioned argument for the Church of the Holy Sepulcher's importance—despite centuries of Protestant prejudice—because "a god had died there," and because "history is full of this old Church of the Holy Sepulcher – full of blood that was shed because of the respect and the veneration in which men held the last resting-place of the meek and lowly, the mild and gentle, Prince of Peace!"[54] For some critics, this passage evinces Twain's secular outlook, the way opts for history over religion.[55] But in the context of this essay, more relevant is that the ideas Twain expresses so vehemently here are not his at all. Twain acknowledges in a footnote that he had borrowed from Prime the argument for the authenticity of the site of Crucifixion, referring to the author of *Tent Life* for once by his real name: "The thought is Mr. Prime's, not mine, and is full of good sense."[56] As for the idea that history endows the Church with value, this too is taken from Prime (albeit with no credit). No moment better illustrates not only how "citational" Holy Land narratives tend to be, but also how internally inconsistent they often are.[57] Expressing his sentiments upon leaving Jerusalem, Twain sounds again like Prime: "Palestine is no more of this work-day world. It is sacred to poetry

[50] Ibid., 604.
[51] Ibid., 512-513
[52] Phipps, *Mark Twain's Religion*, 83.
[53] Twain, *The Innocents*, 567.
[54] Ibid., 573.
[55] Richard S. Lowry, "Framing the Authentic: The Modern Tourist and *The Innocents Abroad*," *New Orleans Review* 18/2 (1991): 18-28.
[56] Twain, *The Innocents*, 573.
[57] See Yother's reading of Prime's appearance in this chapter of *Innocents*, 102-5.

and tradition – it is dream-land."[58] As Yothers correctly points out, "Twain's persona is seen to be reliant on the very accounts that he exposes as utterly ridiculous, and his reader is able to see that the ultimate distinction between Twain and previous travelers is one of degree rather than kind."[59]

What can be deduced from the various thematic and stylistic strands that Twain and Prime share? Arguably nothing that concerns literary merit. As Melton puts it, though Twain and Prime share many of the conventions used by Holy Land travelers, "The difference is that Twain is a far better writer, though not necessarily a better tourist."[60] Even if Said was right to suggest that "the individual genius may finally supersede the political restraints operating impersonally through tradition" it certainly doesn't have to. Twain's genius, in this case, finds expression *within* Orientalist conventions, not by transcending them. Said's "humanistic" belief in the distinction of an individual author does not necessarily need to contradict a Foucauldian emphasis on the citationality of the discourse. Foucault is also relevant here in another sense. If a poststructuralist theory of authorship holds than an author is a textual effect, that a discourse interpellates an author, then the "internally inconsistent" archive of Protestant American Holy Land narratives can only be said to produce very shaky subject positions. A relatively univocal text (no text is completely univocal, of course) may interpellate an author as "religious" or "secular," "modern" or "traditional," "realist" or "sentimentalist," depending on the text. But works composed of various and contradictory strands—*Innocents* or *Tent Life* or other such Holy Land narratives—call attention precisely to the unclear and complex status of these categories in 19th-century American culture. Perhaps more than most other cultures in the West, post-bellum American culture resists being read through simplified secularization narratives. As many sociologists, cultural theorists and literary historians have been pointing out in recent years, in the U.S. the secular never "replaced" the religious, just as realism did not simply overthrow sentimentalism, and the tourist did not depose the pilgrim. The composite, unstable subjectivities brought into effect by multi-stranded Holy Land narratives (the way the "Mark Twain" of *Innocents Abroad* is irreducible to any of such binary terms) demonstrate precisely that.

Encounters of a Third Kind

I wish to return, finally, to the question of Orientalism's relation to the material. As we have seen, Edward Said seemed at first indifferent to and then ambiguous over whether or not the encounter with the "brute reality" of the East produces discursive change. Is it likely that Twain and Prime would have written these accounts of the Holy Land had they not physically been there?

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[58] Twain, *The Innocents*, 608.
[59] Yothers, *The Romance of the Holy Land*, 105.
[60] Melton, *Mark Twain, Travel Books*, 74.

On the other hand, does not their obvious and heavy reliance on the archive's preexisting conventions suggest that whatever their encounter was, it failed to produce a difference in their writing? My hunch is that the multi-stranded makeup of narratives such as *Innocents* and *Tent Life* can help us think further about such questions. For that purpose, I would focus less on how various writers share the same conventional styles and themes, and more on the particular shifts between styles and themes within each text. Twain himself noticed such shifts. In the midst of describing his trip through the north of Palestine, he remembered a passage from *Life in the Holy Land* where the writer "C.W.E" ("Grimes" is spared this time) deposes on the "sweet and cool" waters and the "fertile plains" of the gorgeous hills of Galilee, only to suddenly move to a gloomy expression of disappointment with that very landscape. Twain writes: "This is not an ingenious picture. It is the worst I ever saw. It describes in elaborate detail what it terms a 'terrestrial paradise,' and closes with the startling information that this paradise is 'a scene of *desolation and misery*'."[61]

But as so many critics have pointed out, such moments of abrupt, incongruous change in narration are one of the main characteristics of *The Innocents Abroad*. Consider the following passage from chapter 44:

> Broke camp at 7 A. M., and made a ghastly trip through the Zeb Dana valley and the rough mountains – horses limping and that Arab screech-owl that does most of the singing and carries the water-skins, always a thousand miles ahead, of course, and no water to drink - will he *never* die? Beautiful stream in a chasm, lined thick with pomegranate, fig, olive and quince orchards, and nooned an hour at the celebrated Baalam's Ass Fountain of Figia, second in size in Syria, and the coldest water out of Siberia - guide-books do not say Baalam's ass ever drank there - somebody been imposing on the pilgrims, may be. Bathed in it - Jack and I. Only a second - ice-water. It is the principal source of the Abana river - only one-half mile down to where it joins. Beautiful place - giant trees all around - *so* shady and cool, if one could keep awake - vast stream gushes straight out from under the mountain in a torrent. Over it is a very ancient ruin, with no known history - supposed to have been for the worship of the deity of the fountain or Baalam's ass or somebody. Wretched nest of human vermin about the fountain - rags, dirt, sunken cheeks, pallor of sickness, sores, projecting bones, dull, aching misery in their eyes and ravenous hunger speaking from every eloquent fiber and muscle from head to foot.[62]

Twain opens with the conventional voice of the weary tourist, complaining about primitive roads, inadequate horses, and annoying Arabs, only to shift unexpectedly in the next sentence to the voice of the inspired pilgrim for

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[61] Twain, *The Innocents*, 510.
[62] Ibid., 454-455.

whom the Bible comes alive in the pomegranate, fig, and olive trees. He next moves quickly back and forth between three other styles: the informational mode (e.g., "the fountain is second in size in Syria"), parody of the informational (e.g., "coldest water out of Siberia"), and the voice of the "sinner" putting down the "pilgrims." To complicate things even more, he then shifts gears to a hateful speech against the "Wretched nest of human vermin about the fountain."

What such a hodgepodge of styles and tones registers, I think, is the encounter with Palestine itself. In the face of something that refused to be contained within any singular or consistent narrative—be it devotional, exotic, cynical, disappointed, or poetic—Holy Land writers responded by groping for alternative, often incongruous styles (say the sudden appearance of the sentimental in Twain, or of the cynical in Prime). The unsettling encounter, in other words, did not necessarily provoke any particularly original observation. But it did lead to such frantic shifts in tone and style as those we see above. The fact that this passage is an extract from Twain's journal (embedded in the narrative) may be relevant. It is as if the impressions of the encounter have not yet diminished at the time in which Twain first put them down on paper; had he revised the passage at a later time, he would have probably smoothed out many of these narrational zigzags.[63] But even with revision the trace of the encounter would not necessarily disappear. Twain's sudden stylistic U-Turn in the chapter on the Church of the Holy Sepulcher—the irreverent cynicism morphing into a Prime-like grandiloquence—is a good example. Did an intense experience in the Church—a site he learned from Protestantism to disdain but must have seen was difficult to dismiss—catch Twain off guard? Is that why he so strangely retreated to the words of none-other than his literary nemesis? Twain's encounter with the Church (perhaps what impelled him to buy a Bible for his mother next door) is of a third kind. If we are prepared to fully commit neither to the poststructuralist denial of "brute reality" nor to the humanistic belief in the possibility of transcendence, we can still seek its shadow between the multiple strands that texture Orientalism.

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[63] Although a glimpse at his notebooks reveals that Twain did revise this passage somewhat, despite implying that he copied it verbatim. The notebook entry is even choppier than the "extract." See Mark Twain, *Mark Twain's Notebooks & Journals 1855-1873*, Vol. I (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 418-9.

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"With Eyes toward Zion:"
Visions of the Holy Land in Romanian Synagogues

by *Ilia Rodov*

Abstract

This article analyses perceptions of the Holy Land through the pictorial representations of Jewish holy places in the Romanian Moldavia synagogues from the mid-19th to the mid-20th century. These images implied the sanctity of the biblical land and the belief in its messianic revival by the Jewish people. Some synagogue artists 'domesticated' their paintings of a never-seen land by depicting those remote places according to features characteristic of familiar local landscapes.

Introduction. Non-Travel to a Never-Seen Land

An extraordinarily rich variety of images of the Holy Land is found in the 19th- and 20th-century synagogues of Romanian Moldavia, the historical region between the eastern Carpathians and the Prut River.[1] Persons frequenting these synagogues were surrounded by schematic depictions or naturalistic vista of that remote land in the murals and on hand-drawn *Shiviti* tablets produced by local craftsmen, as well as on the printed plates imported from Europe – mainly Austro-Hungary – or from the Holy Land.[2] The scope of representation

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[1] This article does not deal with Bessarabia, the part of the historical region of Moldavia lying between the Prut River and Dniester River. Bessarabia was under Russian rule from 1812 to 1918. Currently, its eastern area is the Republic of Moldova, while the northern and south-eastern territories belong to Ukraine.

[2] See Eleonora Bergman, "Motifs Pertaining to Jerusalem in the Building and Decorating of 19th and Early 20th Century Synagogues in the Polish Lands;" Zussia Efron, "Motifs of Jerusalem in the Mural Painting of Eastern European Synagogues: The Researcher's Impression;" Olga Goldberg-Mulkiewicz, "The Image of Jerusalem in the Jewish Diaspora of the 19th and 20th Centuries," in *Jerozolima w kulturze Europejskiej*, eds. Piotr Paszkewicz, Tadeusz Zadrożny (Warsaw: Instytut Sztuki Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1997), 449–57, 459–65, and 467–80 respectively; Olga Goldberg-Mulkiewicz, "Der Geldsammler von Jerusalem und seine Kulturfunktionen," in *Juden und Armut in Mittel- und Osteuropa*, ed. Stefi Jersch-Wenzel

varied from specific buildings and sites to townscapes and geographic maps. The repertoire included Jewish historical *loci sancti*, graves of biblical personages and famous rabbis, various sites of traditional Jewish veneration and pilgrimage, as well as contemporaneous Jewish architecture in Jerusalem.

The Jewish culture of Moldavia in the 19th and early 20th centuries was to a significant extent shaped by the waves of immigration of Polish and Ukrainian Jews. The Romanian government did not prevent the influx of Jews to the country, but maintained a close-fisted policy concerning granting them civil rights.[3] Most of the Moldavian Orthodox Jews maintained family, religious, and professional ties with their affined communities: they spoke Yiddish, shared the Ashkenazi or Hassidic rite,[4] and followed the tradition of decorating the prayer hall with paintings – including depictions of the Holy Land – that developed in Polish and Ukrainian synagogues from the 18th century on.[5] Almost all these people had never visited the Holy Land.

This article pursues the image of the Holy Land and the paths of a mental journey suggested by the pictorial settings of synagogue interiors in Romanian Moldavia. It is possible to find here the greatest known bulk of fortunately surviving or documented synagogue paintings of the Holy Land;[6] thus an investigation of these artifacts, curious in themselves, may also compensate for the scarce data on this genre in Jewish popular art in other areas.

Center and Periphery

The *Midrashim* [Jewish homiletic legends] relating the Holy Land to the universe as the iris to the eye[7] or the navel to the body,[8] denote a hierarchy of sanctities culminating in the place of invisible God's presence above the Holy Ark in the Holy of the Holies and the Foundation Stone in the most sacred chamber in the Temple in Jerusalem, and consequently reduced in the surrounding circles of Jerusalem and the Holy Land.[9] The postulate of the

(Cologne: Böhlau, 2000), 167–83.

[3] See Carol Iancu, *Jews in Romania, 1866–1919: From Exclusion to Emancipation* (Boulder: Columbia University Press, 1996).

[4] Ibid.; Ezra Mendelsohn, *The Jews of East Central Europe between the World Wars* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), 174–77.

[5] In the non-Orthodox synagogues this artistic tradition was as a rule discontinued.

[6] A few dozens of these synagogues have survived; more synagogues are seen in the photographs taken by the Israeli historian of Jewish art Zussia Efron in 1968–69 and 1971 that are kept in the Center for Jewish Art of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Efron's Romanian diaries and photographs are the subject of my book in progress.

[7] Midrash *Derekh Eretz* 7:38. Talmudic and rabbinical literature is referred to according to the Bar-Ilan University Responsa Project digital database, version 21 (Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University, 2013).

[8] Midrash *Tankhuma* (Solomon Buber edition) pericope *Kedoshim*, 10.

[9] See Catherine Hezser, "The (In)Significance of Jerusalem in the Talmud Yerushalmi," in *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Graeco-Roman Culture*, vol. 2 (*Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum*, 79), ed.

incessant divine presence above the western wall of the destructed Temple[10] reaffirms the supreme holiness of this area throughout the ages. In Jewish religious thought, liturgy, and customs, the entire Holy Land is considered sacred since it has become a venue of biblical history and the land chosen by God for the People of Israel; it continues to be a ritually holy place and messianic refuge for the faithful.[11]

The Jewish liturgy substantiates this concentric concept by demanding of the worshiper praying in the Diaspora to face towards the Holy Land and in the Holy Land towards Jerusalem; those who pray in Jerusalem face towards the Temple Mount; and those who pray at the Temple Mount turn their faces towards the chamber of the Holy of Holies, from which the prayer arises to God' celestial throne.[12] European Jews considered the Holy Land as laying to the east and oriented their synagogues either eastward or, geographically more correctly, southeastward. The *Torah* ark was set in the eastern wall of synagogues and its design often alluded to the Ark of the Covenant and the Temple.

Seemingly a contradiction to this topography, a few of the earliest representations of the urban settings around the Temple are located on the western side of the synagogue interior. They are schematic depictions of Jerusalem with a domed edifice in its midst – obviously, the Temple[13] – painted by Eliezer Sussman of Brody in several synagogues in southern Germany between 1732 and 1742. Iris Fishof related the placement of these views on the western side of synagogues to the kabbalistic reading of the name of Jerusalem as a synonym for the lowest of the ten *sephirot* [stages of divine emanation] that is associated with the west in *Pardes Rimonim* [Orchard of Pomegranates] by Moses ben Jacob Cordovero of Safed (1522–70) printed in Cracow in 1592. Jerusalem and the Temple were reasserted as the first two of eighteenth stations in the heavenly ascent of Jewish prayer in *Seder Sha'ar ha-Shamayim*

Peter Schäfer, Catherine Hezser (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 37–42.

[10] Midrash Exodus *Rabba* 2:2; Numbers *Rabba* 11:2.

[11] See Isaiah M. Gafni, *Land, Center, and Diaspora: Jewish Constructs in Late Antiquity* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997). See also Stefan C. Reif, "Jerusalem in Jewish Liturgy" and David Golinkin, "Jerusalem in Jewish Law and Custom: A Preliminary Typology," *Judaism* 46 (1997): 159–68 and 169–79 respectively.

[12] The Bible postulates, "Pray unto Thee toward their land, which Thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which Thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for Thy name" (1 Kings 8:48). The concept is elucidated in *Tosefta: Berakhot* 3:14–16; see a translation of this text into English and further discussion in Jacob Neusner, *The Halakhah: An Encyclopaedia of the Law of Judaism*, vol. 1: *Between Israel and God*, part A (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 52, 67. On the topos of passage from the center of the world to heaven, see also Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (New York: Harper & Row, 1961), 42–45.

[13] In the synagogue of Horb am Main, dated 1735 (presently exhibited in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem), the Hebrew inscription *Yerushalayim* unequivocally defines the city as Jerusalem, and the letters ב and ה above the domed tower dominating the cityscape probably means בית המקדש (the Temple); see Iris Fishof, "Depictions of Jerusalem by Eliezer Sussman of Brody," *The Israel Museum Journal* 14 (1996): 67–68, 74.

[Order of the Gate of Heaven] published in Amsterdam in 1717 by a follower of Safedian kabbalah, Isaiah Horowitz (ca. 1565–1630).[14]

An infrequent location of an image of Jerusalem on the western wall in Romanian synagogues is found in the wooden Hassidic synagogue (the so-called Ba'al Shem Tov Synagogue) in Piatra-Neamţ.[15] The mural in a *trompe-l'œil* frame, captioned in Hebrew "Jerusalem; The Temple," portrays a cityscape dominated by the Dome of the Rock.[16] The image appears between two doors in the center of the western wall of the synagogue's prayer hall. This well observable section in the only plain, plastered wall in the room was the best practical solution for locating a large painting. Yet, we have no enough evidence to state whether, while making this choice, the anonymous artist or his Hassidic patrons also followed the kabbalistic concept of a more meandering path of prayer that departs the synagogue from the side opposite the Torah ark.

In the Temple-centered world image, the wider circle of sacredness embraces the Holy Land, which in Jewish minds is perceived sacred since it has been chosen by God to serve as a venue of biblical events, as well as the historical home and eschatological refuge for the People of Israel. Over and above the gradual scale of sacredness within its central area, the Jewish centrifugal topography is distinctly dichotomic: even after the destruction of the Temple the entire Holy Land continues to be a ritually sacred realm[17] and the *omphalos mundi*, while its periphery is a profane domain[18] where generations of Jews sojourn in expectation of their return to the Godly promised homeland. To the best of our knowledge, this concept was first elaborated in synagogue art around the years when Eliezer Sussman depicted Jerusalem in German synagogues. A stylized imaginary urban view labeled ירושלים עיר הקודש (the Holy City of Jerusalem) that resembles Sussman's paintings was produced by Hayim ben Isaac Segal of Slutzk in the so-called "Cold" wooden synagogue in Mogilev on the Dnieper in 1740. Unlike Sussman, Segal placed his Jerusalem on the side closer to the Torah ark, in the southeastern section of the cupola, and complemented it with a similar representation of a town inscribed in Yiddish ווירמש (Worms) in the northeastern section.

Rachel Wischnitzer proposed that Hayim Segal derived his subject from the medieval Jewish folklore recorded by a beadle of the synagogue in Worms on

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[14] Ibid., 73–74.

[15] Aristide Streja, Lucian Schwarz, *Sinagoga în România* (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2009), 150–53.

[16] Shalom Sabar, "Messianic Aspirations and Renaissance Urban Ideals: The Image of Jerusalem in the Venice Haggadah, 1609," *Jewish Art* 23/24 (1998): 294–312.

[17] On the halakhic rules that are obligatory for Jews only when they are present in the Holy Land, see "Eretz Israel," *Entziklopediah Talmudit* (Talmudic Encyclopaedia), vol. 2 (Jerusalem: Talmudic Encyclopedia Institute, 1974), 199–234 (Hebrew).

[18] Cf. Eliade, *The Sacred and Profane*, 36–40.

the Rhine, Juspa (Jephthakh Joseph ben Naphtali, ca. 1604–78), in his book *Ma'aseh nissim* [Story of Wonders] in the 1660s,[19] as it might have been known to Segal from either hearsay or earlier publications of Juspa's book.[20] A legend asserts the establishment of the Jewish community of Worms by a group of Judean exiles from the Holy Land after the destruction of the First Temple in Jerusalem, who fled here instead of to Babylon. When the Jews in Babylon were redeemed and resettled in the Holy Land, the Jews of Worms did not leave the Diaspora, arguing that Worms had become their comfortable home and a "lesser Jerusalem." The story concludes: "For these reasons they [the Jews of Worms] were visited by harsh persecution, and other communities were punished because of Worms."[21] The tale treats the town as a twofold symbol: first, it appears to be a kind of European Babylon, an archetypical figure of Jewish exile; secondly, it is a quasi-Jerusalem contesting the holiness of the true Holy City. In his painting, Hayim Segal condemns the inversion of the world's order of holiness by the Jews of Worms by adding before the town walls the figure of a terrifying dragon, which obviously acts as an agent of divine anger punishing the heretics.[22]

The Jerusalem-Worms contraposition in synagogue art is known to us as Hayim Segal's exclusive innovation.[23] Much more frequent in east-European synagogue art were expressions of the antithesis 'Jerusalem versus Babylon' implied by depictions of musical instruments hanging on trees by the rivers of Babylon, as chanted in Psalm 137:1–3, and in the background of some of these images appears a cityscape. An early known specimen of this iconography was produced ca. 1760 in the synagogue of Przedbórz on Pilica in Poland (*Fig. 1*). Rendered in a more volumetric style than Eliezer Sussman's and Hayim Segal's flattened cityscapes, the painting of a city seen through a fence of trees and suspended instruments in the Przedbórz synagogue replicates a similar urban architecture. A hint for the identification of the city seems to be a domed tall building rising high above the skyline that may be associated with Babylon's

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[19] Rachel Wischnitzer, "The Wise Men of Worms," *Reconstructionist* 25/9 (1959): 11–12.

[20] *Ma'aseh nissim* was first printed in Hebrew in Frankfurt on the Oder (1702), and then in Yiddish translation in Amsterdam (1723) and Homburg (1725). See Shlomo Eidelberg, R. *Juspa, Shammash of Warmaisa [Worms]: Jewish Life in 17th Century Worms* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1991), 564–65.

[21] Ibid., 53.

[22] It is most likely that Segal referred to the toponymic legend relating the name of Worms to *lint wurm*, a dragon that threatened the town but was slain by a hero. A Jewish version of this German tale is recorded in Juspa's *Ma'aseh nissim*, see Eidelberg, R. *Juspa*, 82–84; see also Wischnitzer, "The Wise Men of Worms." For further discussion of the topic in folklore and its interpretation by Hayim Segal, see Ilia Rodov, "Dragons: A Symbol of Evil in Synagogue Decoration?" *Ars Judaica* 1 (2005): 68, 84.

[23] The only additional example depicting the town of Worms and its dragon is Segal's ceiling painting from the lost wooden synagogue in Kopys reproduced in Rachel Wischnitzer, "Iskusstvo u evreev v Pol'she i na Litve" (Art of the Jews in Poland and Lithuania), *Istoriya evreyskogo naroda: Istoriya evreev v Rossii* (History of the Jewish People: History of Jews in Russia), vol. 1 (Moscow: Mir, 1914), 393–94 (Russian).

fabulous landmark – the Tower.

A more conventional representation of the Tower of Babylon as a ziggurat-like stepped edifice is seen next to the trees with musical instruments and opposite a town at a riverside in Babylon in a painting in the early-19th century synagogue of Grójec. The town's storeyed buildings, resembling native architecture, reinforce the association of Babylon with Europe. The only known wider view of this side of the synagogue's interior captures one more painted panel placed symmetrically to the picture of Babylon; it seems that the other image depicts an architectural object. Maria and Kazimierz Piechotka reasonably considered it to be the Temple in Jerusalem, but the photograph is too blurred to discern this object clearly.[24]

In early-20th century synagogue paintings, the depictions of musical instruments which the Jews in the Babylonian abstained from playing as a gesture of their mourning for Zion, became a common complement to the images of Jerusalem. In Moldavia, the concept of the Babylonian exile and redemption in the Holy Land was spectacularly implemented by Mendel Grinberg of Iaşi (d. 1928), who decorated dozens of synagogues in the region. On the northern wall in the Grain Merchants' Synagogue in Bacău, he painted the instruments on trees against a sunset and inscribed the panel in Hebrew "Upon the willows in the midst thereof we hanged up our harps" (Psalms 137:2; *Fig. 2*). On the southern side of the hall, he depicted the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem and captioned it, "The Holies [sic!] of Holies with the Foundation Stone" (*Fig. 3*). The two large facing paintings are prominently distinguished among the numerous murals in the prayer hall: the views of Babylonia and the Holy Land appear in the center of a wall and are framed by naturalistically painted theatrical red curtains. This scenery on either side of the synagogue worshippers might evoke in them a sense of existence in transition from the past and present exile to future redemption, from routine to miracle, and from profane to holy.

The emphasis placed on this pair of paintings in the synagogue interior is reinforced by the artist's signature in the top of each of them. Above the local paysage standing for the "rivers of Babylon" Mendel Grinberg advertizes himself in Romanian as a *pictor decorator* and provides the address of his workshop in Iaşi. He uncustomarily spells his family name "Grünberg" (with the u-umlaut as the first vowel), perhaps purporting his reputation as a master of a prestigious foreign, German or Austro-Hungarian mode of decorative

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[24] Maria and Kazimierz Piechotka, *Bramy Nieba: Bóżnice drewniane na ziemiach dawnej Rzeczypospolitej* (Warsaw: Krupski i Spółka, 1996), 206–7 and fig. 310. The paintings in the Grojec synagogue are purportedly attributed to the Jewish painter and architect David Friedlaender, see David Davidovitch, *Omanut ve-omanim be-vatei-kneset shel Polin* (Art and Artists in Polish Synagogues) (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameukhad Pub. House, 1982), 152–61 (Hebrew).

painting.[25] In contrast, the text in Hebrew and Yiddish above the vista of Jerusalem is the dedication of a Jew who devotes his skills to glorifying the place of Godly worship.[26] Now the artist omits his family name, but expands his given name to its full form that is used mainly on ritual and commemorative occasions.[27] Although loosely observing religious laws in his everyday life, when painting in a synagogue he introduced himself by a quotation in Hebrew from Isaiah's prophesy, "the work of my hands, wherein I glory" that implies his association with God's righteous people, who "shall inherit the [Holy] Land for ever" (60:21). The difference between the Romanian and Jewish versions testifies to the duality of Grinberg's self-identity, European and Jewish, and to his dual attitude to art as both livelihood and mission. Thus the artist's signatures personalized the message of the images they embellish.

The point of view at the Holy Land is moved further to the periphery in the early-20th-century painting "Upon the willows…" by an anonymous artist in the Great Synagogue of Iaşi (*Fig. 5*). The trees with musical instruments hanging from their branches near a row of domed buildings represent Babylon. A book with musical notation cast down before the trees demonstrates that the Jews abstained from singing "the Lord's song in a foreign land" (Psalms 137:4), for it is Jerusalem that they set above their "chiefest joy" (Psalms 137:6). A conventional sign for the Temple's site in Jerusalem, the Dome of the Rock is prominently shown in a deeper plane.[28] The painting renders Babylonia as the side from which the Jewish beholder in Romania observes the heart of the Holy Land. The romantic-national perception of the Holy Land as a distant vision seen by the beholder in the Diaspora was well familiar to a wide stratum of Jews through the works by Ephraim Moses Lilien (1874–1925), beginning with his illustration of "Der Jüdische Mai" in 1902.[29]

Focusing on the development of one kind of Holy Land images, the above survey epitomizes as well that despite the peripheral location of Moldavian

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[25] The signature reads, "Mendel Grünberg / Pictor Decorator / Str. Bulevard Ferdinand 21. Iaşi." The spelling of his family name as 'Grinberg' and the definition of his profession in Romanian as 'zugrav pictor' appear in the Romanian section of the bilingual epitaph on the artist's tombstone in the Jewish cemetery in Iaşi.

[26] The Hebrew text reads: מעשה ידי להתפאר / אברהם מענדיל ב"ר שלמה / מיאססי ("The work of my hands, wherein I glory" [Isaiah 60:21] / Abraham Mendel, son of Rabbi Solomon / of Iaşi).

[27] The same given name, אברהם מנחם-מענדיל ר"ב שלמה (Abraham Menachem-Mendel, son of Rabbi Solomon), without his family name, is inscribed on the artist's tombstone, see above, note n. 25.

[28] The painting is based on the lithograph plaque "Remembrance of the Destruction [of the Temple]" printed in the Monsohn Press in Jerusalem in the late 19th century; see *Offerings from Jerusalem: Portrayals of Holy Places by Jewish Artists*, ed. Rachel Sarfati (Jerusalem: The Israel Museum, 2002), 74 fig. 36.

[29] See Haim Finkelstein, "Lilien and Zionism," *Assaph* B 3 (1998): 199–201.

Jewry on the geographic map of the Ashkenazi Diaspora and the lack of evidence about their synagogue art prior to the early 19th century, by the later years of that century Moldavian synagogues had become a lively center of artistic experiments in visual representation of the Holy Land.

From the West to the East and Back

In the late 19th century, relatively cheap printed broadsheets brought to Moldavian Jews representations of the Holy Land as an entity composed of towns, biblical sites, and graves. A colour lithograph showing sacred places of the Holy Land around a view of Jerusalem signed by Saul ben Pinkhas Hornstein of Vienna and dated 1888-89 was displayed in the *bet-midrash* (house of study used also as a synagogue) on Suliţa Road in Botoşani (*Fig. 6*). The origin of East-oriented maps of the biblical Promised Land shown above the Mediterranean Sea is traced back to the late-16th- and early-17th-century Netherlands.[30] A Dutch printed pictorial map dated ca. 1630[31] was reworked for the Hebrew reader in Abraham bar Jacob's edition of the *Passover Haggadah* (Amsterdam, 1695) and reproduced in numerous later reprints.[32] The map delineates the route of the Exodus and its destination – the Promised Land with the tribal allotments of Israel. The cartographer depicted a single or a few grouped buildings to denote inhabited places, covered the land with numerous hills and trees, and mirror-copied a ship in the sea from his Dutch model. This folded inset in the *Haggadah* could facilitate a mental participation of its reader in the legendary journey of the People of Israel.

In the late 1830s, Abraham bar Jacob's map was reworked by Jewish folk painters in the Holy Land into panoramic maps composed of greater images of Jerusalem and Safed shown against strips of cityscapes and countryside. The earliest known work of this type was drawn by Hayim Solomon Luria of Tiberias as an offering to solicit aid for the victims of the 1837 earthquake in Galilee.[33] Numerous later versions were produced in various media in the

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[30] See Kenneth Nebenzahl, *Maps of the Holy Land: Images of Terra Sancta through Two Millennia* (Tel Aviv: Steimatzky, 1986), 72–73; *Holy Land in Maps*, ed. Ariel Tishby (Jerusalem: The Israel Museum, 2001), 92–93, 96–99; Jean-Louis Renteux, *The Holy Land as Seen by Christiaan van Adrichem* (Brussels: BIMCC, 2007).

[31] *Situs Terrae Promissionis S.S. Bibliorum intelligentiam exacte aperiens per Chr. Adrichom* [Christianus Adrichomius, also known as Christiaan van Adrichem; 1533–85] (Amsterdam, ca. 1630). See Eran Laor, Shoshana Klein, *Maps of the Holy Land: Cartobibliography of Printed Maps, 1475–1900* (New York: A.R Liss, 1986), 4.

[32] The engraving is attributed to Moses Wiesel. See Nebenzahl, *Maps of the Holy Land*, 138–39; *Holy Land in Maps*, 122–23.

[33] Haviva Peled, "Shiv'ah omanim" (Seven Artists), in *Omanut ve-umanut be-Erez-Yisrael ba-me'ah ha-19* (Art and Craft in the Land of Israel in the 19th Century), ed. Yona Fischer (Jerusalem: The Israel Museum, 1979), 146–50 (Hebrew); *Sephardi Jews in the Ottoman Empire: Aspects of Material Culture*, ed. Esther Juhasz (Jerusalem: The Israel Museum, 1990), 240–42. See also, Mordechai Eliav, "Edut re'iyah al mora'ot ha-ra'ash bi-Tzefat be-1837" (The 1837 Earthquake in Safed: An Eyewitness Report), *Cathedra* 79 (1996): 53–78 (Hebrew).

Ottoman Empire, Austro-Hungary, Germany, and Poland. Some of them were designed as a *Shiviti*, decorative plaque inscribed with the Hebrew verse "I have set (*shiviti*) the Lord always before me" (Psalms 16:8), usually placed above the cantor's pulpit in synagogues.[34]
A similar map attributed to Hayim Solomon Pinia of Safed (*Fig. 7*)[35] served as a model for the lithographic "Panorama des heiligen Landes" [Panorama of the Holy Land] with inscriptions in German and Hebrew printed by M. Munk in Vienna, 1875. Hayim Solomon copied the location of vestiges of biblical times, but omitted the route of the Exodus, the tribal partition of the land, and some biblical towns that no longer existed in his days. Instead, he added many later settlements, and graves of post-biblical sages and modern rabbis.[36] The expanded range of sacred objects and sites and alignment of the panoramic views to strips were most likely inspired by the rows or columns of patterns depicting or symbolizing the sacred places in illuminated itineraries and single-sheet charts of the Holy Land produced by Jewish scribes and folk artists in Jerusalem and Safed in earlier times.[37]

Munk's "Panorama" was distributed in inexpensive, large lithographic prints (49.7×69.9 cm) on paper or cloth that were obviously used to decorate walls in Jewish middle-class homes, where the beholders could scan the map level by level while consulting the inscriptions, tracing the routes across the Holy Land, and concentrating on its famous places. Although located off center, the image of Jerusalem nevertheless dominates the map due to its scale, unproportionally large in relation to the other towns. The entire center of Jerusalem is occupied by the frontally shown Western Wall. Rising above the Wall, an enormous round tower with a pendentive dome and attached minaret represents the Dome of the Rock labeled "Türkische Moschee" and "Al Charim" (after Arabic Haram al-Sharif, the Noble Sanctuary). The significance of this structure for the Jews is explained in Hebrew: מקום קדש הקדשים [the place of the Holy of Holies] and in German: "An diesem Orte war einst das Allerheiligste des Tempels." Those who ponder the two Hebrew quotations from the Bible running along the map's lower border[38] convert the image of both historic and contemporary Holy Land into a symbol of remembrance of Jerusalem by the Jews in Exile and their hope for messianic Redemption.

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[34] For an example, a copy painted by Moshe Ganbash of Istanbul in 1838-39, see Norman L. Kleeblatt, Vivian B. Mann, *Treasures of the Jewish Museum* (New York: Universe Books, 1986), 128–29.
[35] The person is referred to in a German inscription in the right-hand frame, "Nach Originalzeichnungen von Rabbi Chaim Salomon Pinia aus Zefath."
[36] See Zev Vilnay, "Folk-Art in a Map of the Land of Israel," *Sefunim* 2 (1968): 56–62.
[37] See Rachel Sarfati, "The Illustrations of *Yikhus ha-Avot*: Folk Art from the Holy Land," *Offerings from Jerusalem*, 21–29 (English section), note also 56–59 figs. 25–26 (Hebrew section).
[38] "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I remember thee not; if I set not Jerusalem above my chiefest joy" (Psalms 137:5–6); "Zion shall be redeemed with justice, and they that return of her with righteousness" (Isaiah 1:27).

Another combination of the pictorial representation and topographic mapping of a land was crafted by Yehosef Schwarz (1804–65), a Bavaria-born Jewish cartographer and graphic artist, who in 1833 immigrated to the Holy Land. In 1836/37, Schwarz published his first lithographic panorama, oriented to the east, comprising a view of the Temple Mount and the Western Wall within the greater central panel and – on either side – smaller frames showing sacred places in Jerusalem. The entire layout, resembling an exposition of framed paintings on a wall, invites the beholder to scrutinize the holiest area of Jerusalem, then to complement his or her impression by examining the sacred places in the vicinity and to note an approximate correspondence of the mutual location of the images of sites to their geographic location marked on the map of Jerusalem appearing at the top of the print. Schwarz's work dedicated to "the brethren sitting in the Exile and seeking for Zion and Jerusalem"[39] exemplifies what the pictorial model from the Holy Land underwent in the Diaspora: his tonal lithograph was redesigned in Europe in a simpler linear style. An exemplar of this replica (*Fig. 8*) reached Austrian Galicia and then passed to Romania.[40]

In his lithograph published in the printing house of E. M. Joachim in Vienna in 1888-89 (*Fig. 6*), Saul ben Pinkhas Hornstein had fragmented a panoramic map of the Holy Land into framed pictures, which he incorporated into a *Mizrakh* plaque indicating the direction of prayer in Jewish homes. This function is designated by the Hebrew definition *MiZRaKH* (East) written twice as an initial world and repeated once again as an acrostic *Mi-tzad Ze Ruakh KHayim* (At this side is the spirit of life) in the upper section of the print. Hornstein apparently based his work on the "Panorama des heiligen Landes" published in the same city of Vienna about fourteen years earlier. He reproduced a section of the coastal strip from Sidon on the north to Jaffa on the south within the arcade in the bottom center. In the middle of the plaque, he thoroughly copied the depiction of Jerusalem with its densely built quarters surrounding the Western Wall and the Dome of the Rock and its pendentive dome and minaret, now bearing a flag with the Turkish crescent.

Hornstein's noticeable alterations to his model are, first, the relocation of the caption "Jerusalem" into the center, and, secondly, the addition of another domed building with a minaret at the right side of the Western Wall,

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[39] Avi Sasson, "Beyn 'mizrakh' le-ma'arav: Yerushalayim be-tziurey Rabi Yehosef Shvartz" (Between "East" to West: Jerusalem in the Paintings of Rabi Joseph Schwarz), *New Studies on Jerusalem* 8 (2003): 18 (Hebrew).

[40] An owner's stamp in the bottom left reads, "S. J. Lindenberg, Horodenka." The town, now in Ukraine, was part of Austro-Hungarian Empire until 1918. In 1969, the print was found in the Romanian Jewish art collection of Iţic Kara-Şvarţ (1906–2001) in Iaşi. See Zussia Efron, "Diary," manuscript (1969), s. v. 31 May and film 223, the Center for Jewish Art, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

symmetrical to the Dome of the Rock. As a result, he distinctly accented the holiest area of the Temple Mount and brought the entire map into closer accordance with the concept of the direction of prayer ascending to heaven via the Holy Land, Jerusalem, and the Temple. The quotation from 1 Kings 8:48[41] inscribed within the white banderole just under the image of Jerusalem reiterates this idea; other excerpts from the Bible embedded in the *Mizrakh* bless the worshippers [42] and affirm their historical and spiritual ties to Jerusalem.[43] The sight of a worshipper directing the prayer eastwards while facing the *Mizrakh* thus grasps the earthly destination of the prayer: the picture furnishes a backdrop for a spectacle of an imaginary 'tunnel in space' from the Diaspora to the Holy Land.

Copies, imitations, and releases in various media and at different levels of professional execution were a common way of disperse of printed models in Jewish popular visual culture. Unlike the peculiar image of the Dome of the Rock in the Viennese "Panorama" and *Mizrakh* (*Figs. 6–7*), a faceted building bearing a domed drum and embraced by a square-plan wall, probably a derivative from Yehosef Schwarz's images (*Fig. 8*), stands for this edifice in a version of Hornstein's lithograph in the Suliṭa *bet-midrash* in Botoşani (*Fig. 6*). This and several other alterations, as well as a more naïve rendering of the images, decoration, and script suggest that this print is an imitation of Hornstein's work.[44]

The exchange of images and ideas regarding the representation of the sacred places between the European Diaspora and Jewish settlement in the Holy Land lasted for ages: influenced by even earlier European models, the pictorial maps imported from 19th-century Jerusalem, Safed, or Tiberias were copied in Austro-Hungary, Germany, or Poland. One more turn of copying of the European-made panoramas in the Holy Land for their export to Europe followed the establishment of the Monsohn lithographic printing house in

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[41] See above, note 10.

[42] The Hebrew inscription in the upper arched row above the image of Jerusalem quotes the priestly blessing recited in synagogues in the course of service, "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; The Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace" (Num. 6:24–26).

[43] Psalm 122:2, "Our feet are standing within thy gates, O Jerusalem," is written in Hebrew in the lower arched row above the image of Jerusalem. In the left-hand frame of the lithograph there is verse 6 of ibid., "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; may they prosper that love thee." The right-hand frame contains a quotation from Psalm 137:5, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning."

[44] Inasmuch as the two works may not be attributed to the same hand, the copy from Botoşani is an unlicensed remake of E. M. Joachim's edition. If the supposition is true, the publisher's exhortation in the bottom margin of Hornstein's *Mizrakh*, "Nachdruck verboten," did not have much effect. An anonymous falsifier omitted his own and his publisher's name, but copied Hornstein's original signature in Hebrew, added its translation into German, "S. Hornstein, Wien," and took care to demonstrate that the publication is legal by writing at the right margin, "Alle rechten vorbehalten."

Jerusalem in 1892.[45] For example, the general composition of Hornstein's *Mizrakh* was re-implemented in a lithograph presumably printed in the Holy Land in the 1920s (*Fig. 9*), an exemplar of which was found in the Furriers' Synagogue in Piatra Neamţ (*Fig. 10*).

Expanding the Settings

The experience of observing the images of the sacral places while mentioning them in prayer was obviously so impressive that the patrons of the Suliţa *bet-midrash* in Botoşani and the Furriers' Synagogue in Piatra Neamţ chose to share it with their fellow congregants by mounting *Mizrakh* prints on the cantor's pulpit in the locale traditionally reserved for the *Shiviti* (*Figs. 6 and 10*).[46] Yet, since *Mizrakh* plates and pictorial maps are designed for private use, while their contents are legible enough to anybody approaching the plate hung on a wall or the map spread on a desktop, they are barely discernible by the attendees of synagogue services standing behind the cantor whilst the latter is facing the *Mizrakh* on his pulpit.

For synagogue painters, the panoramic maps and pictorial *Mizrakh* plates were easily available and portable pattern-sheets that were considered as a trustworthy source of what the Holy Land looks like. In late-19th-century Romanian Moldavia, the images of the Holy Land made their way from prints to synagogue walls. Of the numerous wall paintings modeled on prints, only several representative examples are mentioned below due to the limits of space. A mural in the *Khesed shel Emet* [An act of true kindness] Burial Society's Synagogue of Radauţi (*Fig. 11*) accurately quotes the depiction of Jerusalem in the "Panorama des heiligen Landes" (*Fig. 7*). In the corporative synagogues of Jewish tailors and furriers in Piatra Neamţ, the pictures of Hornstein's *Mizrakh* served as the model for the painted wall panels of Jerusalem (*Fig. 6*, the central panel; and *Fig. 11*); Mount Carmel; tombs of Rachel near Bethlehem, Prophet Samuel near Jerusalem, Meir Ba'al Ha-Nes near Tiberias (*Fig. 6*, to the left of the menorah; and *Fig. 13*), and Joseph in Shechem. The painter of the Furriers' synagogue also possessed an imprint of the *Mizrakh* of the 1920s from the Holy Land, from which he copied the "Place of the Temple" (*Fig. 9*, the uppermost panel in the right column; and *Fig. 14*).

By the 1930s, a few dozens places in the Holy Land were depicted in

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[45] Haviva Peled, "Ha-defus ve-iturav" (The Print and Its Ornaments), *Omanut ve-umanut be-Erez-Yisrael ba-meah ha-19*, 208 (Hebrew); *A. L. Monsohn Print, 1892–1992* (Jerusalem: Muzeon khatzer ha-yishuv ha-yashan al shem Isaac Kaplan, 2009).

[46] The Museum of Jewish History in Russia possesses one more imprint of Saul Hornstein's *Mizrakh* converted into a *Shiviti*, with the Hebrew formula "I have set the Lord always before me" (Ps. 16:8) written by hand within the central panel. See *Videt' and pomnit': estetica sakralnogo v evreyskoy vizual'noy culture* (To See and to Remember: Sacral Aesthetics in Jewish Visual Culture) (Moscow: The Museum of the Jewish History in Russia, 2012), 22–23 (Russian).

Moldavian synagogues after the samples that, in addition to the broadsheet maps and ritual plaques, included more kinds of prints of either Jewish or Christian provenance: postcards, photographs, illustrated periodicals, and books. For instance, Mendel Grinberg's "The Holies of Holies with the Foundation Stone" in Bacău (*Fig. 3*) is an enlarged and vividly coloured replica of "Mosque of Omar" (*Fig. 4*), one of the pocket-size chromolithographs (7.5×12 cm each) in the set "Souvenir de Jérusalem" printed by a Christian shop-keeper in the Old City of Jerusalem, Boulos Meo, ca. 1880. Another plate of Meo's set, "The Tower of David,"[47] was reproduced in the Leipziger Temple (also known as the Great Synagogue) in Piatra Neamţ around 1930.

The wall paintings in the Leipziger Temple of Piatra Neamţ (*Fig. 15*) and numerous similarly decorated synagogues elsewhere in Romanian Moldavia turn the prayer hall into a gallery of illusory canvas paintings or pictorial panels. In terms of formal composition, the translation of a network of framed landscapes in *Mizrakh* plates into individual paintings within *trompe-l'œil* frames hung on a rope from a hook in the wall was a further step in the process, commenced by Yehosef Schwarz in Jerusalem and Saul Hornstein in Vienna, of the fragmentation of pictorial maps into separate representations of particular views. Whereas the printed panoramas suit the field of vision of a static bystander, the paintings surrounding the prayer hall demand of their spectator to move in space. The expanded setting of pictorial vistas enriched the feeling of one's sight penetrating from Romania through the Holy Land to the heart of Jerusalem with the impression of travelling across the Land: when looking at the pictures around them on synagogues walls, the worshippers could feel themselves as if making a pilgrimage to the holy places.

"With Eyes toward Zion"

The perception of the Holy Land discussed above as circles of sacred places surrounding Jerusalem fails to explain the earliest known series of landscape murals in the Moldavian synagogues that have survived in the vault of the Great Synagogue of Botoşani.[48] The anonymous artist incorporated the landscapes as well as the symbols of the Zodiac and allegoric animals in two rows of painted panels running along the vault's bottom (*Figs. 16–17*), and depicted one more cityscape, now repainted, on the western wall (*Fig. 18*).[49] The groups of domed buildings and tall turrets among sparse rows of trees

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[47] The 'Tower of David', called also 'Fortress of David', is the citadel near the Jaffa Gate in Jerusalem that has been associated with King David since the Byzantine period. See also the essay of Dana Hercbergs and Chaim Noy published in this issue.

[48] The building is purportedly dated to 1834, see Streja, Schwarz, *Sinagoga în România*, 142–45; Şlomo Leibovici Laiş, *Evreimea botoşăneană: Mini-monografie* (Tel Aviv: Editura Comitetului pentru activitate culturală iudaică al evreilor originari din România, 2005), 189.

[49] This panel was repainted in 1971. The new painting approximately follows the outline and colours of the original one.

lining the skyline and sloped hills reiterating in these landscapes are inspired by M. Munk's edition of "Panorama des heiligen Landes" (*Fig. 7*). For example, a panel at the southern section of the vault's western side (*Fig. 16*) copies the view of Bethlehem shown to the right of Jerusalem in the "Panorama" while the panel next to "Bethlehem" in the synagogue vault duplicates the Mount of Zion appearing above Bethlehem in the map. The rest of the landscapes in the Botoşani synagogue are modeled more or less precisely after other details of the "Panorama". Consequently, the year of publication of this map, 1875, provides the *terminus a quo* for the synagogue paintings.

When comprehending these landscapes in the context of synagogue liturgy, the congregation might readily associate the seemingly oriental architecture with the Holy Land. However, they could barely recognize any featured religious, historical, or geographic objects and sites, all but one of which bear no inscription. The only caption under a landscape in the vault – כפר ביריט [village of Biryat] (*Fig. 17*) – corresponds to no place known to us in the Holy Land, but is almost identical with of the name כפר ביריא [village of Birya] in the "Panorama" (*Fig. 7*, the leftmost inscription in the first strip from top in the upper left section). The synagogue painter probably confused the letter א (aleph) at the end of "Birya" written on the map in the so-called Rashi script with the square-script ט (tet) like that he drew at the end of "Biryat". A group of buildings and trees, and a hill that represents Birya in the panoramic map could serve as a model for the image of "Biryat" in the synagogue painting. A few legendary graves[50] in the vicinity of Birya near Safed, once home to Jewish sages and in the 19th century a small Arab village,[51] were the object of Jewish pilgrimage; but with the exception of Botoşani, Birya does not appear in synagogue decoration.

An assumed reading of כפר ביריט (village of Biryat) as misspelled בירות (Beirut)[52] seems to be unconvincing for the city of Beirut would scarcely be defined 'village'. The synagogue painter would have seen the proper spelling of the title "Beirut" in Hebrew and German far down of "Village of Birya" in "Panorama des heiligen Landes," above a dense front of storeyed towers with

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[50] The tombs marked in the "Panorama des heiligen Landes" (*Fig. 7*) next to Birya are related to Benaiah son of Jehoiada, a heroic warrior of King David (2 Sam. 23:20; 1 Chron. 27:6; Babylonian Talmud, *Gittin* 68a); and two Talmudic sages, Abba Saul and Rav Pappa.

[51] A Jewish settlement in Birya is mentioned in the Babylon Talmud (*Eruvin* 55b). A noted Jewish scholar and bibliophile in 18th-century Jerusalem, Rabbi Hayim Joseph David Azulai (1724–1806), reported that Joseph ben Ephraim Karo (1488–1575) of Safed completed his *Shulkhan Arukh* in this village in 1554/55, see Hayim Azulai, *Shem ha-gedolim* (The Name of the Great Ones), vol. 1 (Livorno, 1774), 72r (Hebrew). See also Abraham David, *To Come to the Land: Immigration and Settlement in 16th-Century Eretz-Israel* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1999), 28–29. On Birya in the 19th century, see Claude Reignier Conder et al., *The Survey of Western Palestine: Memoirs of the Topography, Orography, Hydrography, and Archaeology*, vol. 1, *Galilee* (London: Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund, 1881), 196.

[52] Efron, "Diary," s. v. 12 July 1968.

low cupolas, fenestrated houses, turrets, and flags waving on poles (*Fig. 7*, the lower left corner). A similar view appeared in the Botoşani synagogue in the only cityscape painted on the wall (*Fig. 17*). In spite of our expectations to meet Jerusalem in such a prominent location, this image has little in common with the traditional representations of the Holy City focusing on the Western Wall and the Dome of the Rock. The depiction of Beirut had its precedents in Jewish maps and panoramas. It was introduced there by Galilean Jewish cartographers[53] and had survived in this art long after it was painted in Botoşani: Beirut is even defined in Hebrew as "the Holy City" in the *Mizrakh* from Jerusalem dated to the 1920s (*Fig. 9*); yet, no image of Beirut is known to us in the other synagogues.

In seems that the peculiar emphasis on Birya and Beirut as well as representation of the rest of the cityscapes as generic in the Great Synagogue of Botoşani reflect the changes in the Jewish perception of the Holy Land during the second half of the 19th century.[54] In mid-century, Israel Joseph Benjamin of Fălticeni (1818–64), who set out in the wake of medieval Jewish travellers to find the lost Ten Tribes of Israel,[55] came back from the Holy Land with considerations regarding the development of its agricultural colonization.[56] Such dreams yielded the first attempts of Jewish emigration from Romania to the Holy Land in the 1870s. In the early 1880s, the ties between the Jews in Romania and Jewish communities in Galilee strengthened due to the visit in Romania of a charismatic champion of Jewish agrarian labour and founder of the Holy Land Settlement Society in Safed, Eliezer Rokah (1854–1914). He propagated for immigration to Palestine in Romanian Jewish communities and disseminated his ideas through Hebrew and Yiddish periodicals in Romania and far beyond. The Holy Land Settlement associations and Hovevei Zion societies in Romania, including branches in Bacău, Botoşani, Iaşi, and Piatra Neamţ, were fertile soil for the speedy spread of political Zionism that followed the publication of Theodor Herzl's *Der Judenstaat* in 1896 and a translation of the book into Romanian later in the same year.[57]

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[53] See above, note 33. The city of Beirut is absent in the map of the Biblical Land in the Amsterdam *Haggadah*, where the northernmost settlement along the coast is Sidon, see above, note 32.

[54] See Ehud Luz, *Parallels Meet: Religion and Nationalism in the Early Zionist Movement, 1882–1904* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1988).

[55] On the intensive efforts stemming from the messianic awakening to locate the Ten Tribes in the first half of the 19th century, see Arie Morgenstern, *Hastening Redemption* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 102–10.

[56] Israel-Joseph Benjamin II, *Cinq année de voyages en Orient, 1846–1851* (Paris: Michel Levy frères, 1856), 26. The author adopted his pen name, Benjamin the Second, in allusion to famous Jewish traveller Benjamin of Tudela (1130–73).

[57] On the Hibat Zion (literally, love of Zion), Hovevei Zion (lovers of Zion), and Zionist movements in Romania, see Israel Klausner, *Khibat Tzion be-Romaniah* (*Hibat Zion* in Romania) (Jerusalem, 1958) (Hebrew); see also Carol Iancu, "The Zionist Movement in Nineteenth-century Romania," in *The History of the Jews in Romania*, vol. 2, *The Nineteenth Century*, eds. Liviu

The emphasis on the village of Birya in the paintings of the Botoşani synagogue could make sense in the context of Jewish national revival in the Holy Land. Supported by the Holy Land Settlement associations in their native towns, immigrants from Romania took an active part in the establishment of new Jewish settlements in the Holy Land and especially in Galilee during the 1880s and early 1890s.[58] As far as we may speculate over the scant historical evidence on these issues, the image of Birya in the synagogue of Botoşani could have commemorated some engagement of its congregation in a project of the Jewish colony in Birya around 1895, when a parcel of land was purchased there, most likely with assistance of Baron Edmond de Rothschild (1845–1934).[59] The reason for a prominent display of the painting of Beirut on the synagogue wall might have been the role of this city as a principal hub connecting Romania and Galilee and headquarters for Jewish colonization activities.[60]

The neglect of sacred places in the wall and ceiling paintings of the Holy Land in the Botoşani synagogue had its parallel in the emergence of pragmatic overtones in the romantic religious discourse pertaining to the gathering of the dispersed people of Israel in their ancestral homeland. A group of Romanian Jews, who sought to establish an agricultural colony in the Holy Land in 1873, proclaimed that their aim was "to settle, cultivate, and preserve" the "land of the forefathers" where they would be able "to serve God freely, without harassment". They foretold their immediate future in the eschatological terms of the resurrection of dry bones prophesied by Ezekiel (37:1–14). The tone turned to practical when they inquired about the land, which they planned to purchase for their settlement: "What is the country like: mountains and hills or rather plains; whether or not are there streams of water?"[61] In contrast to the travelers for whom the country was a mere substance that fills in the gaps between the places of pilgrimage, the settlers transferred the focus from monuments onto the terrain to which they were going to entrust their lives and

Rotman, Carol Iancu (Tel Aviv: Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Center, 2005), 259–81.

[58] See Klausner, *Khibat Tzion*; Iancu, "The Zionist Movement," 272–73.

[59] The British Court of Appeal in Jerusalem endorsed the rights of the Palestine Jewish Colonization Association to 400 dunams of land in Birya, basing the decision in 1946 on a Turkish registration dated 1895. See "Birya Land Case," *The Palestine Post*, 17 March 1946, p. 2. Edmond de Rothschild transferred the title of his colonies in the Holy Land to the Jewish Colonization Association in 1899, which was reorganized as the Palestine Jewish Colonization Association in 1924. See Theodore Norman, *An Outstretched Arm: A History of the Jewish Colonization Association* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985), 54–62, 152–53.

[60] Tomer Levi, *The Jews of Beirut: The Rise of a Levantine Community, 1860s–1930s* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2012), 132–38.

[61] The Hebrew text of a letter of one hundred Jewish families of Nicoreşti to Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Kalischer (1795–1874) was published in *Ha-Magid*, 21 May 1873, p. 6. For more information about this initiative and an English translation of several excerpts from the letter, see *Iancu, "The Zionist Movement*," 262–63.

prosperity. The blue sky over green hills, high trees, white buildings with red roofs, and no grave depicted in the synagogue paintings in Botoşani created an idyllic view of the Holy Land which was able to encourage the congregants pondering its colonization.

Desacralization of the Holy Land in the undefined landscapes of the Botoşani Great Synagogue has remained a unique local experiment: as a rule, the representations of the Holy Land in Moldavian synagogue art conveyed well recognizable and clearly captioned views of the places of religious veneration. The integration of the religious topography in the mainstream Zionist rhetoric is epitomized by Naphtali Herz Imber's (1856–1909) *Hatikvah* [The Hope]. The poem first drafted in Romania ca. 1877 as *Tikvatenu* [Our Hope] became the anthem of Hovevei Zion and then of the Zionist movement.[62] Imber enchants a sight of a Jew in exile, who gazes through tears towards "the borders of the East"[63] and envisions the Holy Land. The poem guides the eye over the mirages of holy places, sacred graves, and fabulous natural landmarks, which list comprises Zion, Jerusalem (also called the "height where David dwelt"), the Holy City's gate, Western Wall, place of the Temple's "sacred ruin," "fathers' graves," as well as the Jordan River and the Sea of Galilee.

The selection of holy places in Imber's poetic itinerary echoed the earlier Jewish panoramic maps and anticipated the extended visions of the Holy Land in the Moldavian synagogue art of the first third of the 20th century. The painters pictured the principal holy places in Jerusalem: the Dome of the Rock marking the location of the Holy of Holies (for example, *Figs. 3, 11–12, 14*) and the Western Wall (for example, *Figs. 23–24*). In many synagogues the repertoire was expanded by the views of "Fortress of David,"[64] "Zion, That Is the City of David,"[65] and "Graves of Kings of King David's Dynasty in the

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[62] First published in Imber's book of lyrics *Barkai* (Jerusalem: M. Meyuhas Press, 1886), the nine-stanza poem was amended and adopted as an anthem first by the Hovevei Zion, then by the Zionist movement, and later by the State of Israel. See Menashe Ravina, *Ha-tikvah: mekoro shel ha-himnon, toldotav u-tekhunotav be-hashva'ah le-himnonim shel umot akherot (Ha-tikvah*: Origin, History and Comparative Analysis of the Jewish National Anthem) (Tel Aviv: Menashe Ravina, 1968) (Hebrew); Shalom Goldman, *Zeal for Zion: Christians, Jews, and the Idea of the Promised Land* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 60. On the implications of *Hatikvah* in the Zionist discourse, see Michael Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry before the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 21–22.

[63] The English quotes from the poem are from Nina Salaman's translation (1921) reprinted in *Master of Hope: Selected Writings of Naphtali Herz Imber*, ed. Jacob Kabakoff (London: Associated University Presses, 1985), 332–34.

[64] For example, the "Fortress of David" in the vestibule of the Ba'al Shem Tov Synagogue and the "Tower of David" in the prayer hall of the Leipziger Temple in Piatra Neamț (both in situ). See also above, note 47.

[65] In Moshke's Synagogue in the town of Roman, see the collection of photographs by Zussia Efron, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the Center for Jewish Art (hereafter: Efron, CJA), film 183.

Holy City of Zion"[66] as well as the "Wall of Jerusalem" (a city wall, not the Western Wall!),[67] "Golden Gate,"[68] and "Damascus Gate."[69] Attendees of Moldavian synagogues observed views of places all across the Holy Land: the cities of Safed, Tiberias at the Sea of Galilee,[70] Jericho,[71] and Hebron;[72] the Jordan River;[73] and the mounts of Carmel,[74] Tabor, and Hermon.[75]

Landscapes became a non-figurative charade of biblical narrations that connected their heroes to particular locales in the Holy Land. In Moshke's Synagogue in the town of Roman, a wall painting of a great tree in the midst of a fenced yard is entitled "*Eshel* Abraham."[76] The Bible uses the word *eshel*, a Hebrew term for tamarisk, for the tree planted by Abraham in Beer Sheba (Gen. 21:33). Jewish folklore identified this plant with the tree under which Abraham entertained the three angels (Gen. 18:1–4). An old oak at the Oaks at Mamre near Hebron (Gen. 13:18) was believed to be Abraham's tree still living.[77] In the Passementerie Merchants' Synagogue in Iaşi, an image of a few houses among flourishing trees illustrates "Leah's Tent" near the tents of heroes of the episode of stolen idols in the camp of Laban at Mount Gilboa in

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[66] For example, in the Grain Merchants' Synagogue of Bacău (in situ), and the Great and Tailors' synagogues in Buhuşi (Efron, CJA, films 92 and 22 respectively). This view was shown earlier in Hornstein's *Mizrakh* (*Fig. 6*, to the right of the menorah).

[67] Nicolina Synagogue, Iaşi, (Efron, CJA, film 144).

[68] For example, in the Grain Merchants' Synagogue of Bacău and the Ba'al Shem Tov Synagogue in Piatra Neamţ (both in situ), and the Great and Tailors' synagogues in Buhuşi (Efron, CJA, films 92 and 22 respectively).

[69] For example, the Ba'al Shem Tov Synagogue (vestibule) and Leipziger Temple in Piatra Neamţ (both *in situ*).

[70] For example, Safed and Tiberias were painted on walls of the Tailors' Synagogue in Buhuşi (Efron, CJA, film 90).

[71] For example, a copy of "Jericho the City of Date-Palms" from the "Panorama des heiligen Landes" (*Fig. 7*, at the upper right corner, in the third row from the top) in Moshke's Synagogue in the town of Roman (Efron, CJA, film 183).

[72] For example, in the Great and Tailors' synagogues in Buhuşi (Efron, CJA, films 92 and 22 respectively), Nicolina Synagogue, Iaşi, (ibid., film 144), and Furriers' Synagogue in Piatra Neamţ (ibid., film 166).

[73] For example, in the Great Synagogue of Buhuşi (Efron, CJA, film 93).

[74] For example, the painting "Mount Carmel" in the Tailors' Synagogue of Piatra Neamţ (Efron, CJA, film 156) that duplicates "The Holy City of Haifa: Mount Carmel" in Hornstein's *Mizrakh* (*Fig. 6*, the third frame from the left in the bottom row).

[75] Both Tabor and Hermon are depicted in the same medallion on the ceiling of Moshke's Synagogue in Roman (Efron, CJA, film 184).

[76] Efron, Efron, CJA, film 139. One more image of "*Eshel* Abraham," with three birds symbolizing angels that fly above a table at an apple-tree was painted in the 1920s or 1930s in the *Beit Tfilah Benyamin* Synagogue in Chernovtsy, the town that from 1918 to 1940 was part of Romania. See Boris Khaimovich, *"The Work of Our Hands to Glorify": Murals of Beit Tfilah Benyamin Synagogue in Chernovits: Visual Language of Jewish Artist*[s] (Kyiv: Duh i Litera, 2008), 75–78, fig. A35 (English and Russian).

[77] Zev Vilnay, *Agadot Eretz Yisrael: agadot, mesorot, memarot kedumot ve-khadashot* (Legends of the Land of Israel: Old and New Legends, Traditions, and Narratives) (Jerusalem: Kiryat Sefer, 1959), 184.

the Bible (Gen. 31:33).[78]

The *Hatikvah* poses the pilgrimage to the sacred graves as a ritual proving the Jewish attachment to the Holy Land: "And tens of thousands of our people go / To find the fathers' graves again."[79] Similarly, the synagogue art largely showed the sepulchral monuments as an integral component of the gallery of Holy Land views. In addition to the tombs of Rachel, Joseph, King David and his royal successors, Prophet Samuel, and Rabbi Meir Ba'al Ha-Nes (*Fig. 13*) mentioned above, there were also the "Cave of Makhpelah" with its tombs of biblical patriarchs in Hebron;[80] the monuments related to Absalom, son of King David and Zechariah in the Kidron Valley;[81] the burial place of Simeon (Shimon) the Just at Mount Scopus in Jerusalem;[82] and the grave of Rabbi Shimon bar Yokhai in Meron near Safed.[83]

The visions of Jewish historical heritage were complemented with the images of two synagogues in the Old City of Jerusalem, the establishment of which symbolized a renascence of Jewish spiritual life in the Holy Land. One of them, the Hurvah Synagogue [after the Hebrew *khurvah*: ruin], also known as the synagogue of Rabbi Judah he-Hasid, was founded in the early 18th century, destroyed by Muslims a few years later, and rebuilt from the ruins in 1864 by the Perushim, followers of the Gaon of Vilna (Elijah ben Shlomo Zalman Kremer, 1720–97).[84] The Perushim, who emigrated to the Holy Land in the early 19th century, approached the reconstruction of the Hurvah as an act heralding the rebuilding of the ruins of Jerusalem, restoration of the Temple, and messianic Redemption.[85] Another synagogue, Tiferet Israel [after the Hebrew *tif'eret Yisrael*: glory of Israel], was inaugurated in 1872 by the Jerusalemite Hassidim.[86] The large domes on paneled drums atop the Hurvah

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[78] Efron, CJA, film 139.

[79] See above, note 63.

[80] See above, note 72.

[81] For example, in the Great Synagogues in Buhuşi (Efron, CJA, film 93), Passementerie Merchants' Synagogue in Iaşi (ibid., film 139), and Furriers' Synagogue in Piatra Neamţ (ibid., film 166). Jewish legends identify the monuments as tombs of Absalom, son of King David (2 Samuel 18:18) and Zechariah and the priest Zechariah son of Jehoiada (2 Chronicles 24:20–21); see Zev Vilnay, *Madrikh Erez-Yisrael* (Guide to the Land of Israel) (Jerusalem: Steimatzky Publishing Company, 1935), 37–38 (Hebrew).

[82] For example, in the Great Synagogue in Buhuşi (Efron, CJA, films 92–93), Tailors' Synagogue in Roman (ibid., film 182), Passementerie Merchants' Synagogue in Iaşi (ibid., film 139), and Leipziger Temple in Piatra Neamţ (both in situ). Simeon the Just was a Jewish High Priest during the period of the Second Temple in Jerusalem.

[83] For example, in the Great and Synagogue in Buhuşi (Efron, CJA, films 92–93) and Grain Merchants' Synagogue of Bacău (in situ).

[84] Morgenstern, *Hastening Redemption*, 111–13, 115.

[85] On the history of the building, see *Ha-Khurvah: Shesh me'ot shanim shel hityashvut yehudit b-Yirushalayim* (The Hurvah: Six Hundred Years of Jewish Settlement in Jerusalem), ed. Reuven Gafni, Arieh Morgenstern, David Cassuto (Jerusalem: Yad Ben-Zvi, 2010) (Hebrew).

[86] See Galia Gavish, Simon Ivgy-Shinhav, Zahava Nussboim, *Beyn khurvah le-tif'eret: "Khurvat rabi*

and Tiferet Israel synagogues in the Jewish Quarter were reminiscent of the Dome of the Rock. The synagogues' high domes contesting the Dome on the Temple Mount and the Holy Sepulchre in the Christian Quarter in the skyline of the Old City also implied that the Jews were reclaiming their primogeniture in the City of God.

The images of the Hurvah and Tiferet Israel reiterated in Jewish prints, stamps, offerings and souvenirs from Jerusalem became symbols of the city's Ashkenazi traditionalist and Hassidic communities.[87] Despite the caption that refers only to the "Hurvah of Rabbi Judah he-Hasid," a view of both synagogues is shown in the *Mizrakh* from Jerusalem (*Fig. 9*, the second frame from the top in the rightmost column).[88] The juxtaposition of this picture and the view of the "Place of the Temple" marked by the Dome of the Rock that is seen just above evokes contemplations on these synagogues as precursors of the Messianic Temple. This very cityscape from the *Mizrakh*, with its two synagogues and the same Hebrew inscription mentioning the "Hurvah of Rabbi Judah he-Hasid," was painted on a wall of the Furriers' Synagogue in Piatra Neamṭ (*Fig. 19*). Tiferet Israel was depicted alone, without the Hurvah, in Moshke's Synagogue, presumably a Hassidic one, in Roman.[89]

The designation of architectural testimonies to the Jewish spiritual resurrection of the Land of Israel in Moldavian synagogue paintings embraced the projects of cultural Zionism. Envisaged by Romanian Jews in the 1870s as a "temple for wisdom and education"[90] and dubbed by Zionists "the crown of our cultural work" in the 1910s,[91] the Hebrew University in Jerusalem appeared in a wall painting in the Tailors' Synagogue of Piatra Neamṭ in the shape of a great central-plan domed building surmounting a hill (*Fig. 20*). The image closely resembles Frank Mears' painting for Patrick Geddes' unrealized project (begun in 1919) of the Hebrew University's main hall.[92] A painter from Piatra

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Yehudah he-Khasid" ve-"Tif'eret Yisrael" al shem Nisan Bek, shney batey ha-kneset ha-mefo'arim be-rova ha-yehudi b-Yirushalayim, (Between Ruin and Glory: The "Hurvah of Rabbi Judah he-Hasid" and "Tiferet Israel" named after Nissan Beck, Two Splendid Synagogues in the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem) (Jerusalem: The Isaac Kaplan Old Yishuv Court Museum, 2000) (Hebrew).

[87] Shalom Sabar, "Mi-Veit ha-Mikdash le-veit ha-kneset 'ha-Khurvah': tahalikhei ha-ikonizatziyah shel mivneh 'ha-Khurvah' be-omanut ha-yehudit ha-amamit shel hayishuv ha-yashan" (From the Temple to the 'Hurvah' Synagogue: Processes of the Iconization of the 'Hurvah' Building in the Jewish Folk Art of the Old [Jewish] Settlement), *Ha-Khurvah*, 111–32 (Hebrew).

[88] The domed building in the upper center depicts Tiferet Israel, while the greater domed edifice to the right of it is the Hurvah Synagogue.

[89] Films 166 and 183 respectively.

[90] See Klausner, *Khibat Tzion be-Romaniah*, 23.

[91] The speech of Zionist leader Menachem Ussischkin (1863–1941) at the Eleventh Zionist Congress (1913), quoted here after Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture*, 111.

[92] Mordechai Shapiro, "Ha-universitah ve-ha-ir: Patrick Geddes ve-tokhnit ha-av ha-rishonah la-Universitah ha-Ivrit" (The University and the City: Patrick Geddes and the First Master-Plan of the Hebrew University), in *Toldot ha-Universitah ha-Ivrit b-Yirushalayim: shorashim ve-hatkhalot*

Neamț had probably seen Mears' painting in its simplified graphic copy (*Fig. 21*) on the cover of a booklet of postcards showing the building process of the University that was published by the Jewish National Fund in Warsaw in 1925, the year of the University's inauguration. The apparent similarity of Geddes' central-plan domed hall to the Dome of the Rock[93] expressed his vision of two urban foci: the center of knowledge and enlightenment of New Jerusalem on Mount Scopus vis-à-vis the Old City's sacred core on the Temple Mount. In doing so, Geddes shared the Zionist *topos* of the Temple in Jerusalem being rebuilt for intellectual and educative rather than ceremonial purposes.[94]

Assumingly, the dichotomy of secular and religious made a lesser effect on the minds of synagogue attendees in Romania, for whom the Temple-like Hebrew University would have been another marvel of contemporary redemption of the Holy Land. The same anonymous artist who depicted the Hebrew University in the Tailors' synagogue also duplicated a postcard from Jerusalem with an image of the "Bezalel Sales Pavilion"[95] in the Leipziger Temple in the same town of Piatra Neamț (*Fig. 22*).[96] We may guess that a view of the gallery established by the Jewish academy of arts at the foot of David's Tower evoked in the synagogue painter an amalgam of historical allusions, national inspiration, and professional pride.

The integration of secular buildings into the gallery of holy places served the

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(The History of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem: Origins and Beginnings), eds. Saul Katz, Michael Heyd (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1997), 222–25, 241, fig. 6 (Hebrew); Diana Dolev, "Architectural Orientalism in the Hebrew University: The Patrick Geddes and Frank Mears Master-Plan," *Assaf* 3 (1988): 217–34.

[93] On Geddes' symbolism of domes in Jerusalem and his discussion of the University's domed hall, the Dome of the Rock, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and two domed synagogues in the Old City (obviously the Hurvah and Tiferet Israel) see Shapiro, "Ha-universitah ve-ha-ir," 218–23; Dolev, "Architectural Orientalism," 224.

[94] The "temple of culture and knowledge," "new Temple," "little sanctuary" (Ezek. 11:16; a traditional Jewish term for synagogues) and the like were common epithets for the Hebrew University, the Bezalel School of Art and Crafts, and the Hebrew Gymnasium (later Herzliya Gymnasium) whose building erected in 1909 in Tel Aviv was inspired by reconstructions of Solomon's Temple. See Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture*, 111–15; Jess Olson, " 'Jerusalem Rebuilt:' The Temple in the Fin-de-siècle Zionist Imagination," in *The Temple of Jerusalem: From Moses to the Messiah : In Honor of Professor Louis H. Feldman*, ed. Steven Fine (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 329–48. Note also Shapiro, "Ha-universitah ve-ha-ir," 201–7; Sergey R. Kravtsov, "Reconstruction of the Temple by Charles Chipiez and Its Application in Architecture," *Ars Judaica* 4 (2008): 36–42.

[95] The shop and gallery for the artistic production of the Bezalel Academy stood outside the Jaffa Gate of Jerusalem from 1912 to 1918. Jacob Ben Dov's photograph of the pavilion was published on a postcard inscribed: "No. 11: Bezalel – Verkaufspavillon / הסחורות למכירת ביתן [Pavilion for the sales of goods]." See a reproduction in *Bezalel 100*, vol. 1: *1906–1929*, ed. David Tartakover, Gideon Ofrat (Jerusalem: Bezalel, 2006), 82.

[96] Our attribution of both paintings to the same hand is based on the identical rendering of the *trompe-l'œil* frames and an akin style of the images. In turn, the "Bezalel Pavilion" from the Leipziger Temple was copied by another painter in the neighboring Ba'al Shem Tov Synagogue.

function of Romanian synagogues as a stage for Zionist propaganda. The strong emotional effect of Zionist speeches in synagogues of interwar Moldavia triggered the plot of the unfinished novel *Meletie Jidovul* [Meletie the Yid] by a Botoşani-born Jewish-Romanian writer, Enric Furtună (1881–1964). The protagonist of the novel, a son of synagogue cantor Meleh Rabinovici from Iaşi, converted to Christianity and adopted a Romanian name, Meletie Popescu, for the sake of his successful carrier as an advocate. Happening to be in a synagogue in his native town when an elated crowd of Jews was hearkening to a Zionist propagandist, Meletie, still called offensively *jidovul* [Yid], experiences a catharsis causing his spiritual transfiguration: his deep compassion to the brethren captured by the idea of national redemption causes him to return to the fold of Judaism.[97] The painted decoration was both an extension and catalyst of similar coalescing religious sentiment and national enthusiasm. The kaleidoscope of historical sacred places and modern Zionist achievements displayed in synagogues would have turned such propagandist performances into showy travelogues.

Conclusion. Jerusalem of Romania

The views of the Holy Land in the synagogues of Romanian Moldavia originated in the prints, souvenirs, and ephemera that were, either truly or reputedly, physical messengers from the distant places they depicted[98] and thus would have been accepted as reliable eyewitnesses. The reoccurrence of the same images in various media available to Romanian Jews not only reinforced the viewers' sense of the reliability of the depictions of holy places, but also – using Walter Benjamin's definition – was able "to bring things 'closer' spatially and humanly" and thus to overcome "the uniqueness of every reality by accepting its reproduction."[99] The process of assimilation of the remote reality in Moldavian synagogues becomes better discernible when the artists had to expand their paintings of holy places to the areas that lay beyond what they could consult in their samples.

A work of the kind is found in an auxiliary prayer hall in the vestibule of the Ba'al Shem Tov Synagogue in Piatra Neamţ (*Fig. 23*). The painter reproduced an iconic image of the Western Wall receding in perspective towards a frontally shown wall of the adjacent building. Such views from a sharp angle were preferred in the realistic depictions and photographs of the Western Wall as long as the dwellings of the Moroccan Quarter bordered the narrow plaza in

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[97] See A. B. Yoffe, *Be-sadot zarim: sofrim yehudim be-Romania*, 1880–1940 (In Foreign Pastures: Jewish Writers in Romania, 1880–1940) (Tel-Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1996), 164–65 (Hebrew).

[98] On this function of such prints, see Galit Hasan-Rokem, "Jews as Postcards, or Postcards as Jews: Mobility in a Modern Genre," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 99/4 (2009): 511.

[99] Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," idem, *Illuminations* (London: Fontana/Collins, 1968), 225.

front of the Wall and blocked the frontal sight of the Western Wall of the kind widespread in Jewish popular art (for example, *Figs. 7, 11–12*). In the Ba'al Shem Tov Synagogue, the depiction of the Western Wall in perspective took up only half of the wide panel allotted to the painting in the synagogue. The artist filled in the extra space with a green meadow trimmed by lush trees common in his native land but alien around the Temple Mount.

A painter in the *Kontzelekhe* (Yiddish: Consul's Wife's) Synagogue in Iaşi obviously saw both frontal and perspective views of the Western Wall, but most probably drew his version (*Fig. 24*) from memory rather than copied directly from a sample. He misidentified the house in the depth of the plaza as the Western Wall and misinterpreted the Western Wall seen in foreshortening as a mere fence. The painting shows a few Jewish supplicants praying at the Western Wall, while some others walk in a garden around the Wall's corner. The artist's certitude that the Western Wall is a separate monument stems most likely from his belief that the sacred remnant of the Temple may not be just a section of any larger structure. The naturalization of the Western Wall in the place resembling a boulevard in a Romanian town was scarcely done in order to undermine the contraposition of the Diaspora to the Holy Land, but rather appropriated the exotic object into domestic reality.

The repetitive, naïve art in Romanian synagogues constructed a variety of complex visual settings prompting a mental journey of their attendees in the never-seen land that was for them a frequent mention in prayer, the *omphalos mundi* and national hope, but nevertheless strange and exotic.

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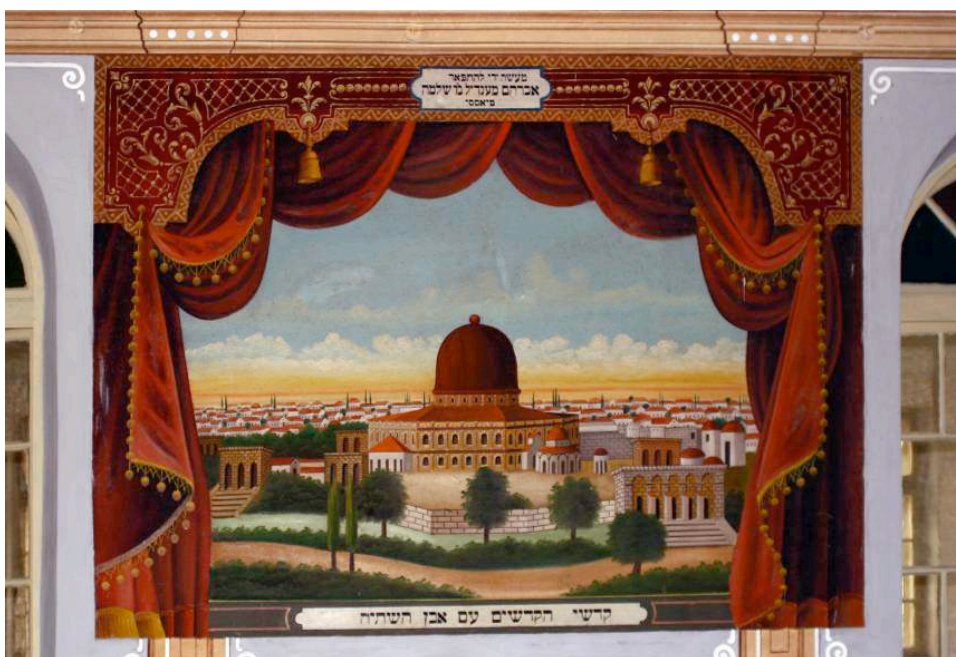
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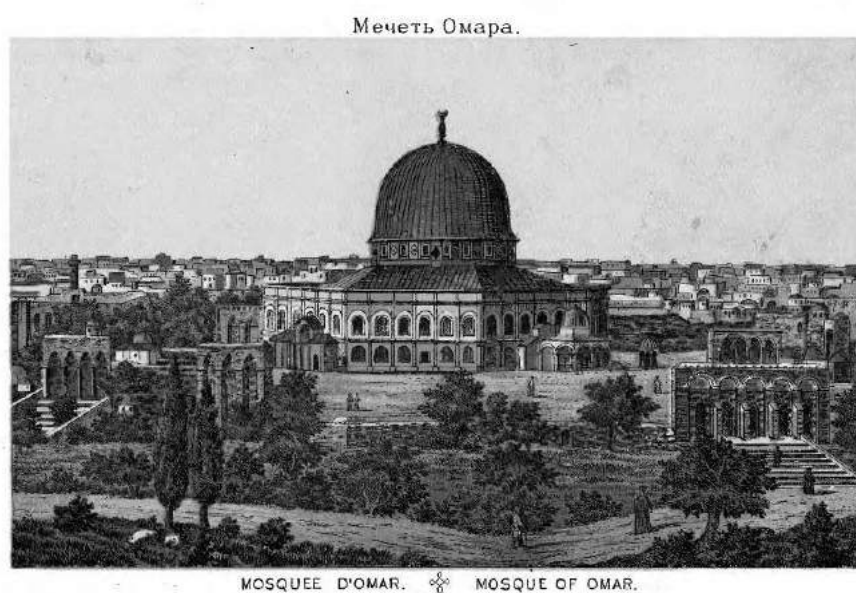
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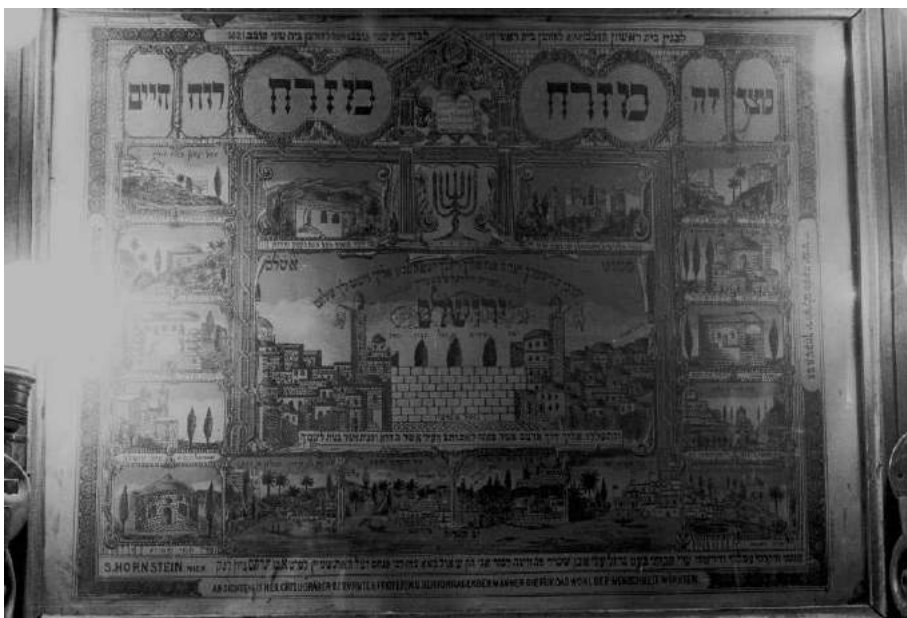

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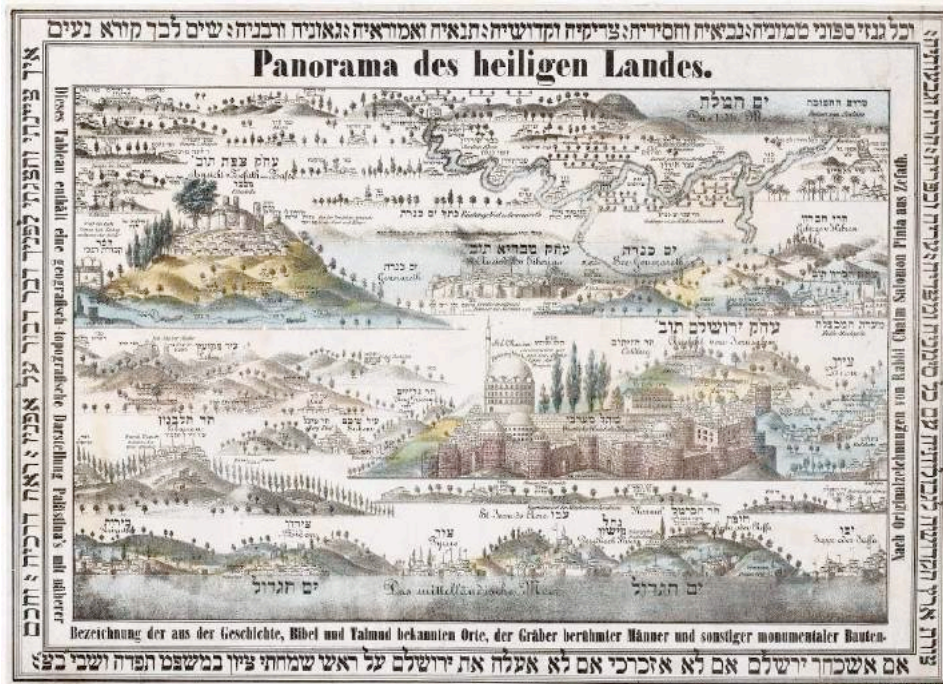
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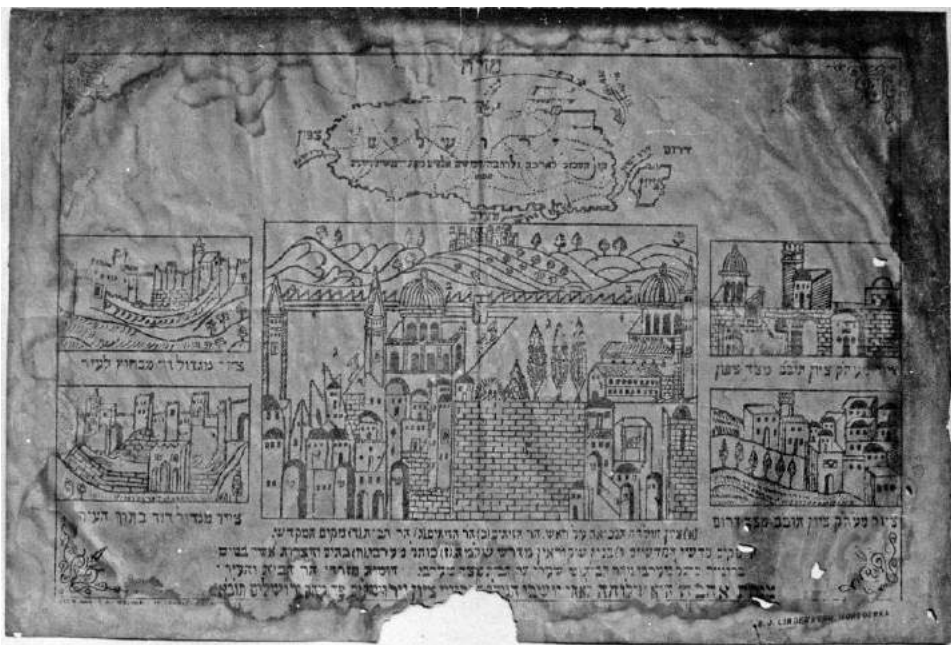

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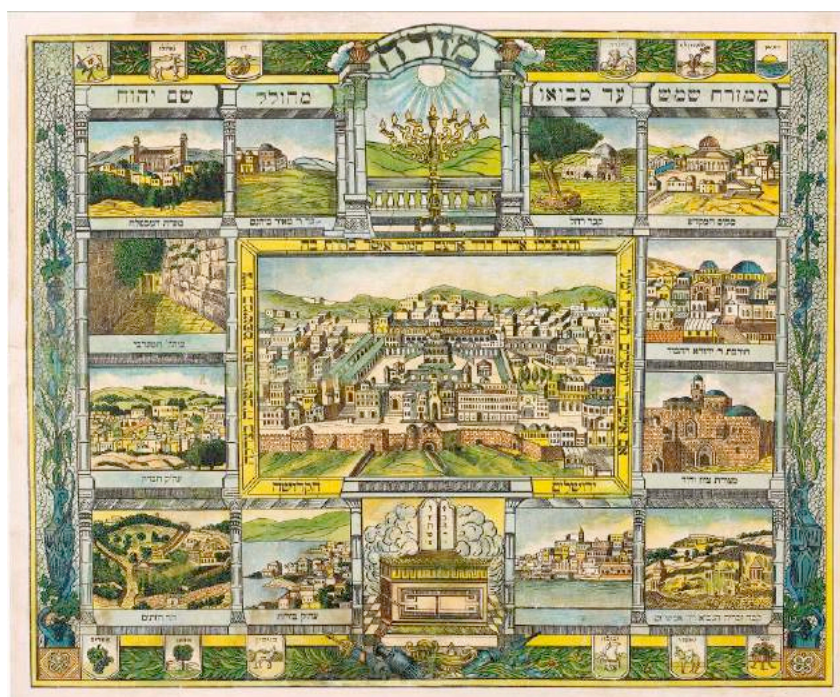
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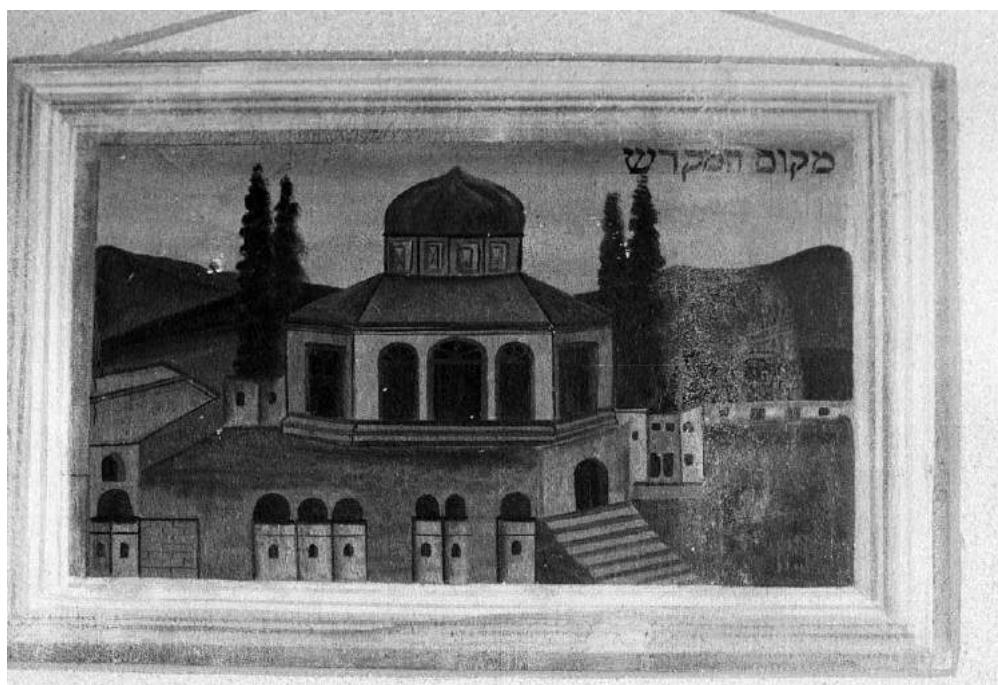

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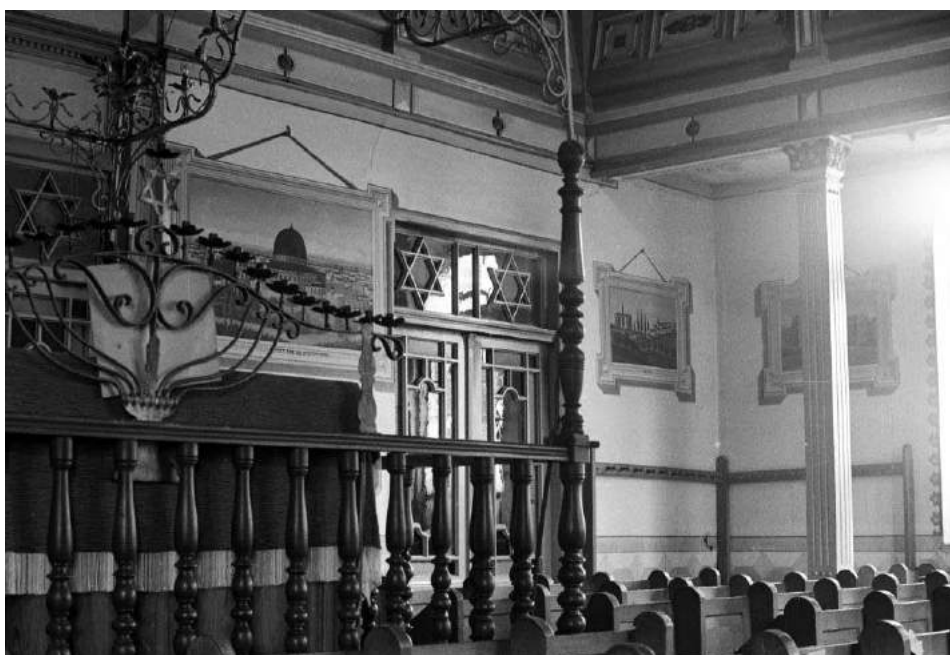
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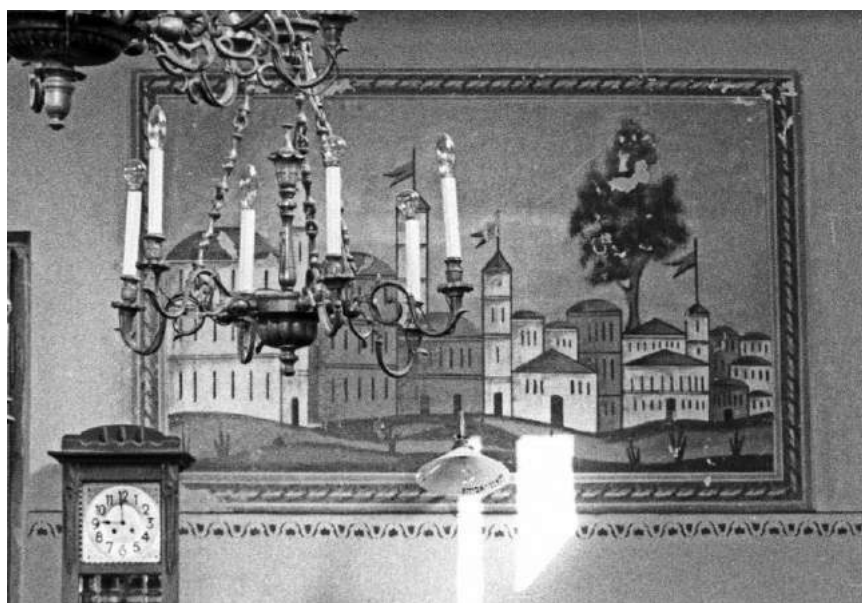

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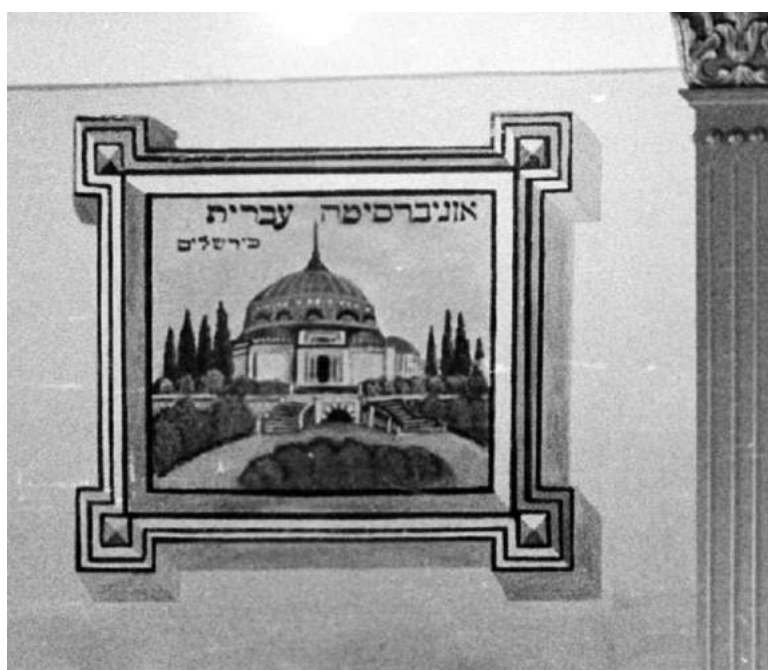

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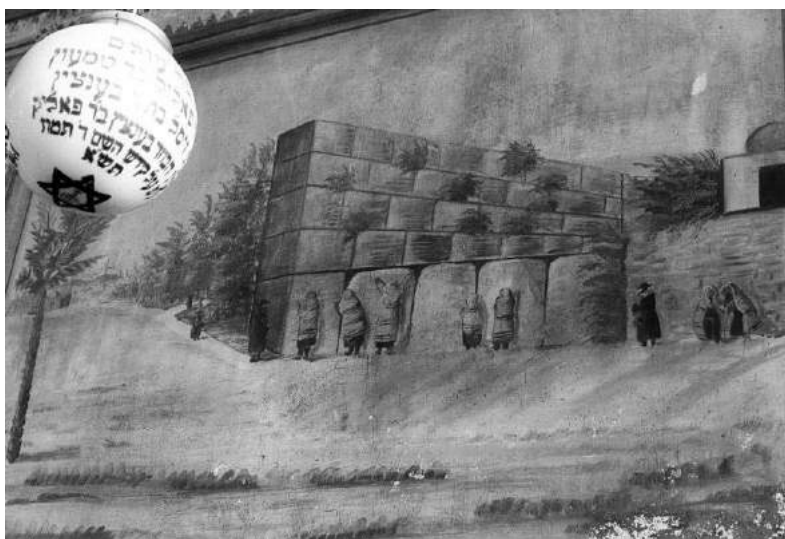

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Visiting British Palestine: Zionist travelers to *Eretz Israel*

by *Arturo Marzano*

Abstract

At the beginning of the 20th century, Ottoman Palestine became a popular destination for tourists, and their number rose significantly during the British Mandate. In particular, Jewish tourists increasingly visited Palestine and among them a new typology of travelers developed, i.e. Zionist travelers. This article draws on travelogues published in the 1920s and 1930s and aims at demonstrating that these travelogues, while presenting personal and direct experiences of Eretz Israel, corresponded perfectly with – and bolstered - the narrative that Zionism was using to describe its enterprise.

- Introduction
- Tourism to British Palestine: Zionist Itineraries
- The Zionist Travelers: more than Tourists
- The Zionist Achievement in *Eretz Israel*: Redeeming the Land
- A Jewish Land: Encounter with the Arabs
- Conclusions

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Introduction

At the end of World War One, a transformation occurred in the typology of visitors travelling to Palestine, which had just become a British Mandate. If during the second half of the 19th century Eastern European pilgrims - in particular from Russia - represented the principal type of visitors to Ottoman Palestine, by the beginning of the 1920s things had changed. While Catholic and Greek-Orthodox pilgrims were replaced – at least partially - by Protestants,[1] pilgrims were no longer the only travelers to Palestine and tourists increasingly began to visit the Holy Land.[2] While traditional religious motivations for visiting remained solid, people began travelling to Palestine for a wide variety of reasons, from business to personal curiosity, from cultural

[1] See Stephanie Stidham Roger, *Inventing the Holy Land: American Protestant Pilgrimage to Palestine, 1865-1941* (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2011).
[2] On the difference between pilgrims and tourists, see Erik Cohen, *Pilgrimage and Tourism: Convergence and Divergence*, in *Sacred Journeys: The Anthropology of Pilgrimage*, ed. Alan E. Morinis (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1992), in particular 48–9. On the reasons for traveling, see also Erik Cohen, "A Phenomenology of Tourist Experiences," *Sociology* 13/2 (1979): 179–201.

reasons to pleasure.[3] A considerable proportion of tourists were Arabs from neighboring countries.[4] However, an increasingly significant percentage of them were Jewish. In particular, "in the first decade of the twentieth century, a new type of tourist began visiting Palestine: the Zionist traveler."[5]

Historiography has recently started concentrating on the growth of tourism to British Palestine[6] and has highlighted the efforts carried out by the *Yishuv* [the Jewish community in Palestine] to increase Jewish tourism by organizing alternative tours to Christian pilgrimages. While it has been pointed out how Jews started challenging the traditional Arab monopoly of Palestinian tourism,[7] historiography has not sufficiently concentrated on the travelogues that were published by Zionist travelers once they returned home after having visited *Eretz Israel*.[8] This article analyzes some of the travelogues that were published in the 1920s and the 1930s and intends to underline that this form of "travel writings"[9] supported the battle Zionism was conducting on two fronts: in Palestine, in order to challenge the Arab monopoly of tourism; and among the Diaspora Jewish communities, to successfully present the progress being made in *Eretz Israel*. In fact, these travelogues bolstered the Zionist narrative by presenting the travelers' personal experience using the same rhetoric employed by Zionism while describing its enterprise in *Eretz Israel*.

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[3] See Doron Bar, Kobi Cohen-Hattab, "A New Kind of Pilgrimage. The Modern Tourist Pilgrim of Nineteenth Century and Early Twentieth Century Palestine," *Middle Eastern Studies*, 39/2 (2003): 131-148; Kobi Cohen-Hattab, Yossi Katz, "The Attraction of Palestine: Tourism in the Years 1850–1948," *Journal of Historical Geography* 27/2 (2001): 178–95.

[4] In order to accommodate these tourists, the Arab High Committee decided to build the Palace Hotel in Mamilla (nowadays renewed as the Waldorf Astoria), quite close to the King David Hotel, which was built to host rich Jewish tourists. See Noam Shoval, Kobi Cohen-Hattab, **"**Urban Hotel Development Patterns in the Face of Political Shifts," *Annals of Tourism Research* 28/4 (2001): 916.

[5] Daniella Ohad Smith, "Hotel Design in British Mandate Palestine: Modernism and the Zionist Vision," *The Journal of Israeli History* 29/1 (2010): 101.

[6] For example, see Kobi Cohen-Hattab, Yossi Katz, "The Attraction of Palestine: Tourism in the Years 1850–1948," *Journal of Historical Geography* 27/2 (2001): 166–177.

[7] Kobi Cohen-Hattab, "Zionism, Tourism, and the Battle for Palestine: Tourism as a Political-Propaganda Tool," *Israel Studies* 9/1 (2004): 61-85.

[8] Jews had referred to Palestine with its ancient Hebrew name, *Eretz Yisrael* [the land of Israel], for centuries. Given that Hebrew was an official language of the Mandate, along with English and Arabic, Zionists were demanding the adoption of *Eretz Yisrael* as the official name of Palestine, thus stressing Jewish claims to the country. For this reason, in this article I will use the expression *Eretz Israel* (in its more common transliteration from Hebrew) when dealing with Jewish travelers, who referred to Palestine in that way. On this issue, see Zachary Lockman, *Comrades and Enemies: Arab and Jewish Workers in Palestine, 1906-1948* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 18.

[9] I have adopted Luca Clerici's definition of "travel writings" as opposed to "travel literature," since, starting with the 19th century, most texts concerning travels were produced without any literary ambitions. Clerici, *Introduzione*, in *Scrittori italiani di viaggio*, ed. Id, Vol. 2 (Milano: Arnoldo Mondadori, 2008), xxvi.

Tourism to British Palestine: Zionist Itineraries

Soon after the birth of the British Mandate, Zionist institutions realized that tourism to Palestine could be a useful tool to advance the Zionist cause among Diaspora Jews. They began implementing policies with the purpose of increasing the number of Jewish tourists and, simultaneously, enhancing their pro-Zionist feelings. This attempt became progressively more important with the increase that tourism experienced in those years, particularly in the second half of the 1920s. For example, "in 1927 the number of visitors amounted to approximately 59,000" people, which was considered a very high number for a country whose population numbered about 600,000.[10] Actually, the number of tourists during the Mandate was very high. According to Kobi Cohen-Hattab, "the available statistical evidence shows that between 1926 and 1945, some 1,600,000 foreigners toured Palestine."[11]

One of the tools used by the *Yishuv* was offering 'Zionist tours,' i.e. creating itineraries that combined visits to religious Jewish sites - both biblical and non-biblical (for example ancient synagogues and/or Rabbis-saints' tombs) - and to non-religious sites, mainly the newly-established agricultural settlements.[12] This combination would confirm the enduring and uninterrupted Jewish attachment to *Eretz Israel* and, at the same time, would demonstrate the progress being made by Zionism in Palestine. For example, in 1922, the Department of Trade and Industry of the Palestine Zionist Executive published a 32-page pamphlet, titled *Eretz Israel for Jewish Tourists*.[13] This one was intended to provide tourists with useful information, from transportation from Europe,[14] to the best traveling season – the months between March and June – to travel expenses, passports, and currency. But the majority of the book (22 out of 33 pages) was dedicated to tours. As stated, the selection of itineraries was considered very important in increasing support for Zionism among Jewish travelers. It is not a coincidence that the suggested itineraries included visits to the Jewish agricultural settlements as a crucial part of each tour. More specifically, the

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[10] Report "Travellers in Palestine and Colonisation Problem," 25 June 1928, in Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem (CZA), S25\3974.

[11] Cohen-Hattab, *Zionism, Tourism, and the Battle for Palestine*, 80. A detailed table with the number of tourists who visited Palestine between 1926 and 1945, year by year, is in Id. *Latur et Eretz-Yisrael. Ha-taiarut be-Eretz Yisrael be-tkufat ha-mandat ha-briti* [Touring Eretz Israel. Tourism in Eretz Israel during the British Mandate] (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Tzvi, 2006): 41 (Hebrew).

[12] Itineraries that travelers would concretely follow started to be identified for both individual and groups in the 1890s, with "the development of the proto-package tour." In Stidham Rogers, *Inventing the Holy Land*, 36.

[13] In CZA, Keren Kayemeth le-Israel (KKL), box 818. See also Cohen-Hattab, *Latur et Eretz-Yisrael*, 228.

[14] The book suggested taking a steamer from Europe (the ports were Marseilles, Teulon, Trieste, Venice, Genoa, Naples, Brindisi) to Alexandria and Port Said – from there a train would lead to Jerusalem respectively in 22 and 18 hours – or to take "a direct service by the Messageries Maritimes line from Marseilles, by the *Lloyd Triestino* from Trieste and by Khedivial Mail Line from Constantinople." "Eretz Israel for Jewish Tourists," 4-5, Ibid.

book suggested three types of tours: 1) Jerusalem, Judaea and Samaria; 2) Jaffa and the Coastal District; 3) Haifa and the Galilee. All tours were supposed to last from a minimum of 4 days to a maximum of 17 days, and they were entirely 'Jewish,' which meant privileging Jewish ancient and modern sites over Christian and Muslim ones.

In 1925, the *Zionist Tourist Information Bureau* (ZTIB) was established. As Cohen-Hattab states, it was financed and run jointly by the Palestine Zionist Executive, the Jewish National Fund and the United Israel Appeal. It had three main tasks: contacting tourists potentially interested in visiting Palestine; dealing with the visitors while they were in Palestine in order to cultivate their support of Zionism; connecting them with Zionist groups and organizations once they returned home, so that they could reciprocally influence and reinforce each other. In this way, the ZTIB was to become the most important tool of the Zionist movement in promoting Jewish tourism, while concurrently generating propaganda that targeted Jewish communities worldwide.[15]

The ZTIB established contact with several Jewish and Zionist organizations, which asked for suggestions and advice in organizing tours for Jews who wanted to visit Palestine. For example, on January 19th, 1925, the American Bureau of the *Keren Kayemeth Le-Israel* wrote to the Jerusalem Office of the KKL to request the News Bulletin that the newly established ZTIB published. According to the American KKL branch, the Bulletin would help American Jewish tourists who intended to visit Palestine.[16] In a note released a few days later, the American office, after having highlighted that "the tourist traffic [wa]s constantly on the increase with the Jews constituting the principal tourist element" clearly stated that it was important that the American Jews willing to visit Palestine were given "the opportunity to see the Palestine of the Jews, especially the Palestine of the *Chalutzim* [pioneers] which is a phase of the country chronically neglected by the established tourist agencies."[17] A similar request of support came from the *Federation des Sionistes de Belgique* in the same January of 1925. It is interesting to note that the Belgian Zionist Federation not only sought information to organize tours to Palestine, but also for material that could be used for "propaganda among Jews as well Gentiles for pleasure trips in Palestine" to be published in Belgian newspapers and periodicals, specifically those dealing with tourism.[18]

In December 1925, the KKL sent a letter to several Zionist groups and

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[15] Kobi Cohen-Hattab, "Zionism, Tourism, and the Battle for Palestine: Tourism as a Political-Propaganda Tool," *Israel Studies* 9/1 (2004): 67. Cohen-Hattab actually refers to it with a different name: Zionist Information Bureau for Tourists.
[16] Letter of 19 January 1925, in CZA, KKL\818.
[17] Note for release "Information Bureau Opened for American Tourists in Palestine," 23 January 1925, in CZA, KKL\818.
[18] Letter to the Palestine Zionist Executive, 28 January 1925, in CZA, KKL\818.

organizations of Western Europe, proposing a "Cheap Palestine Tour." The trip was meant to last 12 days, to cost £ 40 per person, to take place the following May, and to start and return to Marseilles.[19] In the letter, the KKL highlighted "the importance for Palestine propaganda in general of well conducted tours of the country" and explicitly stated that "special attention [should] be given to the Zionist Settlements."[20] It was another confirmation of the value that the Palestine Zionist Executive attributed to Jewish tourism, especially if directed toward Jewish agricultural settlements, considered the flagship of the Zionist program.

The importance that the ZIBT attached to the presence of tourists in *Eretz Israel* was evident in 1929, after "normal conditions were once more restored in Palestine" following the bloody clashes between Arabs and Jews in August of that year. The Bureau considered "it urgently necessary that every effort be made to increase and strengthen the tourist traffic," not only because "from the economic point of view, the Yishuv ha[d] suffered much from the disturbances" and "a good tourist season would be calculated considerably to relieve the situation," but because

> Great benefit would accrue to the Zionist movement as such from the visit of as many friends of our cause as possible, as that they could see with their own eyes that the Yishuv has remained intact and is prepared to continue the upbuilding work with greater energy than ever.[21]

In addition, the Office of the *Keren Hayesod* in Jerusalem supported the organization of trips to Palestine, both for Jewish groups and non-Jewish groups. For example, in August 1931, the Keren Hayesod organized a "Ten Days in Palestine" trip for a Recreational Group located in Venice. (*Fig. 1*) It was not specifically organized for Jewish tourists, but it was a Zionist tour, meaning that the advertisement clearly focused on the Zionist project: "Israel's return to the Promised Land is made possible in particular thanks to the Keren Hayesod, and a visit to the land that was God's motherland could not be organized in a more competent way."[22] The program, which was intended for non-Jewish tourists, included the Catholic sites, such as the Holy Sepulcher, the Via Dolorosa, Bethlehem, the Samaritan well, Nazareth, the Tabor Mount, Capernaum, the Galilee sea. But it also included – and was obviously the main aim of the Keren Hayesod – the relatively new and well established Jewish settlements, such as Rehovot, Rishon le-Tizon, the agricultural school of Mikveh Israel, and the valley of Jezreel/Esdraelon. It was a Zionist tour

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[19] Letter of the KKL, Jerusalem, 23 December 1925, in CZA, KKL\831.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Letter of the ZIBT to the Zionist Federations and Unions, the Keren Hayessod and the Keren Kayemeth Committees, Jerusalem, October 1929, in CZA, KKL\3653.
[22] "Dieci giorni in Palestina. Viaggio promosso dal Circolo Sociale Mestre-Merghera di Venezia, 29 luglio – 17 agosto 1931," in Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People, Jerusalem (CAHJP), Fund Cividalli (P/140 A), box 2.
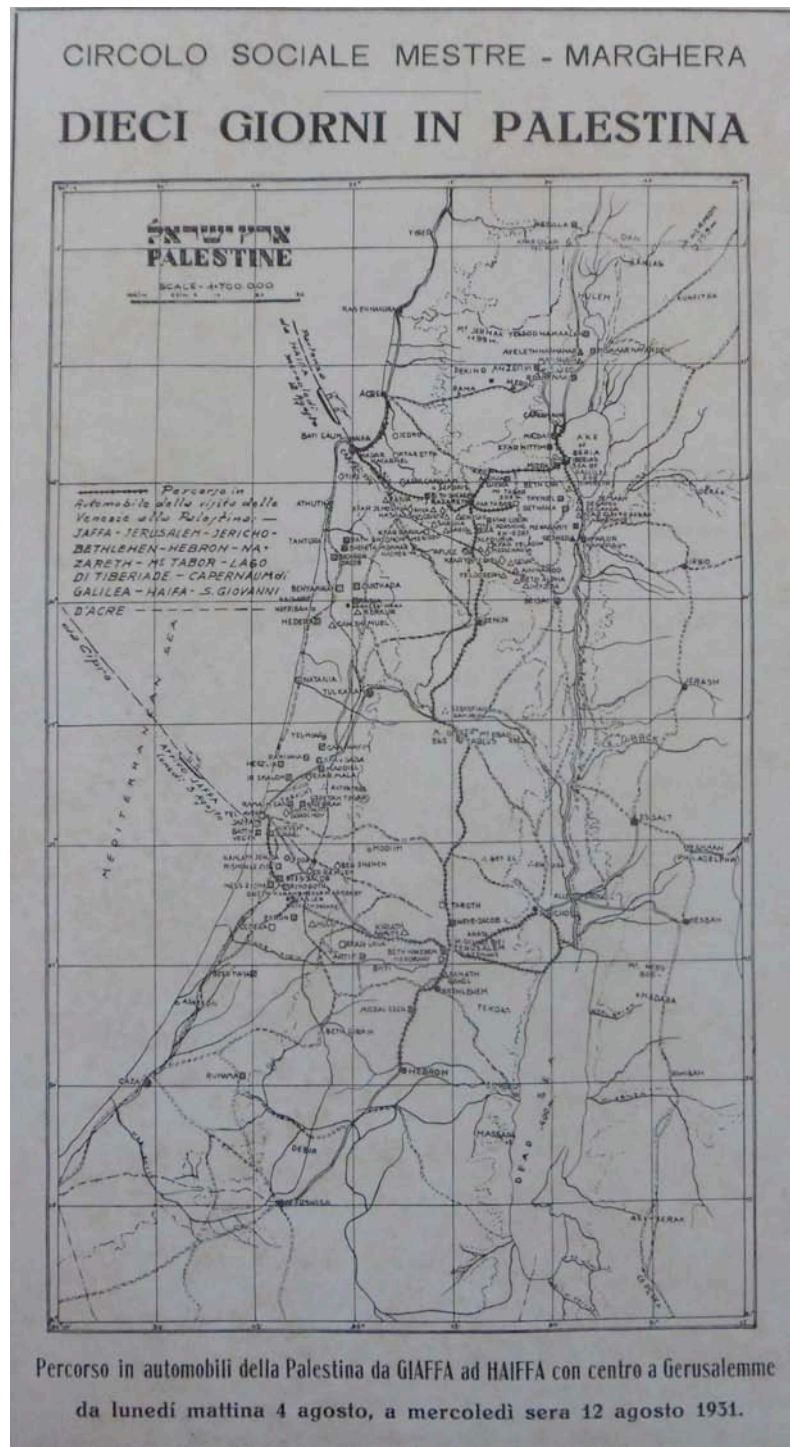
framed as a Catholic pilgrimage.

Fig. 1: Dieci giorni in Palestina [Ten days in Palestine]

The ZIBT engaged several travel agencies to organize tours to Palestine.[23] Among them was the Palestine Lloyd, which published advertisement brochures in different languages, such as English, French and German. The English brochure *Tours in Palestine*, for example, included four different types of tours, according to their length: a 3-day itinerary, a 6-day itinerary, a 10-day itinerary, and a 14-day itinerary.[24] All of them were Zionist tours, i.e. focusing on the Jewish sites of Palestine, from the Biblical spots (Tomb of Rachel, Solomon's pools, Cave of Makhpelah), to religious sites (Tombs of Rambam, Rabbi Meir Baal Hanes, and Rabbi Akiva), to the agricultural settlements (Jezreel/Esdraelon valley, Balfouria, Degania A and B, Mikveh Israel). Longer trips also included other sites, such as newly created schools, the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, or the site of Tel Hai, where Joseph Trumpeldor had been killed in 1920, an event which would later become one of the cornerstones of Israeli civic religion.[25]

In 1926, the Palestine Lloyd produced the French brochure *Excursion en Palestine*, which presented two alternatives. The first itinerary would be a 24-day tour (12 days were needed to travel from France to Palestine and return, while 12 days would be spent travelling in Palestine); it would last between February 23rd and March 18th, and it foresaw spending the Jewish holiday of *Purim* in Palestine - perhaps with the intention of seeing Tel Aviv's famous *Purim* carnival parade, the *'adlayada*. The second trip would be 30 days long, lasting from March 23rd to April 21st, and it was designed to celebrate the Jewish holiday of *Pesach* in Palestine.[26] The two itineraries included the most prominent cities, i.e. Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Safed, Tiberias, Haifa and the Jewish colonies along the Mediterranean Coast and in the Jezreel/Esdraelon valley. The same brochure was also published in German, with the title *Gesellschafts – Reisen nach Palästina*.[27] German tourists would reach Marseilles by train, but otherwise the proposed itineraries were identical.

It is worth writing a few words on the images used to adorn the covers of the brochures. As to the first one (*Fig. 2*), at the center of the image there is a tree, while on the left there is a tall palm and on the right two short buildings. Nothing else is drawn aside from what appears to be a path. What is the visual message that this image intends to convey? Even if it is not entirely obvious, what emerges from the picture is that Palestine is a barren and empty land,

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[23] Cohen-Hattab, *Latur et Eretz-Yisrael*: 21-25.

[24] "Tours in Palestine," The Palestine Lloyd Ltd., no date, in CAHJP, P/140 A, box 2.

[25] On the construction of civil religion in Israel, see Charles S. Liebman, Eliezer Don-Yehiya, *Civil Religion in Israel* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), and on the role Tel Hai had in the construction of Israeli identity, see Yael Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), in particular 39-47.

[26] "Excursions en Palestine," Palestine Lloyd Paris, 1926, in CAHJP, Fund Pacifici (P 172), box 97.

[27] "Gesellschafts – Reisen nach Palästina," Palestine Lloyd Ltd., in CZA, KKL\831

apart from the palm, the little village and the big tree. In particular, the centrality of the tree might represent the role of Zionism (and KKL) in Palestine in terms of planting trees and therefore making the land fertile once again.

Fig. 2: Tours in Palestine

Palms and trees, similar to the ones depicted in this brochure, are recurring symbols found in other images of that period. One of the most known is the poster "Come to Palestine," drawn by Ze'ev Raban (1890-1970, a teacher in Bezalel, one of the most influential Jewish artists and a famous designer in

Israel) and produced by the Society for the Promotion of Travel in the Holy Land in 1929.[28] In this case, Palestine is presented as an idyllic place, that both Jewish (reference to biblical times are obvious, given the biblical verse at the bottom of the poster)[29] and Christian tourists (the recognizable Sea of Galilee where Jesus is believed to have walked was obviously a reference for Christians) should be willing to visit. The prevailing feature of this image is its Orientalist approach, which is not present in the first brochure, but is, in contrast, evident in the second brochure's image. (*Fig. 3*)
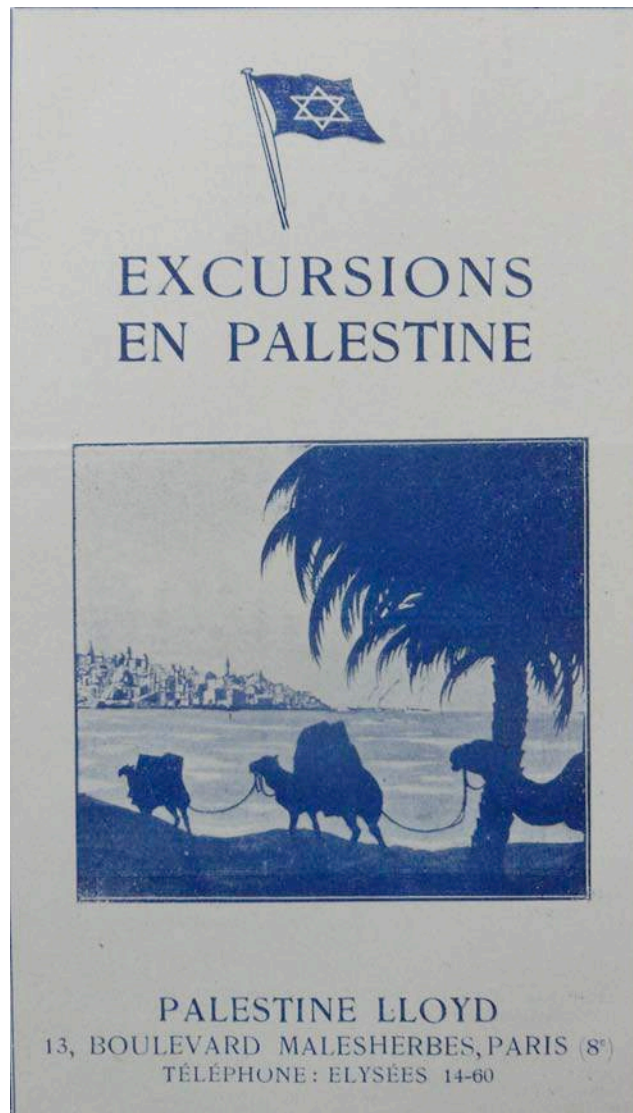
Fig. 3: Excursion en Palestine [Excursions to Palestine]

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[28] The image is available at http://www.english.imjnet.org.il/popup?c0=13606 (accessed 18 September 2013).
[29] See Dalia Manor, "Biblical Zionism in Bezalel Art," *Israel Studies* 6/1 (2001): 55-75, in particular 58.

In this illustration, the scene is dominated by three camels in a caravan, with a palm tree on the left and what appears to be Jaffa in the background. What the brochure seems to convey is the sense of visiting an exotic location, with a hint of what would probably be the first view of Palestine. Only the Star of David in the flag at the top of the leaflet suggests the Zionist bent of the trip that the Palestine Lloyd is advertising.

If we compare the first image with another famous poster, "Come and See Erez Israel" - painted by the same Ze'ev Raban and chosen by the Association of Jewish Guides as publicity to promote Jewish tourism[30] - the message expressed by the first brochure becomes clearer. The building in that brochure bears a striking resemblance to Rachel's tomb as it is presented in Raban's poster (second small picture on the bottom-right), so what at a first sight seems to be a village might actually be a Jewish biblical site. And palms and trees – which are used to represent Rishon le Tzion and Metulah at the bottom corners of the poster – might therefore allude to the newly established Jewish agricultural settlements that the brochure describes. If this interpretation is correct, what emerges as the major theme is the combination of ancient and modern Jewish sites, reinforcing the message that those tours intended to communicate to tourists through the brochure.

Another agency that handled a significant part of Jewish tourism was the *Palestine and Egypt Lloyd* (PEL). For example, it organized a three-day trip to "Judean Settlements, Jerusalem, Samaria, Emek-Efer". In this itinerary, apart from the Old City of Jerusalem, the focus was exclusively on Zionist achievements, from the agricultural settlements to the schools and training institutions (such as the WIZO Girl's Farm in Ayanoth), to the Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem. The trip was a type of full immersion into newly re-established Jewish life in *Eretz Israel*.[31] Finally, in cooperation with the World Zionist Organization (*ha-histadrut ha-tzionit ha-olamit*), the *Lloyd Triestino* also decided to organize a 20-day tour to Palestine, between February 21st and March 12th, 1934.[32]

Among the actors that organized Zionist tours there were a number of varied Diaspora Zionist groups and organizations. For example, despite the small number of Italian Jews and, specifically, of Italian Zionist Jews, the Italian Zionist Federation organized several tours. The first one took place in August 1931, and lasted 20 days. The program was very similar to the one organized

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[30] The image is available at http://www.touchwoodnurit.com/index.files/Page65862.htm (accessed 18 September 2013) and has been reproduced, among the many, in Manor, "Biblical Zionism," 60.

[31] The leaflet is in CAHJP, P/140 A, box 2.

[32] "Il prossimo anno a Gerusalemme! Viaggio speciale turistico ebraico in occasione della festa di Purim 1934 (5694)," in CAHJP, P 172, box 99.

by the Palestine Lloyd for the French Jews,[33] only a bit shorter, as the travel route of Trieste-Brindisi-Jaffa was slightly quicker than Marseilles-Alexandria-Jaffa. Additional trips were organized in 1932 and in the years following.[34]

Finally, apart from collective tours organized either by the *Yishuv* or by Zionist organizations based in the Diaspora, there were also private trips arranged by individuals. It is difficult to give an account of these tours. In fact, in most cases, people travelled by themselves and no traces of their experiences are left. An exception is represented by those trips that, despite involving only individuals, were arranged with the involvement of Zionist institutions because of the travelers importance. For example, in 1935 Mrs. Stern, the wife of a rich Austrian-born Jew who had become a French citizen by marrying her, visited Palestine. Before her departure, the French branch of KKL contacted the Palestine Executive requesting that she be offered particularly good treatment, given that she was quite influential among French Jews and winning her 'heart and mind' was believed to be very useful in advancing Zionist propaganda among French Jewry.[35] A few months earlier, the same thing had happened for the former President of the French Zionist Federation, Mr. Louis Roubach, and his wife Mrs. Fuilderman, vice president of the WIZO – French section. The French branch of KKL stressed the possibility that they might invest money in Palestine if the trip impressed them, by showing them the success of the Zionist project.[36]

The Zionist Travelers: more than Tourists

Who were the Zionist travelers? They were not Zionist in the sense that they aspired to make *'aliyah* and take part in the building of a new Jewish state. Some of them did actually migrate to Palestine after having visited it, but others did not. They were Zionist travelers in that their decision to visit Palestine was not motivated by tourism, i.e. curiosity to have new experiences, but was based on different motivations. First of all, they felt they were tied to *Eretz Israel*, as part of the traditional and abiding Jewish attachment to that land. Secondly, they were interested in understanding what exactly Zionism was doing in Palestine because they had been exposed to Zionist literature and propaganda. Finally, they supported Zionism and therefore wanted to have a firsthand experience of what they believed to be either an important project, a great triumph or even the fulfillment of a dream that could inspire and enrich

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[33] "Viaggio in Eretz Israel 12-31 agosto 1931," Ibid.

[34] See Arturo Marzano, *Una terra per rinascere. Gli ebrei italiani e l'emigrazione in Palestina prima della guerra (1920-1940)* (Milano: Marietti, 2003), 60-69.

[35] Letter by the KKL - Commission Centrale de France, Paris to the Central Bureau of the KKL, Jerusalem, 10 May 1935, in CZA, KKL5\6660.

[36] Letter by the KKL - Commission Centrale de France, Paris to the Central Bureau of the KKL, Jerusalem, 26 February 1935, in CZA, KKL5\6660.

their everyday lives by being part of something greater.[37] As Daniella Ohad Smith states, for Zionist travelers "visiting the sites of the Zionist project elevated them from the ordinary to the extraordinary."[38] Interestingly enough, the Palestine Executive that was logistically supporting Jewish travelers considered that "practically all the visitors [we]re Zionists in one degree or another."[39]

The idea that going to Palestine was not simply a question of tourism but involved a different type of emotion is evident from the reports of some of the travelers. For example, the Italian Jew Alfonso Pacifici - one of the founders of the Italian Zionist movement[40] - visited British Palestine in 1925 and wrote:

> My spirit clearly knows something: 'this' journey is not similar to any other; no other journey could take me so far as does this one. It is neither a transit journey, nor a pleasure or curiosity trip: 'what' I will see does not interest me, just as I do not think that the features of an abandoned mother might interest her son, who cannot remember them for not having seen them for so long. She is his mother, no matter what expectations the child might have; she is his mother and nothing else. This is a journey of 'return', as it might be defined; a trip back home, to his own home![41]

And another Italian Zionist, Giulio Raccah, who would also migrate to *Eretz Israel* later on, reported after his trip in 1934:

> Even if during the nine-day trip to Erez Israel we could not see everything, we have seen – though prepared to see miracles - much more than anyone else could expect. And we must indeed be happy that a lot more has been done, without any regret of not seeing it, since whoever has been once to Erez Israel returns back there.[42]

Even if tourism was not the main motivation of Zionist travelers, this does not mean that they did not tour *Eretz Israel*. On the contrary, they did, according to the already mentioned Zionist tours that included both the Jewish traditional sites and the Zionist newly established settlements and cities.

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[37] In a certain way, "Zionist travelers" might resemble the "political pilgrims" that would visit Communist countries in order to believe in something greater than what they experienced living in Western democracies. On this issue, see Paul Hollander, *Political Pilgrims: Travels of Western Intellectuals to the Soviet Union, China, and Cuba 1928-1978* (New York-Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981).

[38] Ohad Smith, "Hotel Design in British Mandate Palestine," 101.

[39] Letter by Menachem Ussishkin to L. Schen, H. Levin, Rabbi Schwarz, and I. H. Hubin, 16 April 1933, in CZA, KKL5\4989.

[40] Alfonso Pacifici (1889-1981) was the Director of the Zionsit weekly *Israel*. With his activity, he influenced an entire generation of Italian Zionist Jews in the 1920s and 1930s. He made *'aliyah* in 1934. On him, see Marzano, *Una terra per rinascere*, 19-22.

[41] Alfonso Pacifici, "Trieste-Gerusalemme," *Israel*, 6 October 1924. Four other articles concerning his travel to Palestine appeared in the same weekly on 23 October 1924, 25 December 1924, 19 February 1925 and 5 March 1925.

[42] Giulio Raccah, "Nove giorni in Erez Israel," *Israel*, 1 June 1934.

Compared to earlier periods, travelers to British Palestine visited a country that was undergoing huge changes. Apart from the places that previous Jewish travelers traditionally presented in their travelogues – Jerusalem and Safed (two of the 'four holy cities') more than any other place - Zionist travelers also focused on the innovations in Palestine, i.e. new quarters of already existing cities, such as Jerusalem and Haifa; the newly-born Tel Aviv; the recently established agricultural settlements.

By analyzing some of the travelogues that were produced in those years, it appears that Tel Aviv was the city that received considerable attention,[43] given its status as the "first Hebrew city."[44] To Ludwig Lewisohn,[45] who visited Palestine in 1925 and published an entire book on his experience,[46] Tel Aviv actually seemed a bit disappointing: "One must not expect too much. The houses in Tel Aviv are not too beautiful. Some are cheap and pretentious and seem to have been built in imitation of the worst period of American domestic architecture."[47] Yet, its Jewishness was striking.

> I was myself less offended by the ugliness of the houses in Tel-Aviv than I was pleased at the names of the streets which are called after poets, Yehuda Halevy and Bialik, after thinkers, Moses Hess and Achad Ha'am, after prophets of various sorts and ages, Rambam (Maimonides) and Herzl, after benefactors, Rothschild and Balfour. (…) That is what I should expect of a Jewish city; it is by the example of such things that a Jewish city can justify itself among the cities of the world. (…) Tel-Aviv, moreover, is a young city. It was in 1909 that sixty families met on the sand-dunes north of Jaffa and determined to build a clean

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[43] For example, the Vilna-born American Louis Miller defined Tel Aviv as "the most beautiful and interesting creation in all of Palestine." Miller visited *Eretz Israel* in 1911 and in his reports he emphasizes the greatness of Tel Aviv, a city that "emerged from nothing, (…) truly a miracle - and all of it the fruits of Jewish labor." See Ehud Manor, " 'A source of satisfaction to all Jews, wherever they may be living.' Louis Miller between New York and Tel Aviv, 1911," *Quest*, 2 (2011): 273-274, in http://www.quest-cdecjournal.it/focus.php?id=224 (accessed 18 September 2013). On the tourist attractions of Tel Aviv in those years, see Cohen-Hattab, *Latur et Eretz-Yisrael*, 53-67, and Michael Berkowitz, *Western Jewry and the Zionist Project, 1914–1933* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 137.

[44] This is the way Tel Aviv was perceived all over the world. For example, this is how the Israeli poet Chaim Guri defines it. See Joachim Schlör, "Tel Aviv: (With Its) Back to the Sea," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 8/2 (2009): 228. Albert Londres, who visited Palestine in 1929, defined Tel Aviv as "the only city in the world to be composed of Jews one hundred per cent." Albert Londres, *Ho incontrato l'ebreo errante*, translated from French [*Le Juif Errant Est Arrivé* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1930)] by Marili Cammarata (Genova: ECIG, 1997), 150.

[45] Novelist and translator, Lewisohn (1882 – 1955) was born in Germany, but migrated as a child to the United States. Converted with his entire family to Methodism, he later returned to Judaism and became very critical of American Jews' tendency to assimilate. He strongly supported the Zionist cause and was an honorary secretary of the Zionist Organization of America.

[46] On his travel to British Palestine, see Ralph Melnick, *The Life and Work of Ludwig Lewisohn. "A Touch of Wildness,"* Vol I (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998), 375-383.

[47] Ludwig Lewisohn, *Israel* (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1925): 192.

and healthful residential suburb there. Sixteen years have passed and on those dunes has arisen a city of thirty thousand inhabitants with schools, colleges, temples, libraries, banks, shops, factories, hotels, newspaper offices. And no jail. Jewish policemen, unarmed, keep order and regulate the traffic. There is no prison in Tel-Aviv. The people of the city hope that it will never be necessary to build one.[48]

The Italian Zionist Leo Levi,[49] who visited *Eretz Israel* in 1932 before migrating there a few years later, was also clearly struck by Tel Aviv. To him, the city represented a perfect encounter between West and East:

It is in particular the wind: a warm, scented wind, which you feel in the colonies as well as on the seashore in Tel Aviv. And it is a wind that – whenever you are able to listen to it – recounts the ancient times; close to here, I was told, there was Modiin, the center of the Maccabean revolt. And when you feel so close to the life that used to be our life, you feel at home with a thrill of joyful emotion: in Tel Aviv you feel at home because it is part of the West. But, bringing the West to the heart of the East is it not the best result of Zionist Palestine? And if this is a time of transition, you feel the birth of a new society: a modern society, more than in Italy, an American-style society, which you feel in the wineries and in the factories. And the hope for the future lies in the new [Palestinian Jewish] type, who is really wonderful: they are like us [Jews in the Diaspora] but they are strong, beautiful, healthy.[50]

Yet, more than its cities, it was the nature in Palestine which was most concentrated on in these travelogues. For example, American Zionist Judah Leon Magnes,[51] had already been stirred by the landscape in *Eretz Israel* when he visited Palestine and Syria in 1907:

The country between Miqveh [Israel] and Rishon [le-Tizon] gave me the first clue to the constant comparison I have been forced to make between California and Palestine. Everyone knows how brown California is in summer. The fields are parched, the trees are covered with dust, the sun is hot, and yet there is green wherever there is water, besides there is a peculiar odor of hay and of the

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[48] Ibid., 192-193.

[49] Leo Levi (1912-1982) migrated from Turin to Palestine in 1936. In Italy, he was the main founder and leader of the 1930s Zionist summer camps, where Italian *chalutzim*-to-be were meant to prepare themselves before migrating to Eretz Israel. On him, see Arturo Marzano, *Leo Levi: Contro i dinosauri. Scritti civili e politici (1931-1972)* (Napoli: L'Ancora del Mediterraneo, 2011.

[50] Letter by Leo Levi to his mother Sara Bolaffio Levi, 26 August 1932, in CAHJP, P/252, box 6.

[51] Judah Leon Magnes (1877-1948), a Reform Rabbi in the United States, visited Palestine twice, in 1907 and 1912, before migrating there in 1922. Among the founders of the Hebrew University, he was its President between 1935 and 1948. He was in favor of a bi-national State in Palestine, sharing similar ideas to those of the pacifist group *Brit Shalom* [Covenant of Peace]. On him, see Daniel P. Kotzin, *Judah L. Magnes: An American Jewish Nonconformist* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2010). On *Brit Shalom*, see Hagit Lavsky, *German Zionists and the Emergence of Brit Shalom*, in *Essential Papers on Zionism*, eds. Jehuda Reinharz, Anita Shapira (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 648-670; Shalom Matzabi, *Between Zionism and Judaism: The Radical Circle in Brit Shalom, 1925-1933* (Boston and Leiden: Brill, 2002).

meadows. A large part of Palestine is similar to California in many respects. Around Port Costa, for example, the country rolls in hills that are golden from the gathering of the harvest. Here too the land rolls and the blades of hay shine smooth and golden under the blue sky.[52]

The Zionist Achievement in Eretz Israel: Redeeming the Land

In fact, it was not the natural scenery alone to impress the Zionist travelers. Connected to the land as its inseparable element, one of the elements that most captured their attention was the work of the *Chalutzim* [pioneers] and their ideological enthusiasm in cultivating the land.[53] As the Italian Zionist Emilio Stock wrote in 1921,

> Our Chaluzim (…) are happy in their situation and they are our brightest hope. Most probably, no other people have witnessed in their own history a similar fact. Educated young boys and girls have decided to choose a life of huge sacrifice in order to meet their ideals; they work very well even if they do the most exhausting jobs.[54]

According to the French Zionist Fernand Corcos,[55] the "*Poalim* [workers] at work" - the title he gave a chapter in the book he published after visiting Palestine[56] – were the most significant issue of *Eretz Israel*: "their work is the richest and the most valuable experience that has ever been tried and carried out positively."[57] For Corcos, the value of Zionism's role in Palestine was connected to the conditions of the country when Jewish immigrants arrived there in the 1880s: "Palestine in its entirety must be considered a devastated region, not by war, but by centuries of abandonment."[58] Corcos was affected by the *Chalutzim*'s "sane air, their cleanness, their physical beauty; meaning with that, sanity and equilibrium."[59]

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[52] "Magnes' diary of a trip to Palestine and Syria, 28 July 28 1907," 148-149, in CAHJP, Fund Judah Leib Magnes (P/3), box 297.

[53] On the *Chalutzim* ideology, see Ben Halpern, Jehuda Reinharz, The Cultural and Social Background of the Second Aliyah, *Middle Eastern Studies* 27/3 (1991): 487-517; Gershon Shafir, *Land, labor, and the origins of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, 1882-1914* (Berkeley : University of California Press, 1996); Zeev Sternhell, *The Founding Myths of Israel. Nationalism, Socialism, and the Making of the Jewish State* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999).

[54] Emilio Stock, "Impressioni di viaggio in Erez Israel," *Israel*, 10 March 1921.

[55] F. Corcos (1875-1959) was an active Zionist, among the founders both of the French branch of the *Keren Hayesod* and of the association "France-Palestine." On him, see the brief article by Frédéric Viey, *Fernand Corcos*, January 2013, in http://www.judaicultures.info/IMG/pdf/FERNand_Corcos.pdf (accessed 18 September 2013).

[56] Fernand Corcos, *Israel sur la terre biblique* (Paris, Jouve, 1923). Corcos made another trip to Palestine two years later, and his report was published with the title of *A travers la Palestine juive* (Paris: Jouve, 1925).

[57] Corcos, *Israel*, 172.

[58] Ibid., 197.

[59] Ibid., 202.

The idea of Jews redeeming the land was, of course, a cornerstone of Zionism [60] and was actually an ideal shared by many other travelers, both Jews and non-Jews.[61] For example, the French Catholic Priest Marie André Dieux, who was not immune from traditional Catholic anti-Judaism (according to him, the only solution to the Jewish question could be conversion to Christianity)[62] was struck by the "miracle" of the agricultural colonies that the Jews were building in Palestine[63] and by the "marvelous orange fields" that had been set up there.[64] Ludwig Lewisohn, mentioned earlier, also felt the *Chalutzim* were Palestine's greatest and most notable feature:

> A Jewish pioneer who has fought the wilderness and won the fight. A profound satisfaction breathes from him. (…) He is pioneer, farmer, thinker, too. (…) An intrepid and yet quiet spirit. He has literally turned the wilderness into a garden; he has reclaimed a portion of Eretz Israel and set an example for the generations to come. Now he tells us has come the age of a Jewish and a quiet life in the old land. A Jew. He has conquered his piece of earth, but he does not dream of power or force. He dreams of the creative activities of the Jewish spirit for his posterity, for his people, for mankind…[65]

Directly linked to the redemptive work of the *Chalutzim* was the transformation of Palestine from an arid land into a green and fertile one:

> We drive on through the heavy, burning sand. Suddenly shadows fall across the path – shadows in this weary land. The Jewish tree? Yes, it is a eucalyptus grove. The desert is a desert no more. From the trees comes a group of Chalutzim. Young men stripes to the waist. Newcomers who want to get sun-tanned and, so, become sun-hardened as soon as may be. Road workers. Next season this will be not a desert-road but a well-kept chaussée, and motor-cars will spin up and down it. The Chalutzim wave to us. Shalom! Morining and evening and through the bitter burning of the moon-time, through want and inconceivable hardship. Shalom! Work, hope, peace…[66]

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[60] On the concept of redemption of the Land of Israel, see *Geulat Ha-Karka' be-Eretz Yisrael: re'aion ve-ma'ase* [Redeeming the Land of Israel: Idea and Practise], ed. Ruth Kark (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, 1990) [Hebrew]. On the link between the Jews and *Eretz Israel*, see Shmuel Almog, "People and Land in Modern Jewish Nationalism," in *Essential Papers in Zionism*, eds. Jehuda Reinharz, Anita Shapira (New York: New York University Press, 1995): 46-61; Tzili Doleve-Gandelman, "The Symbolic Inscription of Zionist Ideology in the Space of Eretz Yisrael: Why the Native Israeli is Called Tsabar," in *Judaism Viewed from Within and Without: Anthropological Studies*, ed. Harvey E. Goldberg (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996): 257-284.

[61] The already mentioned Albert Londres described the transformation Palestine went through thanks to the work carried out by Jewish workers in this way: "Slowly slowly, the Palestinian mummy got up." Londres, *Ho incontrato l'ebreo errante*, 156.

[62] Marie André Dieux (R. P. de l'Oratoire), *De Jérusalem à Rome. Méditations d'un pèlerin en Terre Sainte* (Paris: Librairie-Editions A. Giraudon, 1929): 18.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Ibid., 25.

[65] Lewisohn, *Israel*, 161.

[66] Ibid., 164.

By underlying the fact that Palestine was a "devastated region (…) by centuries of abandonment" and that the Jews were transforming "the wilderness into a garden," both Corcos and Lewisohn were not simply describing *Eretz Israel* as it appeared to them, but they were also – and primarily – *producing* it for European and American readers, thus constructing a land in need of being saved and redeemed by Zionism and in particular by the work of the *Chalutzim*.[67]

Among the various regions of Palestine that had been redeemed by *Chalutzim*, the travelogues most focused on the Jezreel/Esdraelon valley. This is not a surprise, given the importance that the valley had in the Zionist enterprise,[68] and that it was included in all itineraries suggested by the Zionist Institutions and served as the basis of their Jewish tours.

For example, according to a guidebook published by the above-mentioned Palestine Zionist Executive, the settlements that were imperative for tourists to visit were precisely those of the Jezreel/Esdraelon valley. This book – titled *Book of Sightseeing* – was quite staunch in pointing out that the most meaningful success of the Zionist movement was related to the newly established agricultural settlements. According to the book, this was particularly remarkable since it happened after centuries of negligence of Palestine, whose history was – once again – reduced to a vacuum between its Jewish presence before the Destruction of the Second Temple in the First century, and the Twentieth century:

> The history of Palestine, the cradle of the Jewish race, is one long round of invasion and conquest: from the time of Abraham it has served as a military highway for the warring armies of the surrounding countries, making Palestine its battlefield, and leaving behind them a new culture with each conqueror.
> Historians without number mention the fertility of the country, during times of peace, when the peasantry were able to cultivate their lands. The mountain slopes were abundant with forests, and the terraces of the hills were covered with olive groves, vineyards and gardens. Centuries of neglect and destruction have allowed almost the whole country to fall into a state of ruin. After many vicissitudes the country came under the Power of Turkey, which power had many to contend against [sic]. The Great War brought Palestine into the arena again and in 1916 Gen. Allenby occupied Jerusalem with his victorious British troops, assisted by the Allies, and a few Jewish Battalions. (…) A Civil Administration succeeded the Military Army of Occupation and since that time the country had made remarkable progress under the stimulus of Jewish immigration. The tourist who make a comprehensive tour of Palestine today will find that in the country districts the ancient fertility of the land is being restored by the flourishing agricultural settlements which have been established in the

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[67] I employ the term "produce," in the way in which it is used by Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York: Routledge, 2008, 2nd Ed.), 4.

[68] See, for example, the booklet by Jacob Ettinger, *Emek Jezreel: A Flourishing District, its Decline and Rise* (Jerusalem: Keren Hayesod, 1926).

past three years.[69]

After this historical Introduction – and before presenting various tours, according to their length and their geographical destination (Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa) – the *Book of Sightseeing* focused on the agricultural settlements, including a long list of those that merited a visit. In particular, it was the Valley of Jezreel/Esdraelon to receive attention and to be presented in detail:

> The greater part of the colonizing activity of the Zionist Organization has been concentrated during the post-war years in the Valley of Jezreel or Plain of Esdraelon, which stretches from Carmel on the West to the Jordan on the East and faces Nazareth in the North and Jenin (Ain Jenim) in the South. Here will be found the outstanding success of Zionist settlements' work. Most of the area now occupied by flourishing villages was covered with swamp (…) when acquired by the Jewish National Fund, which carried out extensive reclamation works (…). The Keren Hayessod has established a series of settlements in the centre and eastern half of the valley, which have progressed in a remarkable manner. No visitor in Palestine can afford to devote less than several days at least to a tour of the Emek [valley] settlements that show the Zionist achievements in Palestine.[70]

As remarked, it should not be considered a surprise that the Jezreel/Esdraelon valley was cited in all travelogues. For example, between September 1936 and March 1937, the Polish-born French journalist Joseph Milbauer[71] published a report of a tour he had previously done on the pages of the *L'Univers Israélite*, the Consistory's weekly. The report, called *La Palestine vous parle* [Palestine Speaks to You] and divided into 7 parts, highlighted different aspects of *Eretz Israel*, from Jerusalem[72] (with the Hebrew University[73] and the Art school Betsalel)[74] to Tel Aviv[75] (*Fig. 4*) and Jaffa.[76]

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[69] *Sefer shel tiurim* [Book of Sightseeing], Introduction, 1-2, in CZA, KKL\881.

[70] Ibid., 15.

[71] Born in Poland, he lived in France for several year, working as journalist. He was editor-in-chief of *L'Univers Israélite* between 1932 and 1943. Being "a committed Zionist," during his direction, the weekly changed its anti-Zionist stance into a "benevolent neutrality." He moved to Palestine in 1944 where he was director of the department for French publications of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem. A few lines on him are in Catherine Poujol, "The Daily Life of a Propagandist at the Paris Bureau of the Jewish National Fund (K.K.L.) 1926-1936," *Bulletin du Centre de Recherche Français à Jérusalem* 8(2001): 173-183. On the relationship between Zionism and French Judaism, see Nelly Las, *Le Mouvement Sioniste en France entre le Deux Guerres*; Id., *Le Juifs de France et le Sionisme. Un bilan: Les années 1927-1930*, in *Les Juifs de France, le Sionisme e l'Etat d'Israel*, eds. Doris Bensimon, Benjamin Pinkus (Paris: Publications Langues'O, 1987), respectively 117-132 and 133-141.

[72] "Sainte Jérusalem," *L'Univers Israélite*, 25 September 1936.

[73] "L'Université hébraïque de Jérusalem," *L'Univers Israélite*, 11 September 1936.

[74] "Un atelier d'art à Jérusalem," *L'Univers Israélite*, 9 October 1936.

[75] "Tel Aviv: Un Dahlia Blanc," *L'Univers Israélite*, 11 December 1936.

[76] "Jours de deuil et d'orgueil," *L'Univers Israélite*, 15 January 1937.

Fig. 4: La rue Allenby. Joseph Milbauer, "Tel Aviv: Un Dahlia Blanc"

But it was the Jezreel/Esdraelon valley (*Fig. 5, 6, 7*) to be described as the most important site for any visitor travelling to Palestine:

> The Jezreel valley, adorable valley! Your name sounds to any ear as a call. Thanks to you, I would be able to reply to any detractor. Here you are: once there was a frightful desert, painful like sterility. Then people came. They have drained swamps, cleared land, wooded hills, traced furrows, worked, spaded, seeded – and here you are: everything vibrates, lives and sings. And these people are the Jews.[77]

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[77] "L'adorable Vallée," *L'Univers Israélite*, 5 March 1937.

Fig. 5. Ain-Harod. Joseph Milbauer, "L'adorable Vallée"

Fig. 6. On se rend aux champs. Ibid.

Fig. 7. L'Homme et la terre. Ibid.

Of course, a description of the Jezreel/Esdraelon valley was found in Lewisohn's travelogue as well:

> When you cross the highlands of Samaria north of the Arab city of Jenin there spreads before you the famous valley of Jezreel. It extends almost from the Jordan on the east to a point beyond Nazareth on the west and north. (…) Here Sisera was pursued by the men of Barak; here the Midianites and the Amalekites assembled themselves together while on the valley's eastern edge, near the spring of Harod, Gideon and all the people that were with him encamped. The valley

has known the tread of the Egyptian and the Syrian and of the elephants of Antiochus. A knoll is pointed out at which in this old land ended the triumphant march of Napoleon. In the last days, the legend runs, the battle of Armageddon will be fought upon this plain.

During recent centuries this valley, like every other part of Palestine, fell into utter ruin and neglect. But while drought reigned in the hills, poisonous swamps made life impossible here. The springs that abound in the valley overstepped their basins and the old watercourses and turned the land into marshes. The Arabs called the western spring Ain Samune or Poison Well, and believed that anyone who drank of the water was certain to die of malaria. Forty years ago it was attempted to found a German colony here. The colonists died or fled. Pestilence steamed from this piece of earth and the Arabs avoided it in both real and superstitious terror.

Four years ago the Jewish National Fund began the work of drainage. Three years ago the Keren Hayesod began to plant colonies on the drained land. Today the greater part of the Emek Jezreel is in our hands. Jews of the Gdud Avodah, the battalion of labor, entered the steaming swamps; they turned the waters of the springs into natural channels or pipes; they gathered the swamp-water into reservoirs; they discovered that the western wells had been polluted by the sheep of the natives. Today malaria is stamped out. The valley is a place of woods and fields and delightful villages. We stood beside the spring of Harod and saw it gushing from the deep cave in the hillside and leaned over and scooped up the water in our hands and drank. We entered the cool cave and breathed the clean, fresh air, and came out into the sunlight and drew in the warmer air fragrant with the scents of harvest.[78]

In this long passage, two aspects are worth mentioning. On one hand, his description of Palestine as a land that "fell into utter ruin and neglect" was clearly part of a much larger narrative, i.e. the way in which many Americans described the Holy Land at that time. In fact, as Hilton Obenzinger states, "most American Holy Land authors depict[ed] the land in ways similar to the way in which it was described by Mark Twain, who lament[ed] that 'Palestine sits in sackcloth and ashes'."[79] On the other hand, Lewisohn was strongly influenced by the Zionist narrative concerning *Eretz Israel* as well. In fact, in his account, 1900 years of Palestine's history were completely missing: all the centuries following the destruction of the Jewish Temple - starting with the Romans, through the Arabs and up to the Ottomans - where other populations had ruled the country, had disappeared and been summarized in the two words, "ruin and neglect." In this way, Lewisohn was doing nothing more than presenting the Zionist narrative, according to which there was a direct continuity between the biblical Jewish presence and the Zionist presence, as if nothing had happened in the interim.[80] At the same time, Lewisohn portrayed the Jewish presence as closely connected to both redeeming the land and

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[78] Lewisohn, *Israel*, 176-177.

[79] Hilton Obenzinger, *American Palestine: Melville, Twain, and the Holy Land Mania* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999), xvi.

[80] On the way Zionism reconstructed the history of the Jewish people, see, among the many contributors, Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots*, 13-21; Uri Ram, "Zionist Historiography and the Invention of Modern Jewish Nationhood: The Case of Ben Zion Dinur," *History and Memory* 7/1 (1995): 91-124.

eradicating malaria; that is, bringing civilization and progress to Palestine. This element, of course, also played a huge role in Zionism's narrative concerning its presence and activity in *Eretz Israel*.[81]

A Jewish Land: Encounter with the Arabs

Tel Aviv and the agricultural settlements were therefore the two most evident achievements of the Zionist movement. Yet, they made differing impressions on travelers. While Tel Aviv was considered the "first Hebrew city" and its entirely Jewish population was most striking, the newly established agricultural settlements gave an opportunity for travelers to reflect on the encounter between Jews and Arabs.

For example, the Italian Zionist Paola Malvano visited Palestine in 1932 and she wrote of her reaction to the city of Tel Aviv in a report published in *Israel*, the leading Italian Zionist monthly at that time:

> The shop signs – how precious to our eyes! – were written in stylized modern Hebrew characters. And in every store the seller was Jewish, of course. Horse-drawn carriage drivers; bus drivers; people selling shoe laces; beggars squatting on the sidewalk; young boys walking side by side with their beautiful girls; those old ladies with shopping bags. They were Jewish. All of them were Jewish. This was extraordinary. And I was one of them. The exceptions were the 'others', those who were not wearing European clothes: both the Arabs and the British policemen who were wearing brown uniforms. And for the first time in my life I realized in its full reality that I was Jewish, that I had been born Jewish; neither Catholic, nor Greek, nor Arab, but Jewish.[82]

In writing this, Paola Malvano did not differ from Lewisohn's reflections on Tel Aviv, and the fact that Jews - and only Jews - had built it:

> The Jews have built a city. They have not built it as entrepreneurs, furnishing the capital and hiring labor. They have built a city with their own hands. Every spadeful of earth has been turned up by Jews, every brick has been laid by Jews. The large ugly houses and the small charming houses and the superb Rutenberg Electric Light and Power Station have been planned by the minds and built by the hands of Jews.[83]

Travelling in the Galilee was obviously different, given that the majority of the population was Arab and that the Jews there made up a tiny minority. This

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[81] On this topic, see Sandra M. Sufian, *Healing the Land and the Nation. Malaria and the Zionist Project in Palestine, 1920-1947* (Chicago-London: University of Chicago Press, 2007); Marcella Simoni, *A Healthy Nation. Zionist Health Policies in British Palestine 1930-1939* (Venezia: Cafoscarina, 2010).

[82] Paola Malvano, "Impressioni di un viaggio in Erez Israel," *Rassegna Mensile di Israel* 7/9 (1932-33): 423. During an interview I conducted with Paola Malvano in 1998, she told me that the feeling of being in an "entirely Jewish place" was still the most amazing memory she had of that trip. Author's interview with Paola Malvano, Jerusalem, 15 May 1998.

[83] Lewisohn, *Israel*, 194.

actually gave the opportunity for the travelers to address the issue of the Arab presence in Palestine.

Among them, it is worth mentioning the French Jew André Spire.[84] He accompanied Chaim Weizmann on a tour to Palestine in 1920 and in 1929 published a travelogue in the French monthly bulletin *Palestine*. Spire - who was previously in favor of 'Territorialism'[85] and had been close to Israel Zangwill, the leader of this group - had joined Zionism, thus becoming "a Zionist if not because the first territory concretely open to the Jewish people was Palestine; Zionist, if possible, in spite of myself, reluctantly, aware of the contradictions implied by the Balfour Declaration, anxious for the difficult and, apparently, unsolvable Arab [sic] and Christian problems that the reconstruction of a Jewish National Home in Palestine presents."[86]

Spire's first meeting with the Arab population took place in one of the agricultural settlements established by Zionists close to a large Arab city, Lydda [nowadays Lod]. Spire describes the difference between a group of Arabs "beautifully dressed, but whose majority had ill eyes, devoured by flies" and "a group of Jewish Boy-Scouts, both boys and girls (…) with the rucksack on their shoulders, in their net and simple khaki uniform, slender, straight, with bronze-colored skin, a frank look, a noble posture."[87] The difference between Arabs and Jews is depicted in an even stronger way when Spire refers to "a young Jew," a member of the settlement of Zikhron Ya'akov – one of the first Jewish agricultural settlements created in Palestine at the end of 19th century – who was riding a "bay-brown mare, his quivering legs, inebriated by the cool evening air, of his audacity, of his youth, of his health."[88] In these two episodes, Spire compares the strength and the health of the Jewish population with the weakness and illness of the Arab one, thus completely supporting the Zionist narrative concerning both the 'regeneration of the Jew'[89] and the medical

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[84] A. Spire (1868-1966) was a French poet, member of the *Conseil d'État* and an active Zionist. In 1940 he left for the United States, where he taught French Literature at the École libre des Hautes études in New York.

[85] It was a Jewish political movement that advocated for the creation of a sufficiently large Jewish territory (or territories), not necessarily in *Eretz Israel*. A Territorialist Jewish Organization was established in 1905, but it was dissolved in 1925. On this issue, see Gur Alrorey, " 'Zionism without Zion'?: Territorialist Ideology and the Zionist Movement, 1882–1956," *Jewish Social Studies* 18/1 (2011): 1-32.

[86] André Spire, "Un voyage en Palestine en 1920," *Palestine* 3/1 (1929): 18.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Ibid., 19.

[89] On the creation of a new type of Jew, a "muscular" one compared to the weak Diaspora Jew, see Oz Almog, *The Sabra: The Creation of the New Jew* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Todd S. Presner, *Muscular Judaism: The Jewish Body and the Politics of Regeneration* (New York: Routledge, 2007), in particular Chapter 5 "The Land of Regeneration." On the importance of the corporeal in Jewish life of *Eretz Israel* during the 1920s and 1930s, see Nina S. Spiegel, *Embodying Hebrew Culture. Aesthetics, Athletics, and Dance in the Jewish Community of Mandate Palestine* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2013), in particular Chapter 2 "Promoting Sport: The

progress Jews were bringing to Palestine. In fact, as said, land reclamation and the simultaneous fight against malaria, as well as many other illnesses, were the main accomplishments of the *Yishuv* and of Zionist propaganda during the British Mandate.

A few lines later, Spire presents another typical comparison between the flourishing and green Jewish cultivated fields and the spoiled and barren Arab (un)cultivated lands. While traveling towards the Galilee, Spire has the chance to gaze out the Jezreel/Esdraelon valley:

> European houses, orchards, quantities of vegetables. Everywhere around, well cultivated fields, swivel ploughs, cheerful reaper-binders, yellow and red, rising above the ground their small wings that made them look like reversed tiny wind-mills. And then we go back to the outback, where there are occasionally dark tents hosting nomads, stone-coloured sheep and black goats with silky pendants on their ears, whose teeth have devoured flowers, herbs, even their roots, and rough and thorny bushes; we cross fields that are lazily ploughed by the traditional swing ploughs, pulled by oxen and donkeys decorated with amulets, Arab villages with their graves that are covered with crumbling mud, houses and towns without any tree, any shade if not the one provided by destroyed wells or by hostile fence sticks.[90]

For Spire, Palestine was not a mother, as it was for Alfonso Pacifici, whose profile was never forgotten by her sons. Neither was it a "poor widow," as one of the Sephardi Jews "who regretted the time when they used to live peacefully under the Turkish tolerance" had told him. Thanks to the Zionist presence, Palestine had now become a "magnificent adolescent, whose hand all parties would soon dispute."[91]

As Spire's description shows, travelogues presented a dichotomized picture in which superior cultured and productive Jews lived alongside uncultured and unproductive Arabs. In this way, they were certainly recalling Zionist propaganda, such as in the case of the movie *Aviv be'erets yisrael* [Spring in the Land of Israel], which showed "the desolate landscape before the construction of Tel Aviv, [with] pictures of the stony desert landscape."[92]

Lewisohn's accounts fit very well into this category. According to him, no progress had been made by Arabs, who were passive in using their time and primitive in their cultivation of the fields and in building their houses. In this regard Lewisohn was also influenced by the American narrative vis-à-vis the Arabs, particularly that of Protestant travelers. As Stephanie Stidham Roger states, Arabs living in Palestine had become, in their eyes, the "noble savage,"

First Maccabiah Games, 1932."
[90] Spire, *Un voyage en Palestine*, 19.
[91] Ibid., 21.
[92] Yoram Bar Gal, *Propaganda and Zionist Education, The Jewish National Fund 1924-1947* (Rochester: The University of Rochester Press, 2003), 158.

and several accounts of travels to the Holy Land highlighted the "primitive" way of life that had "remain[ed] remarkably unchanged" since the time of Jesus.[93]

In contrast to the Arabs' idleness there was Jews' activity, which Lewisohn described both in terms of the advanced systems of land cultivation they used and of the destiny they were able to shape and determine:

A village of Arab *fellaheen*, or peasants. The huts are grayish-white, built of mud and mortar. They are small, irregular cubes, more like tombs than houses. They huddle together or are connected by crumbling walls, so that the village straggles up the hillside in a compact, irregular, inextricable mass. Windows are few. The door-holes are dark and cavernous. Some of the flat roofs are of mud, some thatched with rotting straw. There is no tree. By the walls men sit in the sun cross-legged. A few children play feebly. A woman is grinding corn between two stones. (…) Beyond the village, at the foot of hill, stretch a few ragged fields. A man is plowing. He has a bullock hitched to a wooden plow. The grinding of the corn, the plowing of the field have not changed in a hundred generations… Still farther on, if the village is lucky, there is a grove of small orange trees. Near the orange-grove is the well used for irrigation and a tired, dispirited camel walks round and round and round turning the handle of the primitive irrigation pump. (…) The village is listless. The squatters in the sun hardly move. People on the road are unaware of time. A man, sitting sidewise on an ass, trots at a snail's pace. It will take him a long, hot day to ride from Nazareth to Nablus… Another on his ass leads a camel on which are all his household goods: a few sacks, a few earthenware jars, a few bits of brass. His wife trudges behind the camel in the deep sand… Suddenly there is a rattling. A wagon full of grain or fruit drawn by two vigorous mules. A youthful driver with a face full of intelligence and energy. In the back of the wagon two others: bare arms and throats, taut muscles, sun-browned by labor in the open fields despite near-sighted eyes and the foreheads of thinkers. Chalutzim. (…) The road turns and the Arab village disappears. Across well-cultivated fields appear the barracks and houses of a Jewish colony. The houses are roofed with orange tiles, and these orange tiles will soon be as characteristic of the land as the cube-like Arab huts. Trees appear: the inevitable eucalyptus that drain swamps, but also the broad-leaved figtree, the almond and the olive, the peach tree and the palm. (…) Afar comes the inimitable melancholy sound – half cry, half wail – of the mechanical irrigation pump. In the immediate foreground olive trees border the field. A group of pickers is at work: vigorous girls in neat white head-kerchiefs, youths in open blouses. The car stops. Shalom! They smile and give us handful of olives. They are bringing to the land, they are bringing to themselves life and peace…[94]

There is barely a need to highlight the extent to which these lines are soaked with Orientalist stereotypes. Jews are associated with every possible positive aspect: intelligence, culture, innovation, vigor, activism, progress, friendship, future, life.[95] In contrast, Arabs are linked with the opposite qualities: primitivism, lack of progress, passivism, laxity, past and death: the one that

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[93] Stidham Roger, *Inventing the Holy Land*, 68.

[94] Lewisohn, *Israel*, 149-150.

[95] This passage, which highlights the intelligence and energy associated with vigor and muscles, strictly recalls Max Nordau's thoughts on that issue as well as the wider Zionist ideal of the 'muscled Jews.' See Todd Samuel Presner, " 'Clear Heads, Solid Stomachs, and Hard Muscles': Max Nordau and the Aesthetics of Jewish Regeneration," *Modernism/Modernity* 10/2 (2003): 269-296.

emerges from their houses, similar to tombs, and the one that they are responsible for having so far brought to all of Palestine. On this point, Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin's statement seems particularly accurate: "the 'redemption of the land' (…) was also its redemption from the East, and its reintegration into the West. The transformation of the Jew into the new Jew was also the transformation of the land that attempted to preserve the Arab 'view'."[96]

Conclusions

The travelogues that Zionist travelers published in the 1920s and 1930s ended by being subsumed into a wider Zionist discourse concerning *Eretz Israel*. In a way, the attempt of the *Yishuv* to win the 'hearts and minds' of Jewish tourists by presenting them with the achievements of Zionism was even more successful than expected. The travelers completely supported the Zionist discourse and narrative, enriching it with their personal experience. Once again, it is useful to read what Lewisohn wrote in his book:

> My description of the land of Palestine and of the people and of the work there has been tentative and fragmentary. But it has been so quite consciously. For what I have desired to communicate is a vision that I saw, an atmosphere that I felt, a hope that is going forth, a dream that has been dreamed so long and so passionately that it has passed, that it is passing into the world of reality. (…) To not a few of my readers what I shall now say will be a twice-told tale. But to the majority of Americans it will not be so. I am sure that there are thousands of thoughtful people, even of Jews, in America who have but the vaguest notion of those international events and agreements that have transformed the Zionist aspiration into a historic fact and into an inescapable obligation upon the Jewry of the world.[97]

It is beyond the scope of this article to evaluate whether Lewisohn succeeded in reaching thousands of American Jews, or to assess whether the other travelers circulated their travelogues in the Jewish communities they belonged to. Nevertheless, what is sure is that these travelogues were available to the larger public and became part of Zionist literature not only on Palestine, but also on the achievements of the Zionist project in *Eretz Israel*.

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[96] Amon Raz-Krakotzkin, "The Zionist Return to the West and the Mizrachi Jewish Perspective," in *Orientalism and the Jews*, eds. Ivan Davidson Kalmar, Derek J. Penslar (Lebanon, NH: Brandeis University Press, 2005), 170.

[97] Lewisohn, *Israel*, 230-231.

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Graphic Novels Explore an (Un-)Holy Land

by *Nina Fischer*

Abstract

In recent years, graphic novels have staked a claim for cultural respectability, especially through their often-bold analysis of divisive social and political issues; for instance, in travelogues exploring today's Israel and Palestine. This article analyses Joe Sacco's Palestine *(1993-6) and* Footnotes in Gaza *(2009), Sarah Glidden's* How to Understand Israel in 60 Days or Less *(2010), and Guy Delisle's* Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City *(2012) to demonstrate how graphic artists update the long cultural tradition of travel to the Holy Land representations. I argue that graphic novels are a contemporary chapter in portrayals of what the corpus describes as a decidedly unholy land of conflict.*

- **Introduction**
- **Joe Sacco's** *Palestine* **and** *Footnotes in Gaza*
- **Sarah Glidden's** *How to Understand Israel in 60 Days or Less*
- **Guy Delisle's** *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City*
- **Conclusions**

Introduction

In 1991, *Maus II,* the second part of Art Spiegelman's depiction of his parents' survival of the Holocaust and their lives in the aftermath of the genocide, made the *New York Times* bestseller list. In a response entitled *A Problem of Taxonomy,* published on 29 December 1991, Spiegelman, though delighted by the recognition of his work, asked the editors to move it from the fiction to the non-fiction list, despite its use of cartoon imagery. His insistence on *Maus* being a work of non-fiction shone an unexpected spotlight on comics, "a form of sequential art, often in the form of a strip or a book, in which images and text are arranged to tell a story,"[1] a genre that had hitherto primarily been known for portrayals of superheroes with magical powers and busty women.

Spiegelman was among the artists paving the way for an entirely new development. In recent years, comics – or graphic novels[2] – have staked a

[1] Will Eisner, *Graphic Storytelling and Visual Narrative: Principles and Practices from the Legendary Cartoonist*, updated ed. (New York, London: Norton, 1996), xvii.
[2] In order to differentiate the material I examine from fictional comics, I use the term 'graphic

claim for cultural respectability, especially through their often-bold analysis of divisive social and political issues. Indeed, as Charles Hatfield argues, there are now graphic novels that "refuse fiction altogether, favoring history, the reportage, the essay, and the memoir."[3] A striking example of an artistic engagement with complex socio-political realities is provided by portrayals of contemporary Israel and Palestine. The first of these works, Joe Sacco's *Palestine*, a perspective on the Palestinian plight written in the 1990s, is the best known, but a number of others have been published in recent years. Many have won awards, demonstrating the widespread interest in the subject and form. Some of these are works by local artists,[4] others by international artists[5]

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novel' despite its inherent problems. This term has no strict definition; it broadly refers to a story in book form using comic images. Calling such works 'novels' might imply fictional content; however, the term is increasingly used to denote factual material as well. Some artists have rejected this usage, claiming that their works are 'comics'. See, for example, Daniel Raeburn, *Chris Ware* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 110. The term is used here for simplicity's sake, since this article is interested in motifs rather than terminological debates.

[3] Charles Hatfield, *Alternative Comics: An Emerging Literature* (Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi, 2005), 111.

[4] Israeli artists have also produced graphic novels exploring aspects of contemporary Israel; some of them have been published in English or French, implying that they are not merely intended for an Israeli-internal discourse. The best-known example is Ari Folman's prize-winning *Waltz with Bashir* – initially an animated movie (Sony Pictures Classics, 2008), later published as the graphic novel *Waltz with Bashir: A Lebanon War Story*, illustr. David Polonsky (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2009) – which examines the publically and individually suppressed memory of the 1982 Sabra and Shatila massacres. Uri Fink has repeatedly delved into the Arab-Israeli conflict: Uri Fink, *Fink! Tales from the Ragin' Region* (El Sobrante: Hippy Comix, 2002) and *Haaretz Shelanu* (Moshav Ben Shemen: Modan, 2008), which was also issued in French as *Israël-Palestine entre guerre et paix* (Paris: Berg International éditeurs & Uri Fink, 2008). Rutu Modan's *Exit Wounds* (Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly, 2006) explores Israeli life during the Intifada. More recent publications address Jerusalem through the ages, including Hannah and David Amit, *Rehov Be-Yerushalaim: Masa B'sman me-tkufat ha-mekorit ad hayom/A Street in Jerusalem: A Journey through Time, from the Biblical Period to the Present*, illustr. Evgeny Barashkov (Or Yehuda: Kinneret - Zmora Bitan, 2013).

[5] Miriam Libicki's *Jobnik: An American Girl's Adventures in the Israeli Army* (Quitlam: Real Gone Girl Studies, 2008) features both the Israeli and the international perspective, as it portrays an American Jewish woman's service in the Israeli army during the outbreak of the second Intifada in 2000. Maximilien LeRoy's *Faire Le Mur* (Tournai: Casterman, 2010) and Harvey Pekar and J.T. Waldman's *Not the Israel My Parents Promised Me* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2012) take on Israeli-Palestinian relations. *Faire Le Mur* offers a testimonial platform for LeRoy's friend Mahmoud Abu Srour, who lives in the Aida refugee camp in Bethlehem alongside the wall. This graphic novel details Mahmoud's inner life and external situation, both of which are interwoven with and symbolized in the barrier, while LeRoy plays no part in the narrative. Harvey Pekar's posthumously published work is very critical of Israel: Pekar and his co-author Waldman examine the meaning of Jewish identity and the history of Israel and the Middle East conflict from an American perspective, providing a detailed and thoroughly researched discussion of the Jewish, Israeli, and Palestinian past and present. Their criticism of the occupation extends to a refusal to visit the country. Other graphic novels engaging with the Palestinian struggle include Philippe Squarzoni, *Torture Blanche* (Albi: Les Requins Marteaux, 2004), Roannie and Oko, *L'Intruse - Une Internationale en Palestine* (Paris: Vertige Graphic, 2010–2012), and Anaële and Delphine Hermans, *Les Amandes Vertes: Lettres de Palestine* (Berlin: Editions Warum, 2011).

and among their ranks, there are several travelogues, all of which focus on life in the shadow of the Middle East conflict.

In the spirit of this special issue, I focus on three graphic novels that depict Israel and Palestine as experienced by a visitor from abroad: Joe Sacco's *Palestine* (1993–6) and *Footnotes in Gaza* (2009); Sarah Glidden's *How to Understand Israel in 60 Days or Less* (2010); and Guy Delisle's *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City* (2012).

The three authors have produced particularly popular volumes, all of which appeal to a wide audience: the texts were written in or have been translated into English and are therefore accessible to a broad and potentially global readership. Moreover, they all have been translated into other languages, pointing to their extensive circulation. The three offer a contemporary, popular-culture version of a well-known topos in the cultural archive: the journey to the Holy Land.

However, the journeys of the three authors selected here are guided by differing interests and intentions. The writers approach the topic from widely divergent perspectives and subject positions and therefore produce interesting material for comparative purposes: Sacco's works are journalistic, recounting several months-long trips; Glidden's travelogue recalls an identity-seeking voyage of two weeks; and Delisle's work describes a year spent in Jerusalem with his family. Sacco's books in particular feature a less prominent focus on travel as such, but they are nonetheless a portrayal of his journey to Israel and Palestine and are thus compatible with my focus. It is this combination of different perspectives that has guided my selection, as it permits an investigation of how the 'journey to the Holy Land' motif comes to the fore in works that are otherwise seemingly only connected by their setting and graphic novel format.

Over the centuries, travelers of all three monotheistic faiths have used many genres – chronicles, memoirs, and letters – to tell the world about their visits to the landscape of scripture, as discussed in this special issue. These contemporary graphic travelogues differ from earlier reports in both format and content: the voyages are not pilgrimages or crusades, nor are they colonial expeditions. Instead, what we find are the accounts of travelers observing and documenting life in modern Israel and Palestine, whose conceptions of the area are shaped less by religious stories than by the pervasive news images of violent conflict between Israelis and Palestinians.

The content of these works represents a radical break from previous descriptions of journeys to the Holy Land; in addition, in terms of format, they specifically speak to a contemporary audience that does not contest the genre's prerogative to engage with political issues, that possesses the necessary "visual

literacy"[6] to understand the narrative combination of images and text, and for whom the everyday language used is not off-putting – indeed, this audience might even be drawn to the works because of the format.

In order to address both of these elements (the travel motif and its updated format) and maintain a focus on local realities rather than the experience of the Holy Land through preconceived notions, this article will scrutinize a number of elements in the work of Sacco, Glidden, and Delisle. Among these are the positioning and interests of the author-protagonist within the travel narrative; the visual strategies employed; the encounters with local realities, specifically with respect to socio-political aspects; and the narrators' accounts of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, often depicted as the political-spiritual and touristic centers of Israel, respectively.

In this article, I propose that graphic novels are a contemporary chapter in a long-standing tradition of travellers describing their voyages to the Holy Land, now depicting journeys through a landscape of decidedly unholy conflict. Popular culture plays an immense role in our modern lives; indeed, it "fashions the landscape of the political imagination,"[7] and I maintain that these graphic travelogues offer an innovative way for readers to develop an understanding of a place that is constantly politicized in the media and highly significant in the collective memory of all three monotheistic faiths. Given the appealing nature of and the current interest in the graphic format, these works must be recognized as a development that advances a long cultural tradition into the present by employing genre-specific tools to increase awareness of political issues. Joke Hermes has defined "cultural citizenship" as "a process of bonding and community building, and reflection on that bonding, that is implied in partaking of the text-related practices of reading, consuming, celebrating, and criticizing offered in the realm of (popular) culture."[8] She argues that pop-culture has a high "democratic potential"[9] because it fosters participation through potentially widespread interest.[10] The graphic novels selected are

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[6] John A. Walker, Sarah Chaplin, *Visual Culture: An Introduction* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1997), 111 ff.

[7] John Street, *Politics and Popular Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997), 26.

[8] Joke Hermes, *Re-reading Popular Culture* (Malden: Blackwell, 2005), 10.

[9] Ibid., 4.

[10] It can be argued that the works discussed here, in particular Sacco's, adhere to a tradition of alternative, underground comics and should not be described using the term 'popular', as this refers to more commercialized products of popular culture. This argument is particularly valid in light of the fact that most products produced for the Western mass market do not engage with controversial political topics, unlike the graphic novels scrutinized in this essay. However, the recent trend within the graphic novel format of addressing complicated socio-political issues shows that while arguments about cultural citizenship might not be compelling for other pop-culture products, they are a driving force here. Moreover, Sacco might initially have written for a niche audience, but the widespread interest demonstrated by the translations of his works indicates that they are no longer niche products, even if the graphic novels' politics are not attuned to American or Canadian mainstream views.

explicit about their intention to convey the contested issues of life in Israel and Palestine and to culturally and ethically engage the readers rather than being merely picture books of holy sites and touristic experiences.

Scott McCloud maintains that the visual nature of cartoons and especially their simplification strategy enables self-identification with characters who seem to be a blank slate.[11] Authors often draw themselves into the story they are recounting, in what Charles Hatfield has called the 'cartoon self',[12] and their self-descriptions as travelers allow readers to identify with them, too: We have all been tourists. Readers also expect a certain subjective positioning that (depending on the political situation or the characteristics represented) might lead them to reject or only partially accede to identification. In this corpus, the potential identification is further enhanced through the *topos* of the Holy Land journey and the role it plays in the collective memory of all three Abrahamic faiths – this is a cultural motif we can think ourselves into; for members of one of these mnemonic communities, it is part of their cultural heritage.

Only a realistic representation of the setting will allow us to recognize the iconic images of the Holy Land, such as the golden cupola of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, but the contrast between nonrepresentational characters and a realistic setting is another common characteristic of graphic novels. Scott McCloud has argued that the combination of a realistic background with simplified characters "allows readers to *mask* themselves in a character and safely enter a sensually stimulating world."[13] This is yet another way in which the readers' cultural participation in the larger issues is ensured.

However, this setting is familiar to us not only through the imagery of cultural memory. We live in a world that is saturated by news reports of the Middle East conflict, most of them violent scenes of exploding buses, stone-throwing teenagers clad in checkered scarves, Israeli soldiers at checkpoints in full military gear, and grieving mourners from both sides. The graphic novel format and its opportunities for visual recognition and identification allow the artists to combine narratives drawn from the cultural archive with media images, thus producing a new form of the 'journey to the Holy Land' chronicle and a new genre of conflict reportage.

Graphic novels as a format have received a significant amount of scholarly attention, especially in recent years, with the shift towards historical-political and autobiographical work. One scholarly focus has been comics created by Jewish authors, who have always played an important role in comic arts, especially (but not exclusively) in America; however, this scholarly interest only

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[11] Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1994), 36–42.

[12] Hatfield, *Alternative Comics*, 114.

[13] McCloud, *Comics*, 43 (emphasis in original).

connects to Glidden's exploration of her Jewish identity.[14] Other related issues have also been the subject of recent research, including the use of religion in the graphic novel[15] and the transnational element in comic art.[16] Of my selected works, only Sacco's *Palestine* has received significant attention;[17] very little research has been conducted on graphic novels and the Middle East conflict otherwise.[18] Juneau and Sucharov,[19] for example, explore the use of graphic novels in the classroom in connection to international relations and the conflict in particular – specifically, their potential as a teaching tool that provides direct insight into different worlds, helps readers navigate the inherent complexities through imagery, and familiarizes pupils with how images create meaning and may distort 'reality'. Although some attention has been devoted to the subject of travel,[20] the specific perspective of travels to the Holy Land, which this special issue explores, has not yet been considered in relation to graphic novels.

Joe Sacco's *Palestine* and *Footnotes in Gaza*

Joe Sacco's *Palestine* recounts his impressions from a two-month trip to the Occupied Palestinian Territories in the winter of 1991-2 during the first Palestinian Intifada [uprising]. All of Sacco's travel pieces document suffering in areas of war and conflict, and *Palestine* is no exception: It portrays the author's (mostly) random encounters and the ensuing stories of life under the

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[14] See *The Jewish Graphic Novel: Critical Approaches* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2008), eds. Samantha Baskind, Ranen Omer Sherman; "Special Issue: Jewish Comics," *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies*, ed. Derek Parker Royal, 29/2 (2011); Fredrik Strömberg, *Jewish Images in the Comics: A Visual History* (Seattle: Fantagraphics, 2012).

[15] See, for example, *Graven Images: Religion in Comic Books and Graphic Novels*, eds. David A. Lewis, Christine Hoff Kraemer (New York, London: Continuum, 2010) and Thomas Hausmanninger, "Postsäkularität in Comics," *Stimmen der Zeit* 135/228/6 (2010): 619–630.

[16] *Transnational Perspectives on Graphic Narratives: Comics at the Crossroads*, eds. Daniel Stein, Shane Denson, Christina Meyer (London, New York: Bloomsbury 2013).

[17] For analyses of *Palestine*, see, for example, Hans-Joachim Hahn, "'Reality beats out surrealism every time!' Realitätseffekte reconsidered: Comics als Reflexionen von Wirklichkeit," in *Der dokumentarische Comics: Reportage und Biografie*, ed. Dietrich Grünewald (Essen: Christian A. Bachmann Verlag, 2013), 75–88; Mary Layoun, "Telling Stories in Palestine: Comix Understanding and Narratives of Palestine-Israel," in *Palestine, Israel, and the Politics of Popular Culture*, eds. Rebecca L. Stein, Ted Swedenburg, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 313–337.

[18] See, for instance, Chantal Catherine Michel, "Bericht oder Propaganda? Dokumentarische Comics über den Nahostkonflikt," in *Der dokumentarische Comics: Reportage und Biografie*, ed. Dietrich Grünewald (Essen: Christian A. Bachmann Verlag, 2013), 189–206; Id., "Panels for Peace: Contributions of Israeli and Palestinian Comics to Peace-Building," *Quest: Issues in Contemporary Jewish History* 5 (2013): 205–231.

[19] Thomas Juneau and Mia Sucharov, "Narratives in Pencil: Using Graphic Novels to Teach Israeli-Palestinian Relations," *International Studies Perspectives* 11 (2010): 172–183.

[20] See, for example, Mark G. Aune, "Teaching the Graphic Travel Narrative," *Teaching the Graphic Novel*, ed. Stephen E. Tabachnick (New York: MLA, 2009), 223–229, and Candida Rifkind, "A Stranger in a Strange Land? Guy Delisle Redraws the Travelogue," *International Journal of Comic Art* 12/2–3 (2010): 268–290.

Israeli occupation.[21] Sacco's work is bold and loud, with black-and-white images with frequent shifts in size and orientation; in particularly charged moments, the images bleed into the gutters between the panels, or the panels are left open and unstructured, almost swirling across the page. At times, Sacco even uses splash panels that cover the entire page. His graphic form is a clearly identifiable and idiosyncratic narrative-visual voice, characterized by a *mise-en-scène* that tends to affect the message. An example of this is his use of perspective, in which the guns of the Israelis are drawn larger than everything else and are angled to visually emphasize the oppression of Palestinians; for instance, in the scenes taking place in Hebron, a particularly explosive location. (*Fig. 1*)

Fig. 1: Sacco, Palestine*, 127*

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[21] Among others: Joe Sacco, *Safe Area Goražde: The War in Eastern Bosnia 1992-1995* (Seattle: Fantagraphics, 2000). Id., *The Fixer: A Story from Sarajevo* (Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly 2003).

After *Palestine's* initial appearance between 1993 and 1995 as nine issues in a comic-book series, a single volume with an introduction by Edward Said was published in 2001, just at the height of the second Intifada, when the global media were focusing on the region. Said maintains that we live "in a media-saturated world in which a huge preponderance of the world's news images are controlled and diffused by a handful of men,"[22] especially when it comes to Israel/Palestine, but in his view, *Palestine* lacks any "obvious spin."[23] In other words, Said argues that *Palestine* is not influenced or distorted by its graphic novel format; rather, he feels that it presents a realistic representation of the conflict and the situation in the West Bank and Gaza, unlike the news reports, which he perceives as being manipulated. He interprets the book as the travel observations of a curious young man, maintaining that the "absence of a goal in his wanderings emphasize that he is neither a journalist in search of a story nor an expert trying to nail down the facts in order to produce a policy."[24] This *Homage to Joe Sacco* by the famous Palestinian academic (who, with his work on Orientalism, has made important contributions to the study of colonialism and its abuses of power) is a commendation for *Palestine* and Sacco's supposedly unbiased stance; Said's only mention of authorial judgment is a reference to Sacco's "unmistakable skepticism"[25] towards the Israelis.

Despite Said's acclamation, others, including Sacco himself, have noted partisanship in his work. He has clearly voiced his agenda: "I don't believe in objectivity as it's practiced in American journalism. I'm not anti-Israeli (...) It's just I very much believe in getting across the Palestinian point of view."[26] Overall, *Palestine* has received positive reviews. For example, Mary Layoun calls it "a succinct and stunning account of daily Palestinian (and, by extension, at least some aspects of Israeli) life in the Occupied Territories during the early 1990s," that absorbs and extends the "transnational circuit of media images and headlines that travels well beyond Israel or Palestine."[27]

Footnotes in Gaza differs from Sacco's first report on Palestinian life. In this volume, he explores two temporal settings: Gaza during the second Intifada – recounting his visit in the winter of 2002/3, when Gaza was still occupied and dotted with large Israeli settlement blocs – and during the Suez War in 1956. The travel motif plays a minor role; the reader only experiences the author's stays in West Jerusalem and his time in Gaza. Throughout the text, Sacco portrays the hardships of the contemporary situation, especially the bulldozing

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[22] Edward Said, "Introduction: Homage to Joe Sacco" in Joe Sacco, *Palestine* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2002), iii.

[23] Ibid., iii.

[24] Ibid., iv.

[25] Ibid., iv.

[26] The Associated Press, "Graphic Novel on IDF 'Massacres' in Gaza Set to Hit Bookstores," *Ha'aretz* 21 December 2009: http://www.haaretz.com/news/graphic-novel-on-idf-massacres-in-gaza-set-to-hit-bookstores-1.1677 (accessed 15 July 2013).

[27] Layoun, "Telling Stories in Palestine," 313–4.

of houses, but his main focus is a quest into the past: He wants to uncover the truth about the events that took place in Rafah and Khan Yunis in November 1956 by following the trail of two UN reports that noted massacres committed by the Israel Defense Forces against the local population. These reports have been reported by some authors[28] and refuted by others,[29] and Sacco maintains that they have been purposefully turned into historical footnotes. In an appendix, he offers some archival material, both on the historical incidents and on the contemporary house demolitions.

While his findings cannot be verified or disproven here, it is indisputable that Sacco is committed to uncovering the past; in the epilogue, he calls his undertaking a "historical investigation." [30] The author acknowledges the difficulties involved: Much of his argument is based on eyewitness reports, but memories change over time, sometimes drastically, and people can misremember or even create new memories from the stories told around them; consequently, eyewitness testimony is a source with inherent problems.[31] Despite this caveat, Sacco promises to seek out the "definitive version." (*Fig. 2*)

Fig. 2: Sacco, Footnotes in Gaza*, 119*

What he succeeds producing is a collage of memories, as he graphically connects the faces, names, and narratives of the people he interviewed: a living testimony of the events mediated by Sacco's graphic language. One problem he does not acknowledge is that all this testimony has been translated into English, and this translation represents an additional act of mediation; we only learn that Sacco speaks no Arabic.[32]

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[28] For example, see Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-1999* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999), 295.
[29] For examples of doubting voices, see The Associated Press, "Graphic Novel."
[30] Joe Sacco, *Footnotes in Gaza* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2009), 390.
[31] Ibid., x, 112.
[32] Ibid., 41.

Sacco, whose work falls into the category of 'comics journalism' and has a background as a journalist, positions himself as such in both texts; in *Palestine*, he dreams of being a successful documenter of what he has learned from his encounters and fantasizes about receiving prizes as "the guy with the pictures of the 'violence'."[33] He inserts himself prominently into the narrative as a reporter-participant. Hans-Joachim Hahn has pointed out that the genre rules of comic art assume authors to be witnesses to the events they portray, and this subjective approach is incompatible with the general rule dissociating news reports and opinion pieces.[34] This also has an impact on Sacco's representation of the conflict: the Israeli side is barely given a voice in *Palestine* and is not represented at all in *Footnotes in Gaza*, demonstrating Sacco's refusal to create a complex image and highlighting his intention to advocate for pro-Palestinian solidarity.

To this end, he builds on the tradition of war journalism. In *Footnotes in Gaza*, he portrays himself as part of a larger group of journalists in the Middle East. But unlike his colleagues who are scurrying after 'good stories' focused on current events,[35] he is "heading to the Gaza strip for a 50-year-old-story. Because old stories are always good ones. Old stories are a sure thing."[36] His timing also situates *Footnotes in Gaza* within the realm of journalism. The book was published in December 2009, less than a year after Israel's controversial Gaza campaign and in the wake of the much-discussed Goldstone report investigating war crimes committed by both Hamas and Israel.[37] Sacco has thus once again positioned his work within a time frame in which Israel was prominently featured in the news, primarily in a negative light.

He also aligns himself with war photography: *Footnotes in Gaza* ends on images of human suffering.[38] (*Fig. 3*)

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[33] Sacco, *Palestine,* 57.

[34] Hahn, "Reality," 83.

[35] Sacco, *Footnotes,* 3–7.

[36] Ibid., 124.

[37] For the full text, see: http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-files/Guardian/documents/2009/09/15/UNFFMGCReport.pdf. Richard Goldstone later reassessed his report: R. Goldstone, "Reconsidering the Goldstone Report on Israel and war crimes," *The Washington Post*, 1 April 2011, http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2011-04-01/opinions/35207016_1_drone-image-goldstone-report-israeli-evidence (accessed 15 July 2013).
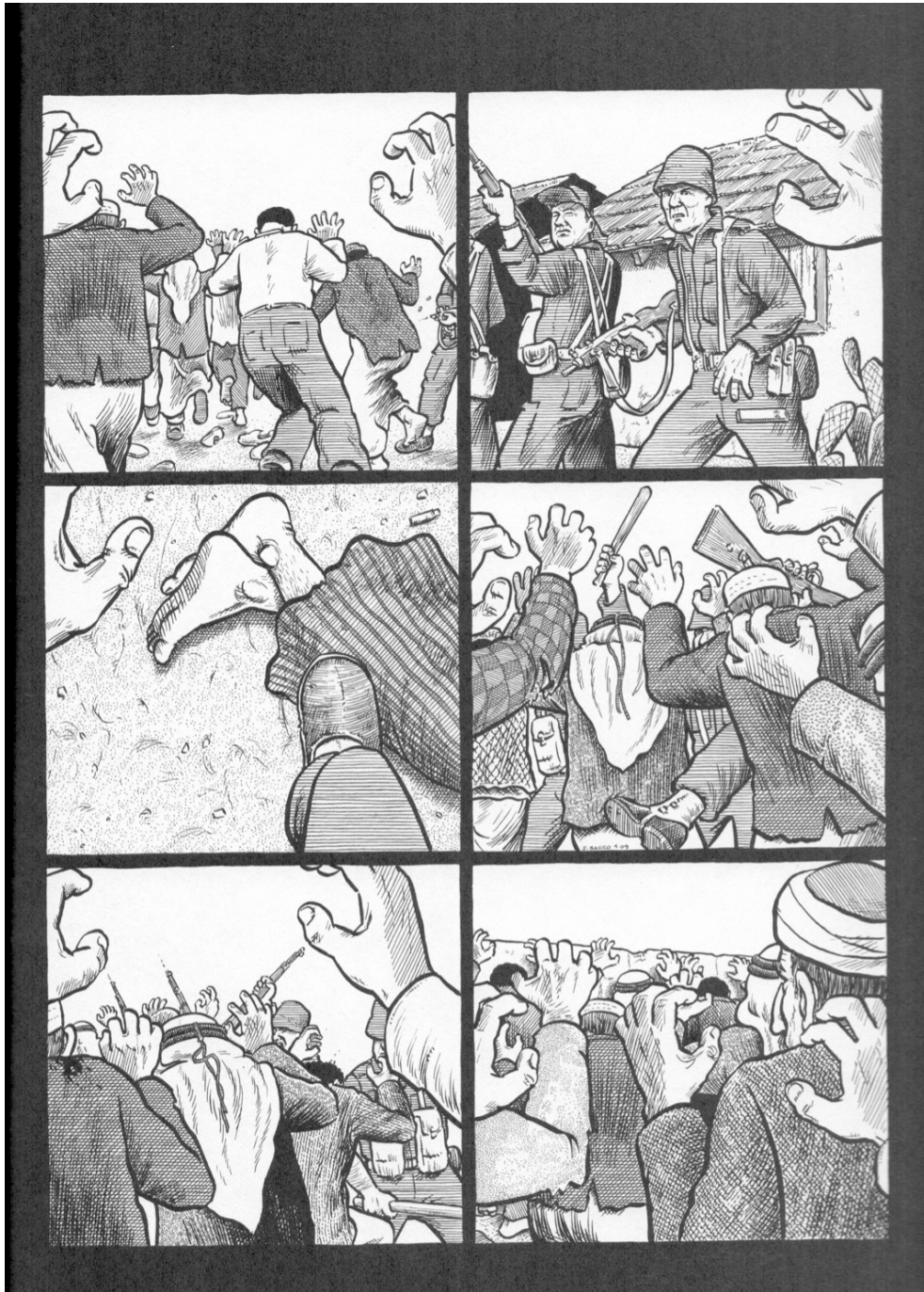
[38] Sacco, *Footnotes*, 386–8.

Fig. 3: Sacco, Footnotes in Gaza, *386*

In graphic novels, ending with a selection of photographs (or images that look like photographs) has become a tradition. Emmanuel Guibert, Didier Lefèvre, and Frédéric Lemercier were among the first to do this in *Le Photographe*, their war report from Afghanistan that interweaves comic images with

photographs,[39] and Ari Folman used the technique in *Waltz with Bashir*. In opting for this type of ending, using images of suffering without captions, Sacco visually and morally draws the audience into the witnessing collective.

However, although Sacco ostensibly explores the issues from a journalist stance, he simultaneously reminds us, often through purely visual means, of where we are. This serves to frame the report on the conflict within the recognizable framework of travel in the Holy Land, and the figure of the tourist certainly increases the accessibility of the difficult subject matter. The imagery evoked, drawn from the visual cultural archive, adds an unspoken layer to the narrative. The very first page of *Palestine* already provides a familiar picture: Sacco portrays himself leaning against the Old City ramparts of Jerusalem, looking out over hills, olive groves, and small houses, with a mosque on the horizon. This is a recognizable landscape, and the bag slung over his shoulder reminds us of his tourist status; throughout the book, we accompany Sacco on his journey through Palestine and a few sites in Israel. The theme is introduced textually as well: the chapter on visiting the Jabalia refugee camp, for instance, is entitled *Pilgrimage*[40] and thus subtly plays on the motif of Holy Land journeys and the current (decidedly unholy) realities. The initial Biblical landscape of olive trees and medieval ramparts is contrasted to the world of suffering in Gaza,[41] where many Palestinians lead rain- and mud-soaked lives in squalor; this opposition emphasizes Sacco's underlying theme that humanitarian issues in the region demand attention.

The larger travel motif of coming to Israel/Palestine, is included as well, but it primarily serves to introduce the content and the author's intention to counter the allegedly pro-Israel stance of the global media. The beginning of *Palestine* is set in Cairo, a manic setting, brimming with people, noise,[42] and also with anti-Israel sentiment.[43] Soon after his arrival in Israel/Palestine, Sacco brings up the issue of terrorism and portrays himself as concerned by the comments of a young woman infatuated by the Palestinian cause.[44] Juneau and Sucharov have argued that a central theme in *Palestine* is the attempt "to counter the widespread Western view of Palestinians as terrorists."[45] Throughout the work, Palestinian terrorism is not acknowledged; instead, the images emphasize that violence and intolerance stems exclusively from the Israelis. Indeed, towards the end of the book, after Sacco has acquainted himself and his readers with the roles he perceives in the conflict, he legitimizes some violence by referring

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[39] Emmanuel Guibert, Didier Lefévre, Frédéric Lemercier, *Le photographe* (Paris: Dupuis, 2003–2006).

[40] Sacco, *Palestine*, 217.

[41] Ibid., 175, and throughout the scenes in Gaza.

[42] Ibid., 1.

[43] Ibid., 2.

[44] Ibid., 6–7.

[45] Juneau, Sucharov, "Narratives in Pencil," 173.

to it as "*military* action against the occupying forces"[46] rather than terrorism. When an Israeli acquaintance responds to this by expressing her longing for peace, Sacco does not comment, refusing to engage with the complexities of the situation.

Framed by visits to Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, *Palestine* also offers an interpretation of the historical events that led to the establishment of the state of Israel and reveals Sacco's impressions of modern Israelis. In a chapter entitled *Return* – referencing the Jewish diasporic longing for return, the current law of return that allows all Jews to become Israeli citizens, and also the impossibility of return for Palestinian refugees – we encounter Dave, a young American Jew who is spending time in the country. Together, Sacco and Dave visit the Western Wall, the holiest site in Judaism, and Dave talks about "getting into [his] heritage." (*Fig. 4*)

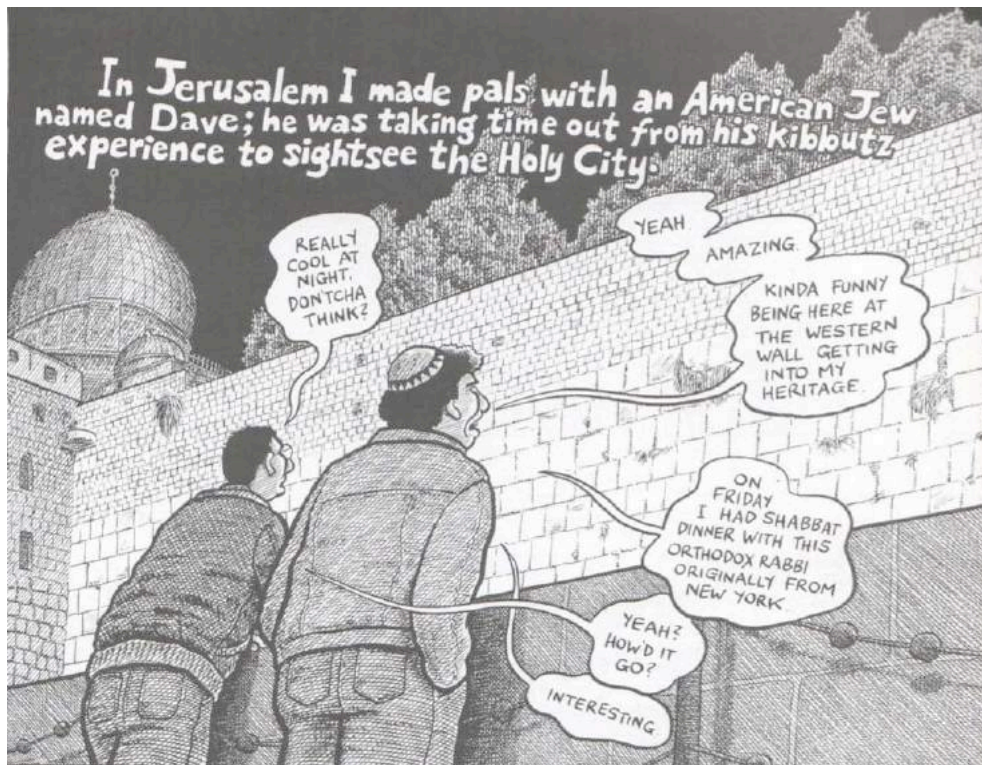*Fig. 4: Sacco,* Palestine*, 11*

This is then followed by a Jewish version of local history; in a two-page spread,[47] we move from a portrayal of the Jewish hope for a homeland (encapsulated in the phrase 'Next year in Jerusalem') to an image of God accompanied by the biblical quote (Jehoshua 1:13) in which he promises the

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[46] Sacco, *Palestine,* 264 (emphasis in the original).
[47] Ibid., 12–13.

land to the Jews, to Lord Balfour's 1917 declaration in favor of a Jewish homeland and other events in Israeli history. Sacco's commentary ends with, "it's been downhill for the Palestinians ever since,"[48] a note that needs no further explanation.

Sacco repeatedly visits Jerusalem, the main contested site between the two peoples, and it is here that he initially introduces his readers to Israelis. The first Israelis he sees are handsome soldiers, both male and female. One of the men is "taking five on the Old City ramparts… gazing over annexed Arab land… Doing a Welcome-to-Marlboro Country." (*Fig. 5*)
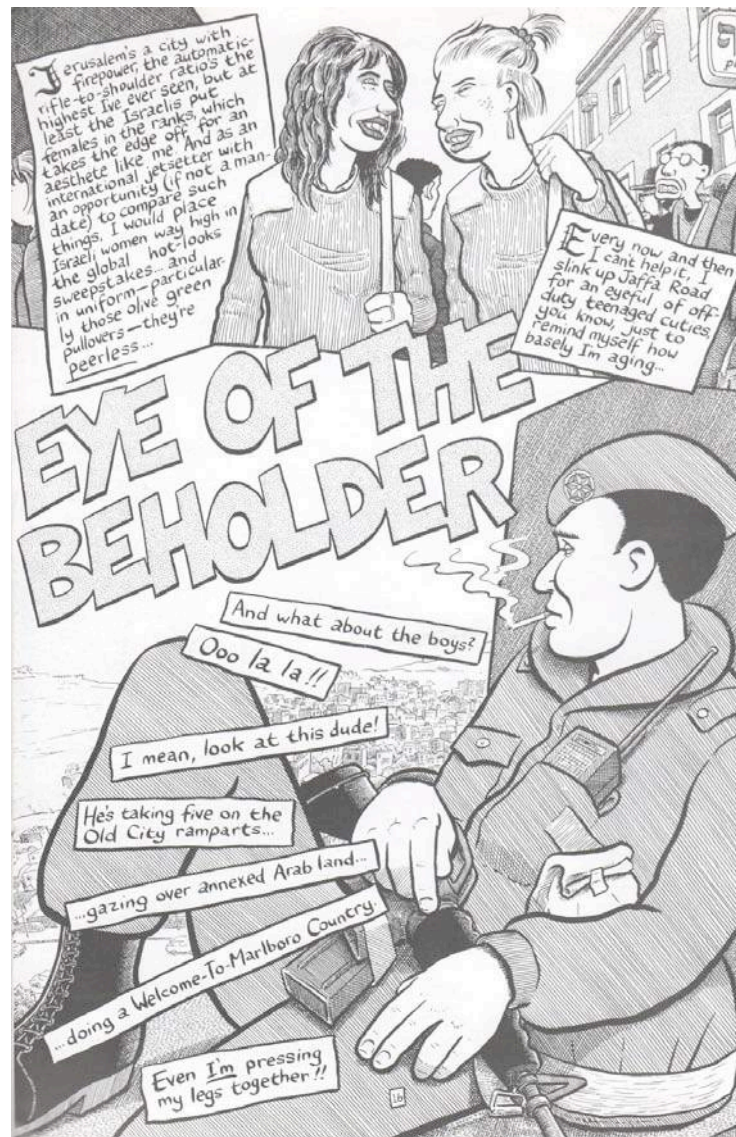

Fig. 5: Sacco, Palestine*, 16*

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[48] Ibid., 13.

The ironic comment highlights the fact that for Sacco, no encounter with Israelis can be interpreted outside the framework of the conflict, even when there is an attempt at lightheartedness: "Even I'm pressing my legs together,"[49] he says about the soldier, after observing some tourist girls who are smitten with the good-looking Israeli. Throughout his journey in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Israelis are depicted as figures of power and violence – soldiers and settlers – and not as partners in dialogue, neither for the Palestinians nor for Sacco.

Towards the end, in a chapter entitled *Through Other Eyes*,[50] Sacco encounters two young women from Tel Aviv who are visiting Jerusalem. At first, he gets along well with Naomi and Paula, who seem to be anti-settlement; as architects, they make the case that even visually, their architectural style does not fit in with the landscape. Later in their acquaintance, when they speak about the status of Jerusalem, one of the women says that the city "can never be divided again,"[51] because it represents Jewish heritage, even from her perspective as a secular Jew. This comment leads to a discussion about the conflict, but Sacco ultimately fails to acknowledge Israeli concerns and their desires for peace. When he is asked why he has not been to Tel Aviv or made an effort to learn about the other side of the conflict, his caption reads: "And what can I say, I've heard nothing but the Israeli side most of my life, that it'd take a whole other trip to see Israel, that I'd like to meet Israelis, but that wasn't why I was here…"[52] In saying that, he mirrors Said's claim in his introduction to the book that the global media is run by pro-Israel powers.[53]

When he finally decides to visit Tel Aviv, Sacco ostensibly shifts away from his one-sided perspective; however, even in this section, Palestine is his main concern. Visual elements reinforce his intentions. On a page with three panels, two portray the good life on the beach; the third panel, the exact same size, depicts a memory of the previous day in Nablus, in which the Israeli guns are once again the largest element. (*Fig. 6*)

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[49] Ibid., 16 (emphasis in the original).
[50] Ibid., 253.
[51] Ibid., 263.
[52] Ibid., 256.
[53] Said, "Introduction," iii.

Fig. 6: Sacco, Palestine*, 260*

But he does enjoy his visit: "it's pleasant enough in Tel Aviv, which seems familiar, somehow, to my Western ears and eyes."[54] This sense of recognition never occurs in his Palestinian encounters, a point that adds a certain othering element to his documentation. The world of refugee camps and the Palestinian

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[54] Ibid., 261.

plight is unquestionably different from his prior experience (and that of his readers), but this mention of how he relates to the people in 'Western' Tel Aviv suggests that Orientalism is infiltrating his perspective. This visit is followed by a return to the West Bank, its harsh realities emphasizing the frivolity of beach life just as the Nablus panel did.

Unlike most other travelogues, the very end of *Palestine* is not a representation of Sacco's departure: He is depicted on a bus headed to Gaza. Even though little Palestinian boys throw stones at the bus, he is sending us a message that he is not leaving the conflict behind; indeed, *Footnotes in Gaza* shows his return.

Sarah Glidden's *How to Understand Israel in 60 Days or Less*

Jewish American graphic artist Sarah Glidden describes her 2007 journey to the Holy Land in *How to Understand Israel in 60 Days or Less*. This trip took place within the framework of *Taglit*-Birthright Israel, a non-profit organization that takes young Jews to Israel on sponsored 10-day heritage trips, with the intention of strengthening their Jewish identity, bringing them closer to Jewish culture and history, and bridging the divide between Jewish communities around the world and the Jewish state.[55] These trips have been happening for over 10 years, and almost 350,000 young adults from countries around the world have participated.[56] Glidden was initially resistant to the concept and stayed skeptical throughout much of the journey that took her to the Golan, the Galilee, Tel Aviv, the Negev desert, the Dead Sea, and Jerusalem.[57] Her graphic novel is clearly a travelogue, and we are constantly reminded of that the fact: large parts of the work are set on planes, buses, or in hotel rooms, and there are numerous depictions of the many sights the group visits.

Much like a guidebook, the volume starts with a chapter entitled *Orientation* and a map showing the bus route of the tour and political elements; for example, it indicates which areas in the Occupied Palestinian Territories are under Palestinian Authority Control and which are controlled by the Israel Defense Force.[58] The later chapters are also introduced with maps, and again the graphic novel mirrors a guidebook; for example, the reader is provided with a detailed street map of Tel Aviv showing the highlights of the tour, such as Rabin Square.[59] The maps have multiple functions: they emphasize the fact that this is not a fictional journey; they help readers to orient themselves; and they

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[55] See S. Kelner, *Tours that bind. Diaspora, Pilgrimage, and Israeli Birthright Tourism* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2010).

[56] http://www.birthrightisrael.com/TaglitBirthrightIsraelStory/Pages/Our-Achievements.aspx (accessed 5 November 2013).

[57] On her scepticism about Birthright, see Sarah Glidden, *How to Understand Israel in 60 Days or Less* (New York: Vertigo, 2010), 23, 27–8, 63, 107, among others.

[58] Ibid., 5.

[59] Ibid., 78.

tell a story about the places being visited. Visually, Glidden works with watercolors, employing a complete palette of hues. Some of the landscape images, such as the depiction of a Galilee sunrise[60] or the Negev,[61] could easily serve as postcards. In particular, the view over the Western Wall and the golden Dome of the Rock evoke well-known images, and Glidden's caption-free illustrations only enhance the picture-effect. (*Fig. 7*)
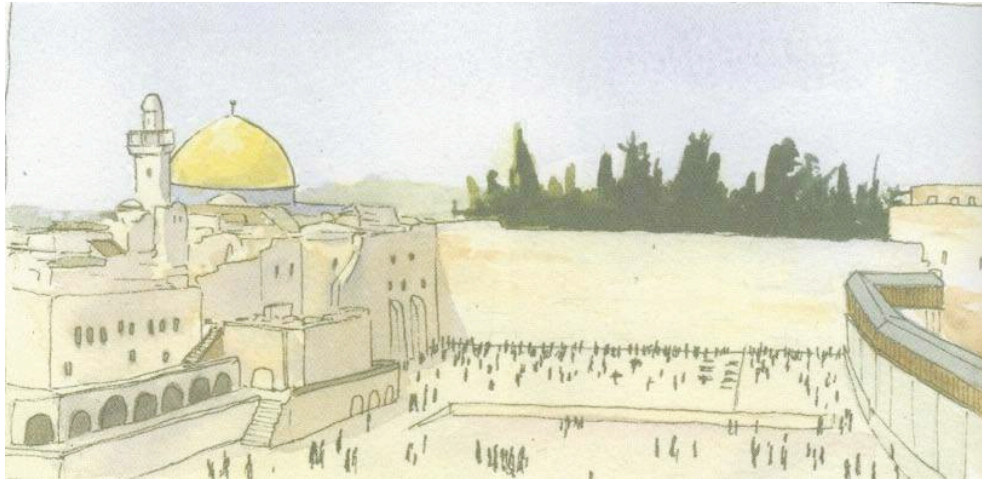

Fig. 7: Glidden's How to Understand Israel*, 176*

But this is not merely a travelogue; it is also a journey into Glidden's Jewish self-identification and the problems she (as a secular, left-wing American Jew with a Muslim boyfriend) has with Israel and its treatment of the Palestinian population. The country we encounter with Glidden is certainly not holy, but instead a land that demands difficult ethical considerations. Questions of self-definition, in particular concerning her Jewishness, are introduced in the text from the very beginning. Already in the opening scenes at Newark Airport,[62] we encounter a multitude of Jewish identities and lifestyles, from the tough Israeli security officials to Orthodox Jews, to Glidden's friend Melissa who joins her on the journey and who, although Jewish, had never even participated in a *Shabbat* meal before their trip.

Glidden's complex feelings about Israel are roused when she sees Israel's West Bank Barrier for the first time.[63] Having just arrived in the country, Glidden

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[60] Ibid., 54.
[61] Ibid., 124, 130.
[62] Ibid., 7–10.
[63] In 2002, Israel began constructing a barrier intended to physically prevent potential suicide bombers from entering Israel; upon its completion, it will be over 700 km long. See http://www.securityfence.mod.gov.il/Pages/ENG/purpose.htm (accessed 5 November 2013). Most of the barrier is a 60-meter-wide high-tech structure, but some 10% in urban areas is a 6- to 8-meter-tall concrete wall. See http://www.btselem.org/separation_barrier/map (accessed 31 May 2013).

looks out of the tour bus window, tired and jet-lagged, "waiting for the scenery to look more like how I'd imagined Israel and less like rural Pennsylvania."[64] Her ideas of Israel are given no introduction; instead, we are thrown directly into the conflict. As the bus drives along what at first looks like a prison wall, she suddenly realizes that it is the barrier. Depicting herself as agitated, with movement lines emphasizing her distress, the caption above the image reads, "And just like that, Israel has become real. Not Pennsylvania, not a bus full of Americans." (*Fig. 8*)
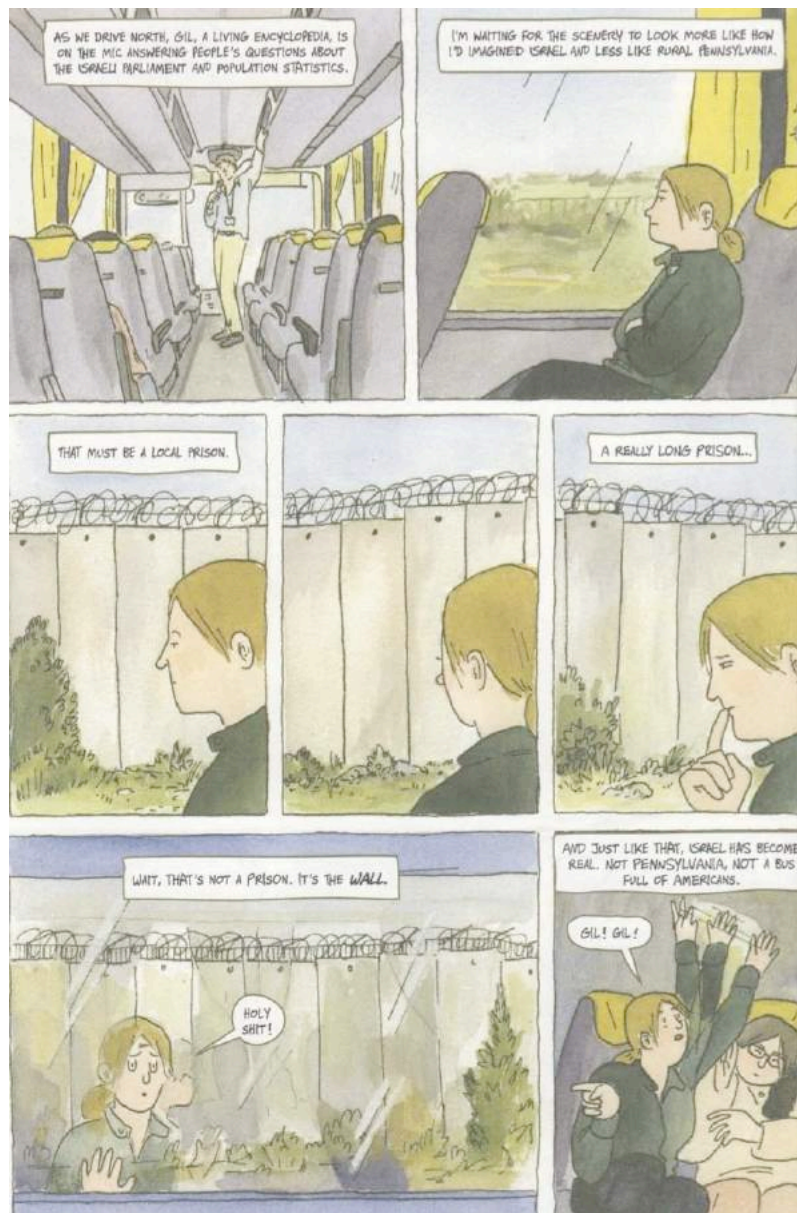

Fig. 8: Glidden's How to Understand Israel*, 24*

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[64] Glidden, *How to Understand Israel*, 24.

Israel has constructed several barriers (for instance, on the border with Gaza), but the West Bank Barrier is the most controversial because much of it has been built outside the 1949 Armistice Line (the so-called 'Green Line') and infringes on Palestinian-owned land.[65] The explanation for the barrier Glidden hears from her Israeli guide Gil immediately actualizes the conflict, the complexities of the situation, and the fact that there are no simple solutions: "My personal opinion is that, while I hate how it hurts many people, every day that I wake up and there's no attack on the news, I think about the wall."[66] Glidden had never before fully grasped the realities of Israel's security problem and its human cost; accompanying her journey, readers are also confronted with the issue.

The complexities continue to challenge her initially pro-Palestine position. Despite her misgivings about the occupation and the treatment of the Palestinians, Glidden repeatedly notes that she feels unexpectedly at home in Israel. The city settings in particular make a real impact on the New Yorker. In Holon, a city near Tel Aviv, Glidden suddenly notices how much she fits in physically. She compares this to previous experiences in other countries: in France she had felt unfashionable, in Asia she had felt immensely tall, but in Israel, as she notes, "I could easily be one of these people."[67] And there is more to this realization: "In fact, the only reason I'm *not* one of them right now is because when my great-grandparents fled Eastern Europe and considered their two options, they chose the United States."[68] It is a moment of belonging: she knows that Israel could have been her home in another life, and she blends in so well that she is spoken to in Hebrew. However, when she cannot respond, it becomes clear that she does not entirely fit in, there is a language barrier: "Crap. My cover's been blown."[69] This is another way in which the visual element draws the reader in: The question is written in Hebrew letters, conveying Glidden's experience of incomprehension to a non-Hebrew-speaking audience. (*Fig. 9*)

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[65] http://www.btselem.org/separation_barrier/map (accessed 31 May 2013).

[66] Glidden, *How to Understand Israel*, 25.

[67] Ibid., 83.

[68] Ibid., 83 (emphasis in the original).

[69] Ibid., 83.

Fig. 9: Glidden's How to Understand Israel*, 83*

In Tel Aviv, she also fits in socially; however, her time in this city pushes her to the breaking point, as the certainties she had known before her first-hand

encounter come under fire. During a tour of the Independence Hall Museum,[70] a historical landmark in Tel Aviv where David Ben Gurion declared Israel a state on 14 May 1948, she is forced to consider the lack of options Jews had after the Holocaust when only a few countries offered entry visas, contemporary Israeli life under the constant threat of terrorism, and the mutual longing for peace. When she sees a group of soldiers who are barely out of their teens and begins to contemplate both Jewish and Palestinian suffering, Glidden is overwhelmed. She calls on the visual medium to portray her inner turmoil: she depicts herself wandering through images of the soldiers' young faces, Nazi violence, emaciated victims of concentration camps, and a checkpoint along the Israeli wall. The scene in which she bursts into tears is a mosaic of recognizable images (suicide bombers, exploding buses, and people grieving) jumbled together; all of these images are known to the reader, either from earlier pages of *How to Understand Israel in 60 Days or Less* or or from their own media-shaped conceptions of Israel. (*Fig. 10*)
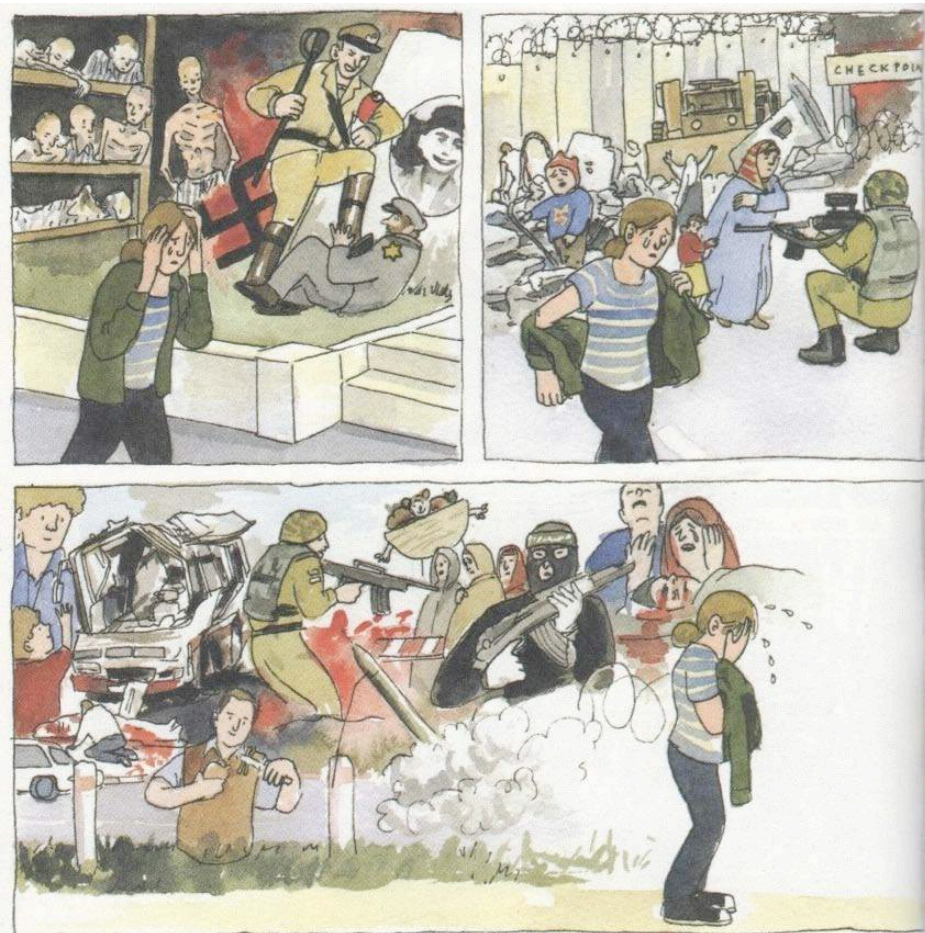

Fig. 10: Glidden's How to Understand Israel*, 100*

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[70] On Birthright's visit to Independence Hall, see Kelner, *Tours that bind*, 130-131.

Later, Glidden admits to one of the guides what her real problem is, now that she has been confronted with the complex, contradictory, and challenging realities of Israeli and Palestinian life: "I came here… I think I wanted to know for sure that Israel was the bad guy. I wanted to know that I could cut it out of my life for good."[71] This initial hope is not fulfilled, as the trip forces her to realize that there is no simple black-and-white solution – the realities on the ground complicate the often one-sided understanding of the conflict propagated by the media. Unlike Sacco's work, the first-hand experiences and reflections in Glidden's graphic novel communicate to the reader that neither side in the conflict has a monopoly on righteousness, and neither side is blameless.

Glidden's journey also takes her to Jerusalem. As she recounts, "I've been looking forward to being in Jerusalem most of all. It's the epicenter of the big mess: ancient, holy and constantly oscillating between negotiable and non-negotiable."[72] One reason behind Jerusalem's complexity is related to the many historical narratives revolving around the city, and Glidden uses a combination of visual and textual elements to explain this range of stories – especially those concerning Mount Moriah, the site over which Jerusalem's most iconic feature, the golden dome, towers. In Hebrew, this place is called *Har Ha-Beit* [the Temple Mount], the location where the two Jewish temples once stood. In Arabic, it is *Haram al-Sharif* [the Noble Sanctuary], the site of the Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa Mosque. This is heavily contested territory, as it is a place of origin of all three monotheistic religions, said to be where God set the earth's foundation stone and also the location of Abraham's binding of Isaac. Glidden illustrates these stories separately in an inset notebook page with explanatory captions. The notebook format implies that the picture was drawn while she was listening to the stories, once again a reminder that we are reading the account of a journey. (*Fig. 11*)

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[71] Glidden, *How to Understand Israel*, 103.
[72] Ibid., 148.
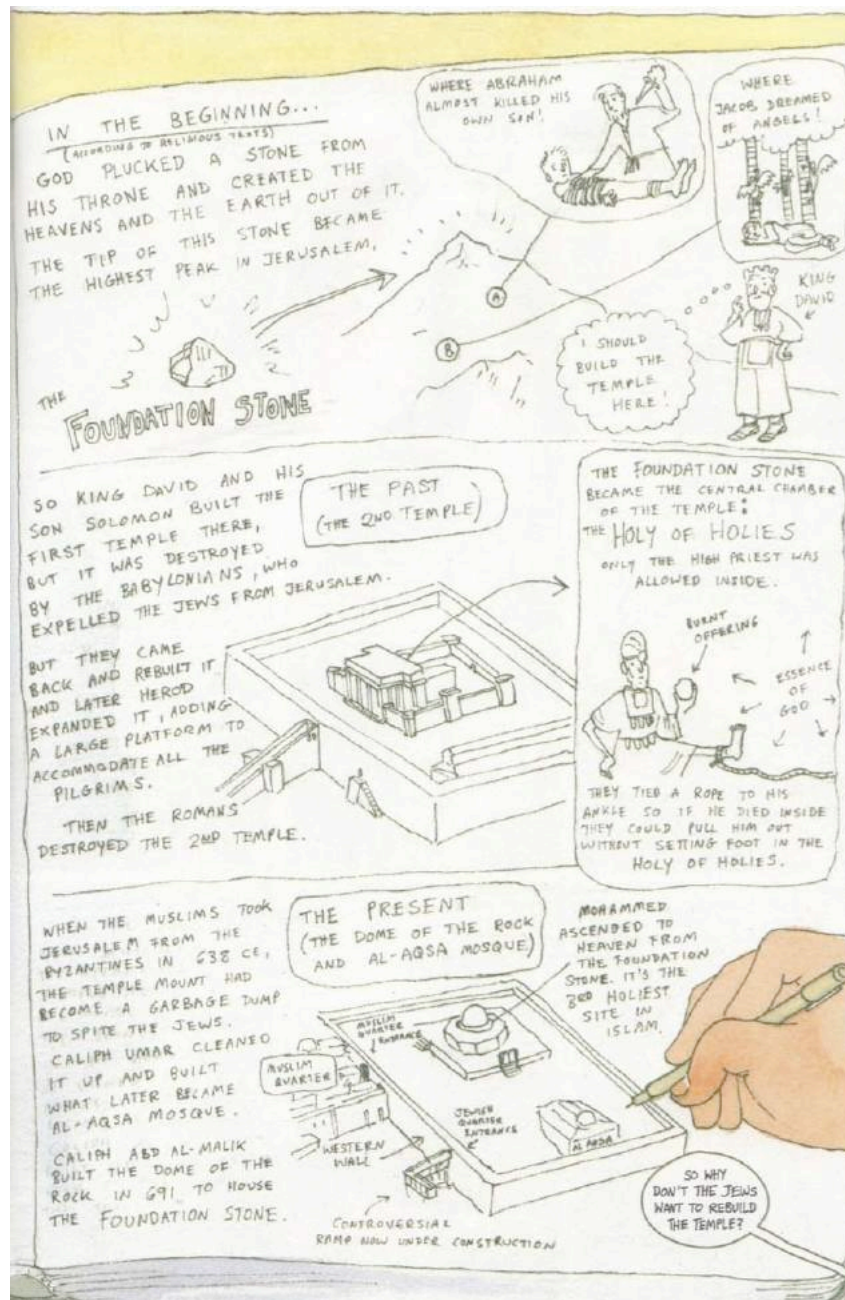
Fig. 11: Glidden's How to Understand Israel*, 171*

But Jerusalem is also complicated in other ways. The visit includes, for instance a trip to Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust memorial, as well as meetings with Israelis and Palestinians from the Bereaved Family Forum (people from both sides who have lost family members in the conflict). At this point, Glidden shares the fact that her brother had been killed in an accident, and that she feels personally connected to this experience of familial loss.

Thus, although it is difficult, Jerusalem also becomes a place of belonging, especially after the end of the official trip, when she and Melissa stay with one of their guides, a student just like them. They go out with young Israelis, and Glidden feels right at home as they watch a modernist play she could well have seen in America (except that is performed in Hebrew). However, once again, fitting in invokes conflicting feelings: "They live in Israel, I don't. They understand what is happening in this play, I don't. But we probably have so much in common. I'm ashamed to admit to myself that I like this feeling of being in this room. I'm even more ashamed at how much I don't like being outside of it."[73] This last comment refers back to an uncomfortable moment in the Palestinian neighborhood of Silwan in East Jerusalem when Glidden had asked herself whether some Arab boys nearby were just playing or yelling at them, and she had longed "to be back inside a homey Jerusalem cafe [sic] talking about the city's culture clash instead of wandering around inside it."[74]

Glidden ends up not visiting the West Bank, even though she had intended to do so when she first considered going on the trip: "I really want to go to the West Bank. I think it's our responsibility to check out the reality on the other side of the Green Line."[75] The practical challenges are too great; in the end, she and Melissa go to a lecture at the pluralistic Shalom Hartman Institute that suggests a more open-minded view of religion disconnected from political arguments. Here, for the first time, Glidden is moved by a religious idea, because the concept is humanistic and not essentialist – she represents herself as enraptured by illustrating a heart over her head – and offers a way to deal with the complexities she has been struggling with.[76]

However, Glidden does not leave us with a sense of resolution. Like a true travelogue, the final pages show her departure. What we see are mostly images without captions; no captions are needed, as everything is recognizable: a last night out partying in Tel Aviv, the airport procedures, and her arrival in Istanbul. In a way, this reduces the Israel trip to one of her many journeys, but an encounter in the hostel in Turkey indicates that the voyage was different from the rest. She discovers that other young travelers imagine Israel as a war zone. When asked what she thinks, Glidden is stumped. Her only answer at that moment is to say, "Well…."[77] Ultimately, *How to Understand Israel in 60 Days or Less* is her response to this question.

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[73] Ibid., 192.
[74] Ibid., 191.
[75] Ibid., 17.
[76] Ibid., 197–199.
[77] Ibid., 206.

Guy Delisle's *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City*

Canadian graphic artist Guy Deslile's *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City* is the most recent addition to the canon of Holy Land graphic travelogues. Both the original French *Chroniques de Jérusalem* and the English title make reference to the topos with the use of the word *chronicles* (emphasized in English with the explicit use of the term *Holy City*). Delisle's artwork, employing a limited palette, is much more restrained than Sacco's; notably, he refrains from extending images into the gutters between the relatively orderly panels. Delisle portrays the year in his family's life when they were living in East Jerusalem because of his wife Nadège's job as an administrator for Doctors Without Borders. The text is a sequel to his earlier works, created during the family's placements in Burma and his travels to China and North Korea.[78]

Much of what the book describes are everyday challenges. One example is the need to negotiate the three 'holy' days of the Jerusalem week: Friday for Muslims, *Sabbath* [Saturday] for the Jews, and Sunday, the day the Christian stores (the only ones selling alcohol in the neighborhood) are closed.[79] The stories are framed within his experiences of being in Israel/Palestine in 2008-9 while the Gaza campaign was taking place. The political events had a personal impact on his family – for instance, Delisle watches rockets being launched into Israel on TV and then finds out that his wife cannot leave the Gaza strip, as the military has closed the border because of the rockets.[80]

Whereas Glidden explores a touristic and personal perspective and Sacco positions himself as a journalist, Delisle takes on an observational role, recounting the experiences of the internationals involved with the NGOs working in the region. These observers are half-traveler, half-resident, but neither Palestinian nor Israeli. Delisle's intermediary position allows the reader an interesting view of an entire year in Jerusalem.

The graphic novel is structured around this year. Each chapter represents a month, while the subchapters depict encounters, events, and their explanations. With its stories of life in a East Jerusalem and descriptions of the NGOs' difficulties with the Israeli authorities, *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City* seems more closely related to Sacco's work than to Glidden's. Delisle even makes a direct reference to Sacco when he finds out that his coordination request for Gaza has been declined. The Israeli reaction to his application: "The guy who draws comics? Forget it." His response is, "Maybe they've

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[78] Guy Delisle, *Pyongyang: A Journey in North Korea* (Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly, 2005); Id., *Shenzen: A Travelogue from China* (Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly, 2006); Id., *Burma Chronicles* (Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly, 2008).
[79] Guy Delisle, *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City* (Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly, 2012),16.
[80] Ibid., 29.

mixed me up with Joe Sacco?"[81] And while there are similarities, Jelena Bulić has identified a distinct difference between the two authors and their respective approaches: "Whereas Sacco has access to the (private) lives and stories of others, Delisle remains on the sides, as a spectator and an outside observer."[82]

Like Glidden, Delisle quite explicitly takes his readers on a journey. The first page shows two maps: one of the world, with Israel/Palestine marked, and one of the country itself, allowing readers to orient themselves.[83] The entire last page depicts a plane; even without a caption, we understand that the Delisle family is leaving.[84]

The first chapter emphasizes the travel theme, showing an overnight flight and Delisle's attempts to quiet his screaming toddler. When an elderly man seated next to him tries to calm her down, the author and the readers have their first visual encounter with Israel: he has a tattoo from Auschwitz on his forearm. On this indelible symbol of Holocaust memory, Delisle says: "We've seen so many horrific images from that time in history that my imagination just takes off."[85] With this remark, he introduces an issue that plays a role in many Israeli/Palestinian encounters: they are pre-shaped by other images, either from collective memory or from the news media. His next observation is evocative: "But I'm treated to a whole other picture tonight, as this old Russian plays with my daughter thousands of feet up in the sky."[86]

Most things on his journey turn out differently than expected, and certainly deviate from preconceived notions and images of voyages to the Holy Land. Upon his arrival in the country, for example, Delisle greets his driver with a Hebrew *Shalom*,[87] then realizes that an Arabic *Salamaleikum*[88] might be more appropriate. However, the driver responds in both languages, and no confusion or reproach can be seen on his face. Towards the end of the book, we meet him again; as it turns out, he also speaks English and Russian and has found good jobs abroad. However, as a Palestinian, this represents a problem: "If I leave the territory for more than three years, I'm no longer considered a resident in my own country."[89] So he returns periodically and works as a driver until his papers are renewed because, as he says, "This is my home! They can

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[81] Ibid., 301.

[82] Jelena Bulić, "The Travelling Cartoonist: Representing the Self and the World in Guy Delisle's Graphic Travel Narratives," *Narodna umjetnost: Croatian Journal for Ethnology and Folklore Research* 49/1 (2012): 63.

[83] Delisle, *Jerusalem*, 4. Sacco also includes maps; for instance, *Footnotes*, 18, although in this case, the map is used as a means to educate the reader about the historico-political situation.

[84] Ibid., 336.

[85] Ibid., 7.

[86] Ibid., 7.

[87] Ibid., 8

[88] Ibid., 9.

[89] Ibid., 315.

never make me leave."[90]

Delisle, more than the other authors, introduces the reader to the city at the center of the conflict: Jerusalem. Its status is one of the most critical issues in every round of peace talks because neither Israelis nor Palestinians are willing to make concessions when it comes to authority over the city, which represents a central site of collective memory and identity for all three monotheistic religions and for both nations. All throughout its existence, the city of Jesus' life, suffering, and crucifixion, which is the *Yerushalayim* of diasporic longing and Jewish nationhood, and at the same time *Al-Quds,* the Holy, where Mohammed's night journey took place, has been fought over. The Judeo-Christian tradition in particular has elevated Jerusalem as a sacred site and an *axis mundi* connecting heaven and earthly life. However, what we encounter through Delisle's eyes and pen is a very real city, and one that is not easy to comprehend or navigate.

Delisle's first foray into his neighborhood, Beit Hanina, "an Arab village that was annexed following the Six-Day War in '67,"[91] shows him that it is more than a little run-down; indeed, it reminds him of him of his earlier travels most of which took him to the Third World.[92] (*Fig. 12*)

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[90] Ibid., 315.
[91] Ibid., 15.
[92] Ibid., 14.

Fig. 12: Delisle, Jerusalem*, 14*

But this is not all; he learns that even geographic designations are political and often difficult to navigate. When he asks whether he is in Israel, he receives the following response: "According to the Israeli government, we're definitely in Israel, but for the international community, which doesn't recognize the 1967

borders, we're in the West Bank, which should become Palestine (if that day ever comes)."[93] Also his next question, "But Jerusalem is the capital of Israel, right?" requires a lengthy answer: "Again, it depends: For the international community, it's Tel Aviv. That's where the embassies are. But for Israel, it's Jerusalem. The parliament, or 'Knesset' is here, not in Tel Aviv."[94] Delisle's true reaction is not the "Hmmm, ok" of his speech bubble, but the "I don't really get it, but I tell myself that I've got a whole year to figure it out"[95] contained in the caption. This reaction allows his readers a similar sense of relief – we have only just begun to understand.

Delisle often uses visual elements to explain what he encounters. Readers learn, for instance, that the path of the Green Line was drawn on a map by Israeli officials and their counterparts in Jordan. Delisle portrays this as two military men with a big pencil sitting like children on top of a map, pointing and drawing boundaries. (*Fig. 13*)

Fig. 13: Delisle, Jerusalem*, 33*

The next image is a map with Israel and Palestine in different colors and

scissors on both sides, now reminiscent of a children's cutout game, and possibly offering a tacit comment about the childishness of political manoeuvring, especially in this region of the world. (*Fig. 14*)

Fig. 14: Delisle, Jerusalem*, 33*

Delisle also uses visual means to explain the Old City and his prior knowledge about it. Coming from a Christian background, he sees it as the setting for the stories about the apostles, which he represents with drawings of toy models (not unlike Glidden's method). After just a few panels, however, contemporary realities take over again: in order to get to the Western Wall, a checkpoint must be passed.[96]

Delisle provides a visual explanation of Mount Moriah as well; he uses the term 'Noble Sanctuary' (the translation of the Arabic *Bait-ul-Muqqadas*) for the site, thus giving an indication of his social context in Jerusalem. But his historical survey includes all elements; we see, for example, the two Jewish temples lying in ruins after they were destroyed by the Babylonians and the Romans (in 586 BCE and 70 CE, respectively). Later on during his stay, Delisle visits the esplanade with the Dome of the Rocks and the Al-Aqsa Mosque and is amazed by the space, the architecture, and the unexpected contrast to the bustling streets of the Old City below. (*Fig. 15*)
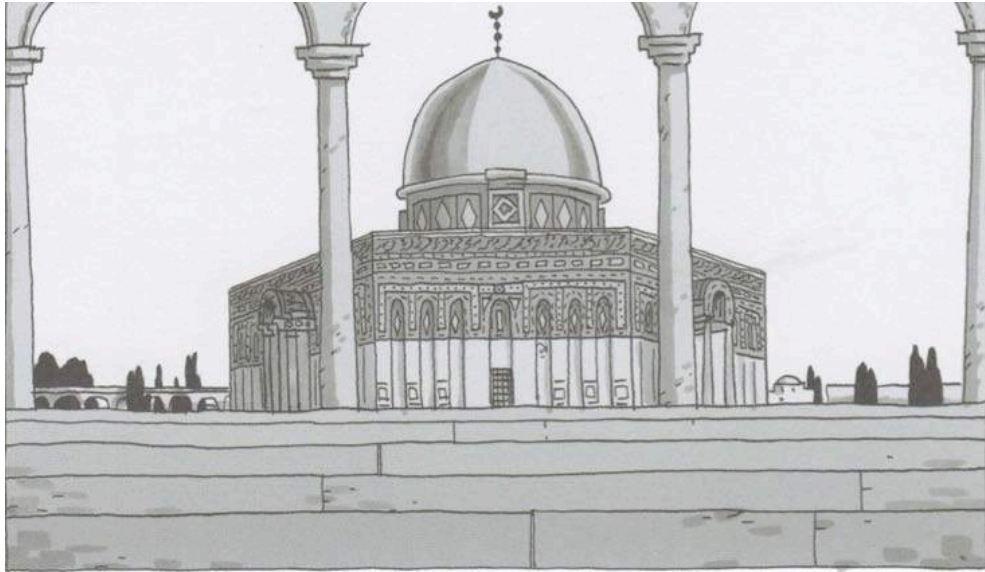
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[96] Ibid., 19.

Fig. 15: Delisle, Jerusalem, 140

His travels extend beyond Jerusalem; he also visits cities in Israel and in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The visits to Tel Aviv are the most touristic but the most 'normal' experiences on this contemporary Holy Land pilgrimage, much like in the other graphic novels. After having spent some time navigating Jerusalem and its many divisions –social, religious, and ethnic –, the Delisles decide to spend a day on the beach in Tel Aviv. He is shocked to discover "A normal city – with normal people."[97] He adds a caveat, though: "for the most part," he says after passing by a rave. But on later visits, he reminds his readers that young people dancing in the street are not the only unusual aspect of the city. As he and his friend sit on beach chairs overlooking the ocean, they observe military aircraft heading south towards the Gaza strip. The Gaza conflict had just heated up and, even after the end of the fighting, Tel Aviv is much closer to the fault lines of the conflict than its touristic image suggests. (*Fig. 16*)

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[97] Ibid., 132.

Fig. 16: Delisle, Jerusalem*, 175*

Conclusions

Graphic novelists are not the only contemporary artists to have updated the 'journey to the Holy Land' motif. Another example is provided by a 2010 episode of the award-winning animated series *The Simpsons*.[98] In an episode

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[98] http://www.thesimpsons.com/#/recaps/season-21_episode-16 (accessed 15 July 2013).

entitled *The Greatest Story Ever D'ohed*, the most famous cartoon family on TV goes on a church trip to the Holy Land, where Homer Simpson succumbs to Jerusalem Syndrome, a psychosis featuring religiously themed delusions triggered by a visit to the city.[99] He believes himself to be the Messiah, and with his message of unity ("Spread the word: Peace and chicken!"), he attempts to resolve the conflict between people and religions. This might seem foolish at first, but his message of inclusion – we all want peace and all the faiths permit eating chicken – rather than exclusion was publically recognized when Kevin Curran, the episode's writer, was nominated for the 2010 Humanitas Prize (awarded for film and TV writing promoting human dignity, commonality, and freedom). Like the graphic novels, if perhaps with more humour, the *Simpsons* episode illustrates an engagement with the realities of conflict in Israel/Palestine using a pop-culture medium.

In their respective voices, and driven by their own personal interests and situations, Delisle, Glidden, and Sacco have produced travelogues of their experiences in Israel and Palestine. These works show that such journeys have changed over the years: these travelers have not come with swords to take back the Holy Land from the heathens or to occupy it; instead, they come armed with pencils to document and communicate the situation in the region. These are not pilgrimages, either, as the intention is not to engage with the divine, but rather with everyday human life in a contested space. In the process, the artists have developed a new form of representing and reporting the conflict made possible by the versatility of graphic art. As Scott McCloud says, "it is a vessel which can hold any number of ideas and images."[100] With this perspective on graphic representations, we move away from the traditions of the format, which had long been monopolized by fictional and humorous material; in the selection of works presented here, the format is a means of interrogating socio-political realities. Derek Parker Royal argues that "given its reliance on symbols and iconography, comic art speaks in a language that is accessible to a wide audience, transcending many of the national, cultural, and linguistic boundaries imposed by other media and giving it a reach that is as democratic as it is immediate." [101] This view is congruent with Joke Hermes' arguments concerning cultural citizenship discussed in the introduction to this article. This artistic engagement with a distant conflict argues for a global cultural citizenship in which pop-culture has become an additional element within the larger mediascape. Graphic novels are subjective representations, as the texts

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[99] See, for instance, Yair Bar-El, Rimona Durst, Gregory Katz, Josef Zislin, Ziva Straus, Haim Y. Knobler, "Jerusalem Syndrome," *British Journal of Psychiatry* 176 (2000): 86–90; Eliezer Witztum, Moshe Kalian, "Overwhelmed by Divinity in Jerusalem," in *Emotion in Motion: Tourism, Affect and Transformation*, eds. David Picard, Mike Robinson (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2012), 99–116.

[100] McCloud, *Understanding Comics*, 6.

[101] Derek Parker Royal, "Foreword; Or Reading within the Gutter," in *Approaches to Multicultural Comics: From Zap! to Blue Beetle*, ed. Frederick Luis Aldama (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), ix-xi.

filter impressions not only through the artists' opinions and words, but also through the visual images. Sacco admits that "any act of visualization – drawing, in this case – comes with an unavoidable act of refraction,"[102] but no journalistic 'objectivity' is expected from graphic art in the first place. Indeed, the texts focus on the human element of the conflict rather than addressing large-scale political considerations.

However, these graphic forms of reporting conflict are also contemporary travelogues, as they tie into the longstanding topos of the Holy Land journey, at least visually if not more explicitly – for example, in their explanations of Jerusalem's many meanings. Considering the graphic travelogues from this perspective allows them to be perceived as part of a tradition involving accounts of journeys to the Holy Land. The reports from the land of conflict involve the readers on a number of levels. First, through the potential for personal identification with the traveler figure, whose subjective positioning is expected; second, with the 'journey to the Holy Land' motif as an element of the cultural archive of all three Abrahamic religions; and third, by invoking and reworking media images. All of these aspects are employed using the textual/visual form as a "communicator." [103]

These texts convey to their readers the reality of a land that is anything but holy in an engaging, contemporary format; their popularity indicates the value of such approaches to the conflict in our increasingly mediatized world, especially when they evoke traditional topoi to offer multi-layered and complex images. It might be worthwhile to consider how other products of popular culture have explored the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through the 'journey to the Holy Land' topos – for example, crime novels and thrillers, such as bestselling author Richard Patterson's *Exile* (2007), set in Israel/Palestine. Such works communicate critical issues to a wide readership and thus demonstrate cultural citizenship potential, in a somewhat different form than the graphic novels analyzed here, which build on a tradition of socio-political engagement since the appearance of works like Art Spiegelman's *Maus*.

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[102] Sacco, *Gaza*, x.
[103] Eisner, *Graphic Storytelling*, xvii.

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Beholding the Holy City:
Changes in the Iconic Representation
of Jerusalem in the 21st Century

by *Dana Hercbergs – Chaim Noy*

Abstract

This article focuses on a recent turning point in the history of gazes in and of Jerusalem. For decades, the Muslim structure of the Dome of the Rock and the Jewish Western Wall served as a primary (dual) image for Jerusalem. Yet since the 1990s, there has been a transition towards framing the city as exclusively Jewish, with a focus on the Tower of David as the new icon. This transition embodies the political shifts to an ethno-national agenda combined with the neoliberal zeitgeist.

- Introduction: The Davidization of Jerusalem
- Visualizing Ideological Shift(s): From the Dome of the Rock/Western Wall to the Tower of David
- Tracing Icons in (and of) Jerusalem
- Referencing the Tower of David
- Circulating Images of the Tower of David
- Conclusions

Introduction: The Davidization of Jerusalem

Jerusalem has been the object of various gazes throughout centuries and millennia, and an essential stopping point in itineraries of the Holy Land. Appearing as a metonym of the Holy Land and also of the divine—Jerusalem and its visual icons have come to play a role in both religious practices and images, and more recently, in related political struggles over the control of simultaneously the physical area and its visual-symbolic representations.[1] This paper focuses on what we see as a recent turning point in Jerusalem's history of iconic representations, which is highly ideological and which is mobilized by a current synergy of ethno-national (Zionist) and neoliberal (or 'free market') economic policies that act in tandem to promote Israeli Jewish demographic and spatial dominance in Jerusalem. As the other articles in this issue attest, this turning point is situated amid a lineage of pilgrims' and tourists'

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[1] Nadia Abu el-Haj, *Facts on the Ground: Archaeological Practice and Territorial Self-Fashioning in Israeli Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); Yasir Suleiman, *A War of Words: Language and Conflict in the Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Annabel J. Wharton, *Selling Jerusalem: Relics, Replicas, Theme Parks* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006); Kimberly Katz, "Jordanian Jerusalem: Postage Stamps and Identity Construction," *Jerusalem Quarterly File* 5 (1999):14-26.

experiences of the Holy Land that have historically been shaped by prior itineraries, travelogues, and souvenirs (including images). What characterizes the present shift is the state's strong role in shaping the experiences and expectations of travelers in light of current political struggles, and its attempt to likewise mold the ideological perspectives of foreigners and locals alike through interventions in the representation of Jerusalem.

In order to trace – theorize and illustrate – current shifts, we need to briefly recapture a few relevant and recent historical points concerning the management of Jerusalem and its highly charged visualizations.[2] Since 1948, Jerusalem has served as Israel's administrative and symbolic capital, although the city was divided by an armistice line that relegated the Old City and the Jewish holy sites to Jordanian East Jerusalem. Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem in June 1967, particularly its incorporation of the symbolic center of the Old City into the capital of the Jewish state, provided the impetus to fuse religious and political orientations.[3] The Jewish dream of return was enacted through a government policy of occupation, resulting in a tense interplay between religious and national ideologies.

Since the 1990s Israel has pursued a policy of neo-liberal restructuring that has accelerated in the post-Oslo era, with the regress of the peace process between Israel and Palestine.[4] As part of Israel's concurrent integration into the global economic system, Jerusalem has at the same time increasingly appealed to foreign investment, promoting an imaginary directed at wealthy, ideologically-motivated diaspora Jews, and Israeli and foreign visitors to the city. Simultaneously, the transition from a secular to a religious and nationalist agenda in the municipality has resulted in the gradual change of Jerusalem's symbolic value from an administrative capital (where religious and traditional symbolism assumed a background role) to a cornerstone of Jewish ethno-national identification. Enacting the myth of homogeneity that is the basis of the nation-state, Israel is pursuing a strategy of Judaization that is based on an exclusionary Israeli-Jewish national identity. Oren Yiftachel and Haim Yacobi term the establishment of hierarchical ethnic citizenship on the municipal level "urban ethnocracy."[5]

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[2] Here we are using the concept of visualization following the work of John Dorst on the framing of the tourist gaze, specifically around monuments in the western United States. Dorst links colonial visual regimes with the power to render landscapes as artifacts for consumption. See John Dorst, *Looking West* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 195.

[3] Yael Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

[4] Andy Clarno, "A Tale of Two Walled Cities: Neo-Liberalization and Enclosure in Johannesburg and Jerusalem," *Political Power and Social Theory* 19 (2008): 166-71.

[5] Oren Yiftachel, Haim Yacobi, "Urban Ethnocracy: Ethnicization and the Production of Space in an Israeli 'Mixed City'," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 21 (2003): 673 – 674.

Accompanying this turning point is a shift in the spatial and visual regimes of, and perspectives in, Jerusalem. We argue that a major and ongoing transition is taking place, from portraying the city for decades via the Muslim structure of the Dome of the Rock and the adjacent Jewish holy site of the Western Wall—to framing it as an exclusively Jewish Israeli city, with its focus on the *Tower of David* as the new icon. We refer to this change as the "davidization" of Jerusalem. We further contend that this shift powerfully combines ethno-national policies, which revolve around the notion of the exclusively Jewish state, on the one hand, and neo-liberal policies, which revolve around an economic restructuring of Jerusalem, on the other. To support our proposition we present in this paper a semiotic analysis of two types of data in the shape of, first, recent architectural sites and structures that make reference to the Tower of David or to the biblical King David, and second, municipal street posters and high-profile real-estate ads, and other spatial and visual ephemera that exemplify this historic and consequential shift. We argue that the Tower of David does not merely replace the old icons as 'a new representation' of a changing reality; rather, following Baudrillard[6] we maintain that this icon no longer operates in the realm of *representation* but rather that it is implicated in the *simulation* of a new reality.[7] The circulation of Tower of David images in the urban landscape and on everyday objects, and the multiplication of actual sites containing the name David constitute a cycle whereby image and reality are no longer separate, but where one begets the other. This process forges a new matrix that orients the gaze of visitors, long-time sojourners and locals alike towards the solitary Citadel (wherein the Tower of David is located) at the western entrance to the Old City.

Visualizing Ideological Shift(s): From the Dome of the Rock/Western Wall to the Tower of David

Jerusalem's ethno-national divisions stem from a power struggle between unequally positioned actors. Since the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, which resulted in Israel's independence and the destruction of Palestinian society, known as the *Nakba*, or catastrophe, Jerusalem has been a divided city. In 1948-67, East Jerusalem was in Jordanian territory while Israel controlled West Jerusalem, and the dividing border known as the Green Line was fortified in different stages and patrolled by soldiers on both sides. This barrier was dismantled following the 1967 War when Israel occupied the West Bank and annexed East

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[6] Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation,* translated from the French by Sheila Faria Glaser (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994).

[7] The difference between the real and the model of simulation has disappeared; today simulators create simulations with which the real should coincide "with this same imperialism" (Ibid., 1-2). Baudrillard traces the development of the simulacrum and states that unlike the image, which may be said to constitute a 'good' or 'evil' appearance of the real, the simulacrum is "no longer of the order of appearances"; there is no longer a distinction between sign and signifier (Ibid., 6).

Jerusalem, and incorporated its residents into the city's municipality—a move defined by UN Resolution 242 as illegal, and by Israel as the unification of its 'eternal capital.'

One of the central issues in the conflict over Jerusalem is the Old City, where the holy places of the Jewish prayer site of the Western Wall (*ha-Kotel ha Ma'aravi*), often referred to as the Wailing Wall, and the Muslim Noble Sanctuary (*al-Ḥaram ash-Sharif*, whereupon is the golden Dome of the Rock) are adjacently located, forming a bone of contention for Israel and the Palestinians. The city's overall population currently numbers 773,000 with Palestinians constituting just over one-third of it at 275,900.[8] Jerusalem's divisions are evinced in social and residential separation by ethno-national identity and exacerbated by differential allocation of municipal services, resources and funding to Israeli-Jewish and Palestinian-Arab sectors.[9] Moreover, while Jerusalem remains an overall poor city, demographically Palestinians experience the most poverty.[10] Following the failed Oslo peace accords of the 1990s, Israel continues to accelerate measures taken since 1967 to Judaize the city and reduce its Palestinians population, including settlement building in East Jerusalem and the construction of the Israel-West Bank barrier—which removed large Arab areas from the city—to maintain a 70% Jewish majority therein.[11]

Since the second Palestinian *Intifada* (uprising) of 2000, also termed the *al-Aqsa* Intifada, there has been a shift in the Israeli establishment of its visual representation of the disputed capital – namely its emblematic sites – from the Dome of the Rock and the Kotel as the icons of Jerusalem, situated between the Muslim and Jewish Quarters of the Old City, to the Citadel and especially the so-called *Migdal David* (Tower of David), a first century BCE tower. It is one of three towers which were built or fortified by King Herod around 37–34 BC and the only one that remains.[12] Since the beginning of the British Mandate

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[8] Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies—Population of Israel and Jerusalem, by Population Group, 1922-2009, http://jiis.org/.upload/yearbook/10_11/C/shnaton%20C0111.pdf (accessed 12 March 2013).

[9] Meron Benvenisti, *City of Stone: The Hidden History of Jerusalem* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

[10] Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies.

[11] Benvenisti, *City of Stone*, 125-7; Tovi Fenster, *The Global City and the Holy City: Narratives on Planning, Knowledge and Diversity*, (London: Pearson, 2003), 96; Nir Hasson, "Israel Stripped Thousands of Jerusalem Arabs of Residency in 2008," *Haaretz,* 2 December 2009. http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/news/israel-stripped-thousands-of-jerusalem-arabs-of-residency-in-2008-1.3006 (accessed 31 October 2013).

[12] The Citadel comprises structures from various eras beginning from the Second Temple period (538 BCE-70 CE) when it was designed to protect the city. It has been destroyed and rebuilt many times and throughout different centuries–up until the 19th century. The three towers that Herod built inside the Citadel were named Hippicus (after a friend of Herod), Miriam (Herod's wife), and Phasael (his brother). Whether the extant tower was the one named Phasael or Hippicus is a matter of debate among archaeologists. See Hillel Geva, "The 'Tower

in Palestine, the Citadel had ceased to function as a defense structure, and its impressive grounds were transformed into a museum. In this capacity it functions today, presenting information, exhibits, and performances dealing with the history of the city.[13] The Citadel and the tower within it are located inside the Old City beside Jaffa Gate, the western-facing entrance named after its orientation to the port city of Jaffa. Bahat notes that "Today, erroneously, the name 'David's Tower' refers to the seventeenth [century] minaret of the Citadel."[14] We therefore likewise refer to the Tower of David as the minaret as it appears atop the west-facing wall of Citadel in the images we analyze.

The shift from presenting the Kotel and the Dome of the Rock as the 'stars' in a repertoire of images that also included the Citadel (as well as other political and cultural landmarks like the Israeli Knesset)—to the Tower as the *singular emblem* of Jerusalem represents an extension of a previous phase in the Israeli visualization of the city. While Israeli postcards depicted the Citadel before the 1967 War, as Semmerling shows, following Israel's annexation of the Old City the Tower of David became associated with state power, as exemplified in a postcard where it is featured as the backdrop for an Israeli military procession.[15] The theme of militarism was also carried over to postcards depicting the Western Wall, where soldiers are shown holding parades or praying.[16]

This turn of events represents a departure from the era when Mayor Teddy Kollek presided over the city (1965-1993),[17] when the Dome of the Rock/Kotel constituted a primary symbol of it (See *Fig. 1*), at times in tandem with the Tower of David. Former Mayor Kollek held a traditional pragmatist Zionist ethos and occupied many areas in East Jerusalem. At the same time, unlike all subsequent mayors to date, he consistently tried to avoid the fundamentalist Judaization of dense Palestinian neighborhoods, which his successors accomplished by erecting Jewish settlements within them. Emblematic of the prominent visualization of Jerusalem until the 2000s is a song that Kollek requested that singer and songwriter Naomi Shemer write for the 1967 Israel Song Festival, held three weeks before the 1967 War in June.[18]

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of David'—Phasael or Hippicus?" *Israel Exploration Journal* 31/1-2 (1981): 57-67. For an illustrated overview, see Dan Bahat, *The Illustrated Atlas of Jerusalem* (New York: Simon & Schuster; Jerusalem: Carta, 1996), 39, 41, 47, 56.

[13] See http://www.towerofdavid.org.il/English/General/Tower_of_David-Museum_of_the_History_of_Jerusalem (accessed 24 October 2013).

[14] Bahat, *The Illustrated Atlas of Jerusalem*, 56.

[15] Tim Jon Semmerling, *Israeli and Palestinian Postcards: Presentations of National Selves* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004), 38.

[16] Ibid., 37-42.

[17] Note the dates – Kollek was mayor of West Jerusalem and then of 'unified' Jerusalem. A Zionist from Austro-Hungary, Kollek (1911-2007) was a close ally of Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion.

[18] Motti Regev, Edwin Seroussi, *Popular Music and National Culture in Israel* (Berkeley: University

Entitled "Jerusalem of Gold," its refrain is "Jerusalem of Gold, and of Copper and of Light / For all your songs I am a violin." For many, the song resonates with the golden hue of sunset reflected on the limestone of the city, but more so with the romantic (and Orientalized) image of the golden Dome of the Rock. This symbol was featured prominently on Israeli postcards especially by Palphot, the main Israeli postcard producer.
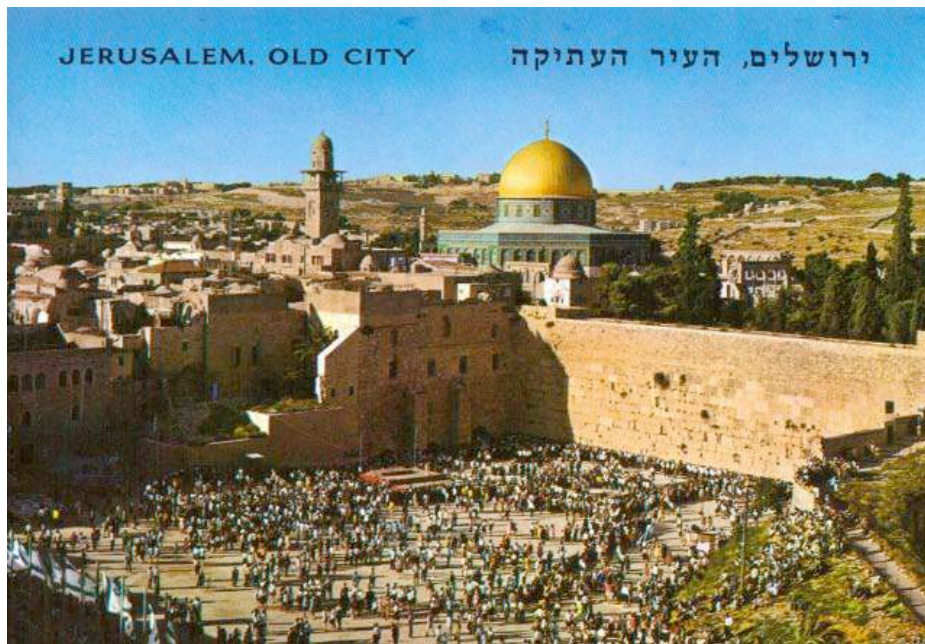

Fig. 1: Palphot postcard #9872 entitled 'Jerusalem the Old City' depicting the Dome of the Rock and the Kotel

Yet the three mayors who came after Kollek were explicitly right wing, and subscribed not to the socialist-national ideology of the center-left Mapai party,[19] but to varieties of ethno-national policies and ideologies. As a result, and with the growing weight of Jewish religious discourse in politics,[20] the value of Israel's capital has gradually shifted from an administrative capital with a (mainly symbolic) religious and historic value to an embodiment of more Jewish ethno-national sentiments.

The second Palestinian Intifada also contributed to the shift away from the Dome of the Rock/Kotel to the Tower of David. The Intifada, and the subsequent escalation of terrorist attacks inside Israel, precipitated the construction of the Separation Barrier beginning in 2002 to control the entry

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of California Press, 2004), 117.

[19] Mapai, an acronym for Workers' Party of the Land of Israel, was a Zionist socialist party headed by Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion until it merged with the Labor Party in 1968.

[20] Baruch Kimmerling, *The Invention and Decline of Israeliness: State, Society, and the Military* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

of Palestinian West Bank residents into Israel purportedly for security purposes.[21] The rise of a right-wing government, set on unilateral actions and disengagement from peace negotiations with the Palestinians, both stoked and corresponded to Israeli fears, fueling a cyclical justification of violence.

Lastly, the demise of the Mapai paradigm and the Intifada may be seen within a wider policy of neo-liberal restructuring pursued by the Israeli state since the early 1990s. As Clarno indicates, proponents of liberalization argued that the conflict posed an obstacle to Israel's global economic integration, and considered peace negotiations with the Palestinians as a means to solve the state's economic woes of the 1980s.[22] Still, despite the absence of a resolution to the conflict with the Palestinians as evinced by the demise of the Oslo accords, Israel's neo-liberal restructuring has proceeded without disruption, working by way of occupation rather than via negotiation. As part and parcel of Israel's integration into the global economic system, Jerusalem's real estate and tourism industries are conspicuous in their appeal to foreign investment. The city's embrace of globalization is most evident in the building boom of luxury apartment complexes, hotels, and high-end retail establishments begun in the mid-2000s and which has since accelerated. Real estate construction and international tourism comprise two aspects of world city formation and propel the image-driven city by circulating images of luxury, convenience, and modernity.[23]

The connection between image-making, transnational movement and ethno-nationalism in Jerusalem is exemplified by two recently completed projects. The sleek Calatrava-designed 'Chords Bridge' that greets visitors at the western (main) entrance to the city, and the Jerusalem Lite Rail that travels on the bridge, play into a transnational imaginary of efficiency and smooth circulation.[24] As we discuss below, the Chords Bridge references King David's harp, thereby subtly announcing visitors' entry into a Jewish-scape, while the bridge's world-famous designer elevates the city's symbolic capital. This imaginary is at odds with the controversies underlying the projects, due to the amount of money and time they took to complete, and because the Lite Rail traverses occupied East Jerusalem in its apparently seamless connectivity.[25] This was the first light rail project in Israel as well as the country's first

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[21] Robert D. Brooks, ed., *The Wall Fragmenting the Palestinian Fabric in Jerusalem* (Jerusalem: International Peace and Cooperation Center, 2007), 15.

[22] Clarno, "A Tale of Two Walled Cities," 166.

[23] John Friedmann and Goetz Wolff, "World City Formation," in *The Global Cities Reader*, eds. Neil Brenner, Roger Keil (London: Routledge, 2006), 61. Although Jerusalem is not a classic example of a global city, the authors emphasize that these features are characterizing many cities in the latest phase of globalization.

[24] The Chords Bridge and the Jerusalem Light Rail were inaugurated in 2008 and 2011, respectively.

[25] Omar Barghouti, "Derailing Injustice: Palestinian Civil Resistance to the 'Jerusalem Light Rail'," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 38 (2009): 46-58.

experiment with private funding for a transit project,[26] exemplifying another element of Jerusalem's financial globalization. Although Jerusalem has been the conservative, poor, administrative foil to Israel's liberal cultural and financial capital of Tel Aviv, Jerusalem nevertheless consistently pulls tourists because of its religious and symbolic significance.[27]

The tourism and real estate industries' appeal to a foreign clientele—primarily affluent North American and French Jews—aligns with the municipality's agenda of Judaizing the city in part through privately-funded ventures. This attention to foreigners has been contentious due to the 'phantom apartments' phenomenon—units purchased by diaspora Jews who visit Israel on occasion but which otherwise remain uninhabited. By flooding the housing market with their higher purchasing power and by keeping these units off the market from potential local renters, absentee owners have exacerbated the housing crisis in Jerusalem (which, of all the cities in Israel, has the largest percentage of real-estate purchases performed by non-Israeli investors).[28] The summer 2011 protests, which brought thousands of Israelis to the streets, were sparked in part by the lack of affordable housing in the major cities. They have succeeded in prompting recent policy changes to make foreigners' investments more difficult. Nevertheless, the real estate and tourism industries continue to cater to the transnational elites. The shift in the gaze from Dome of the Rock/Kotel to the Tower of David as the metonym presents Jerusalem as the eternal, unified ethno-national center, not only for Israeli Jews but also for the diaspora, and this is how Jerusalem from the 2000s is viewed.

Tracing Icons in (and of) Jerusalem

In the following we describe what we term the recent "davidization" in Jerusalem – the re-centering of the Zionist gaze on the Tower of David - one which selectively combines a new semantic field of Jerusalem as the City of David and as a global city. We conceive this as an exercise in theorizing 'pertinent historicity', that is, recovering what is relevant and not the entire

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[26] Kevin Dwarka, "The Political Economy of Infrastructure Development: The Case of Urban Light Rail" (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Jerusalem: The Hebrew University, 2011), 83.
[27] For a discussion of Israel's integration into the global economic system and Jerusalem versus Tel Aviv, see: Nurit Alfasi, Tovi Fenster, "A Tale of Two Cities: Jerusalem and Tel Aviv in an Age of Globalization," *Cities* 22/5 (2005): 351-63 and Daniel Monterescu, Ro'i Fabian, " 'The Golden Cage': On Gentrification and Globalization in the Luxurious Andromeda Gated Community in Jaffa" (Hebrew), *Theory and Criticism* 23 (2003): 141–78.
[28] According to the statistics published by the Ministry of Construction and Housing (for the period of June 2012 – February 2013), 13% of the real estate deals in Jerusalem were done by foreign investors–which was 5% higher than the second-in-line city, Tel Aviv. Moreover, most of the real-estate deals done in Israel by foreign investors in this period were in Jerusalem (31%), and then Tel Aviv (18%). See Hila Tsion, "The Contractors: The Taxes Will Cost Housing Renovators 100 Thousand Shekels," *ynet real estate* (Hebrew), 20 May 2013, http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4381805,00.html (accessed 18 July 2013).

history of the area. The structuring of the gaze that we believe is focused on the Tower of David in the Old City is accomplished through an inter-dispersed matrix of material and symbolic icons that populate the Jerusalem landscape, and which comprises its current davidization. In other words, there are multiple sites that help redirect and realign the gaze toward the Tower, and this occurs in two related processes that inform our analysis:

1) The appearance of actual sites that bear the name David (for instance, David's Citadel Hotel), or make other semiotic references to King David (the Chords Bridge), or lead the gaze directly to the Tower of David (Alrov Mamilla Mall). This mushrooming of 'Davids' during the last decade occurs with the speed and multiplication of malignancies. Included in this multiplication are *images of* the Tower of David commonly found in public places (municipal and real estate ads) and movable objects that are frequently used (phone books, sugar packets).

2) These sites constitute a matrix that is falling into alignment with the shift of the gaze to the Tower; a new constellation that is revolving around a central axis. This is a relation between the many and the one. But these sites also exist in a relational grid: Each site is a node in Jerusalem whose placement is contextually significant, gaining meaning through its relationality to surrounding or nearby elements. The referencing becomes multi-directional and intensified as we get closer to the Tower itself, the state's and the municipality's new ideological center of gravity.

Our analysis is divided into two sections: The first describes a series of 'David-ian' sites following a trajectory from west to east, beginning with the Chords Bridge toward the architecture on King David Street and the Green Line, and ending with the City of David settlement and archaeological park to the south of the Old City. This trajectory is also a continuum that begins with global imagery (a sleek modern bridge bearing the new light rail) that reaches up to the sky, and ends with the ethno-national site of colonization, which is aggressively oriented to unearthing King David's ancient city deep in the ground. The second section discusses the images of the Tower in print media, and relates their circulation to strategies of image-formation – accomplished through the banal and the everyday. This group of images is arguably more oriented to the local.

Referencing the Tower of David

Fig. 2a: The 'Chords Bridge'

Fig. 2b: Billboard ad for King David Residence

Fig. 2c: Front of David's Citadel Hotel

Fig. 2d: Alrov Mamilla's eastern opening with a tunnel view to the Tower of David

Fig. 2e: Mamila Kfar David (center right) with the historic King David Hotel in the background (top left)

The 'Chords Bridge'

Following a west-east trajectory, the first prominent icon that visitors to Jerusalem see in what we call the 'David constellation' is the Jerusalem 'Chords Bridge' (*Fig. 2a*), inaugurated in 2008, whereon the Jerusalem Light Rail travels. Designed by famed Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava, the characteristically white structure is located at the main (western) entrance to Jerusalem, and its impressive aesthetic appearance consists of chords, which are presented as icons that evoke the image of the strings in David's harp.[29] Hence the bridge physically marks the entrance to the city of Jerusalem as an entrance to the biblical-scape (which is also an alluded biblical soundscape). Despite the

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[29] Though famous for his courage as King, as a young biblical figure David is described as sensitive and poetic, and he was "skillful in playing" the harp (First Samuel, Chapter 16, verses 16 and 23). Although the biblical text uses the term "violin" (*kinor*), it is commonly held that the term designated the instrument we call a harp.

biblical reference, however, it is not a regionalist architectural form; the bridge represents a departure from previous, state-supported building schemes in which Israeli architects employed neo-Oriental motifs and materials—such as arches, courtyards, and local limestone—to achieve an "active re-rooting" of contemporary Jewry into the landscape.[30] The effect is therefore not of integration into the (biblical, even 'Levantine') landscape, for the bridge's smooth form stands in sharp contrast to everything that is seen around and *through* it. At the same time, with its multi-dimensional reach, it catches everything in sight within its net; through technology and optics, the state is able to capture the entire city in what Handelman terms a bureaucratic aesthetics of the state.[31] Moreover we can say that the global is imposed or transposed on the local. At the same time, a Calatrava-designed bridge has become a status symbol, a 'must-have' for world cities.[32] The bridge's high modernist style seems to announce Jerusalem as a global city while also making reference to a biblical past, fusing past and present through contemporary architecture. The Chords Bridge is a kind of screen that announces the matrix; we see the city through the lattice that it creates.

The Green Line Triangle
Inside the former Green Line lies the threshold to Jaffa Gate, leading to the Old City and the David Citadel within it. Here the gravitational pull is magnified as the distance between the sites is reduced: The King David Residence, David's Citadel Hotel, and Alrov Mamilla, all on King David Street, form a triangle. It is worth noting that these structures draw on the cultural capital of the extremely well-known and high-scale King David Hotel, built in the 1920s and situated nearby on King David Street. Two additional David-ian sites are located in this vicinity: the Kfar David complex, and further to the southeast, the City of David. We address these sites in this order: first the three on King David Street, followed by the two others.

The *King David Residence* represents an instance of the Jerusalem municipality's re-orientation agenda: it is part of the Judaization, and specifically davidization of city, combining normative and contested ideologies and spaces. It is therefore to be understood as carrying David's sign (which is inscribing greater swaths of Jerusalem), including the aforementioned Chords Bridge. In this particular case, David is not only a sign of religious nationalism but also of luxury for a transnational Jewish diaspora (its website originally was in English and French, but not Hebrew). The building is a ten-minute walk from both downtown West Jerusalem and the Old City's Jaffa Gate. Reminiscent of a

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[30] Alona Nitzan-Shiftan, "Seizing Locality in Jerusalem," in *The End of Tradition?* ed. Nezar AlSayyad (London: Routledge, 2004), 245.

[31] Don Handelman, "Folding and Enfolding Walls: Statist Imperatives and Bureaucratic Aesthetics in Divided Jerusalem," *Social Analysis* 54/ 2 (2010): 65-66.

[32] Steven Flusty, "Culturing the World City: an Exhibition of the Global Present," in *The Global Cities Reader*, eds. Neil Brenner, Roger Keil (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 346-352.

tourist bubble, it is a particularly high-end complex of apartments, barred from the street's commons by a secured lobby, guards, and surveillance equipment. The complex combines amenities for inhabitants of both elite and Orthodox Jewish populations: It includes three buildings with 88 luxurious apartments, commercial areas, a swimming pool, underground parking, an underground wine cellar, a synagogue and Shabbat elevator.

The building's privatized lifestyle is accomplished through 'indoorization.' By indoorization, we refer to the mechanisms that serve to enclose the residents in a protected space while keeping out unwanted others, as well as to the ethos of privatization and individualization that signals the King David Residence as a separate universe, as opposed to an orientation towards the public space of the street.[33] The complex's securitization recalls the guards and cameras that often surround Jewish establishments abroad, and feeds into the Israeli narrative of persecution by a Palestinian (and more broadly, Muslim) Other,[34] hence connecting transnational flows of wealth with state security apparatuses. Architecturally and ideologically, the building borrows from the citadel motif, conforming to the clientele's triple desire for access to Jerusalem and its holy sites, a high-end lifestyle, and 'security'. The Residence icon (its logo— see *Fig. 2b*) is in the shape of a harp, suggesting thus a David-related visual image which compliments the complex's name. Indicative of globalization and convenience, the King David Residence exists in a topological conversation with high-end shopping and hotels located across the street in this triangle on the Green Line.

The second site we discuss in this section is the *David's Citadel Hotel (Fig. 2c)*, which is located right across the street (on King David Street) from the King David Residence, and it too is within a ten-minute walk from the Tower of David. It was the first of the three structures to be built, and here we are pointing out the name of the hotel and its façade – where the latter shows an interplay between openness and defense, echoing the notion of the citadel. Whereas the Chords Bridge relates to the space around it through transparency (enabled by open spaces between its strings), the façade of this hotel looks like a fortification that minimizes permeability; the open planes are filled in, in addition to being layered. Handelman wisely terms this 'Third Temple' architecture and situates the hotel in a matrix of bureaucratic aesthetics of the state.[35] The façade of the hotel is a concrete slab faced with Jerusalem stone in the shape of tall arches. The arches reference the common shape for passageways or doorways in the Middle East, where they are indicative of shelter, hospitality, and protection. And yet the architecture of the front of the hotel tells us that this is a citadel.

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[33] Teresa Caldeira, "Fortified Enclaves: The New Urban Segregation," *Public Culture* 8/2 (1996): 308.

[34] Handelman, "Folding and Enfolding Walls," 65-66.

[35] Ibid., 71.

The very tall aches announce a monumentality that is not as permeable as it may appear. The first line of defense is a soft boundary: trees are planted in the spaces of the arches; above them are smaller square-shaped openings that recall the openings in tall citadel ramparts where snipers would stand. Behind this arch is the crescent-shaped driveway, and further back stands the actual hotel with its tall windows. Notice the lattice-like effect of blue cross beams over the window. Viewed straight on, there is a feeling of depth and defense resulting from the juxtaposition of two lattices. From the main (Mamillah) junction nearby, the Tower of David can be seen further away, supplying the background for the presence of the David's Citadel Hotel.

The third and last site we discuss is *Alrov Mamilla*, a high-end residential and commercial pedestrian strip (basically, a mall) completed in 2007.[36] Built to traverse the former Green Line, this fortified walkway connects West Jerusalem to the Old City (in East Jerusalem), creating a sense of seamlessness across the old dividing line. The appeal of this complex to a global imaginary of high-end real estate is predicated on the illusion of unification between East and West Jerusalem through architecture. It aims to attract foreign Jewish tourists and buyers by erasing traces of division, thereby bolstering the economy of this traditionally poor city.

Until the city's division in 1948, Mamillah's location between the Old City and West Jerusalem contributed to its economic viability. It was a commercial and transportation hub that extended from Jaffa Gate, and included clothing shops and hotels, car dealerships and garages. During the Armistice Regime (1949-1967), it was relegated to No Man's Land, and the area was largely abandoned owing to its proximity to the dangerous border. The new Alrov Mamilla, constructed as a shopping corridor, was built to connect Jaffa Gate to West Jerusalem's traditional city center, the 'triangle' of King George, Jaffa and Ben Yehuda Streets. In serving as a kind of bridge between the Old City and the high-profile cluster of residential buildings and hotels along the intersection of King David Street and Agron Street, Alrov Mamilla successfully connects between a globalized future and the ancient past of the 'City of David.' It anticipates and partly enacts an enclosure of its own and is referential to the enclosure of the King David Residence. *Fig. 2d* shows the eastern emergence or exit from Alrov Mamilla's shady walkway, which opens dramatically onto the very sunny image of the Tower of David. If the walkaway serves as a bridge that offers a high-end consumer connection between West and East Jerusalem, then its east-facing destination is set on the Tower of David.

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[36] The omission of the final 'h' in the English transliteration of Mamillah, which more accurately reflects the Arabic name, indexes a departure from Arab cultural associations especially from the Mamillah Cemetery across the street. We use Mamillah to refer to the neighborhood and Mamilla to the newly-built complex.

The foregoing discussion indicates a new relationship between individual sites and the whole, reconstituting the entire city of Jerusalem as the City of David with its entrance in the west through the Chords Bridge and its counterpart in the Old City of the Tower of David within Jaffa Gate, whence the Holy Basin and the City of David archaeological park are reached. Understood as markers of a reconstituted biblical terrain, the sites may arguably become key symbols that evoke structures of feeling, namely of a spiritual ascent of pilgrimage or tourism.[37] The final approach to the Tower through Alrov Mamilla is via an ascent, *aliyah*, such that ascending from the mall to the Tower of David constitutes a twist on the familiar scenario, now linking transnational travel and consumption with the new symbol of 'unified' Jerusalem.

Mamila Kfar David and the City of David National Park
Two final examples that support Jerusalem's davidization are the *Mamila Kfar David*[38] complex and the *City of David National Park* and settlement. Mamila Kfar David is a high-end, gated complex of luxurious apartments that was built during the 1990s, and which is located to the east of David's Citadel Hotel and closer to the Jaffa Gate and the Tower of David (See *Fig. 2e*). Since it is mostly owned by foreign investors and by Jewish residents who visit Jerusalem only on High Holidays, the area is usually empty of people and devoid of social life, and has come to be called a "ghost neighborhood" (in Hebrew, *shekhunat refa'im*).[39] The complex's windows typically face the Tower of David. Since the complex was built relatively early, it is one of the first projects that established the view of the Tower as a high-end visual product.

The final example concerns the name and the logo of one of the more active Jewish settler organizations in East Jerusalem, namely the *ElAd* organization. *ElAd*, which is an acronym for "to the City of David" (*El 'ir David*), is an Orthodox, right-wing settler organization whose main goal is to Judaize Palestinian East Jerusalem.[40] Important for the present discussion is the fact that it is also in charge of an important Jewish heritage site—located in the Holy Basin, in proximity to al-Ḥaram ash-Sharif and the Western Wall—named the City of David National Park.[41] *ElAd*'s logo is a golden harp,

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[37] Sherry B. Ortner, "On Key Symbols," *American Anthropologist, New Series* 75/5 (1973): 1338-46; Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977).

[38] Once again we follow the transliteration used by complex itself, which spells Mamila with one "l" in distinction from Alrov Mamilla.

[39] Journalist Dror Ben Gil describes the entire complex and its surround as "one big ghost complex" and its recent history as "corrupt." See: Dror Ben Gil, "If Walls Could Talk: The Story of Mamilla Neighborhood," *Maariv NRG*, 24 August 2009. http://www.nrg.co.il/online/54/ART1/933/646.html. (accessed 20 July 2013).

[40] Chaim Noy, "The Political Ends of Tourism: Voices and Narratives of Silwan/the City of David in East Jerusalem," in *The Critical Turn in Tourism Studies: Creating an Academy of Hope*, eds. Nigel Morgan, Irena Ateljevic, Annette Pritchard (Amsterdam: Elsevier Publications, 2012), 27-41.

[41] For more on that see Chaim Noy, "Peace Activism in Tourism: Two Cases Studies (and a

indexing, again, King David's Harp and the fantasy of the revival of a Judean Kingdom.

The park is a highly visited heritage tourist site, although it is mainly visited by Israelis. The signs and the tours there narrate exclusively the Jewish ethno-national past, omitting anything having to do with the contemporary and archaeological presence of Palestinians and other cultures (despite the fact that the Park is located within a densely populated Palestinian part of town). The park employs its own security guards who walk around with guns, and there have been numerous altercations between them and Palestinian residents of Silwan. Also, of the dozens of national parks in Israel, it is singular in that this one is operated by private hands, and in that it has residents (in the shape of Jewish settlers) living within its confines. The point is that this site, which is located near and to the south of the Old City, also promotes the davidization or the reorientation of the conjoined spaces of both East and West Jerusalem.[42] Its symbiotic relationship with the municipality exemplifies the way that privatization has opened the gates (so to speak) for the Judaization of East Jerusalem.

As indicated by this constellation of images and landmarks – from the global architecture of the Chords Bridge in the west to the nationalist settlers' heritage park City of David in the east, the new focus is suggestive of an emergent visual and semantic field; of a network of sites related by the appellation David. In the next section we move from the matrix of structures to circulating images, which also have the iconic Tower of David as their visual focus.

Circulating Images of the Tower of David

We noted in the introduction that the gravitational and ideological power of the Tower of David icon derives from both the mushrooming of referential sites, which we highlighted in the previous section, *and* its circulation as an image in various media in spaces within Jerusalem and beyond. In this section we shift somewhat our object of analysis from actual sites that reference the Tower of David, to various contemporary widespread images of the same. Before we pursue this, however, we wish to interject a further discussion concerning the symbolism underlying the shift from the Dome of the Rock/Kotel to the Tower of David. Our point here concerns two aspects of the architecture and environment of the Western Wall that have partly propelled the shift away from it as a major iconic image. The first concerns the

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Few Reflections) in Jerusalem," in *Peace through Tourism: Promoting Human Security through International Citizenship*, eds. Lynda-Ann Blanchard, Freya Higgins-Desbiolles Blanchard (New York: Routledge, 2013) 204-16.

[42] *ElAd* has refused to publish the names of its contributors. See Noy, "The Political Ends of Tourism," 30.

fact that the Wall is not highly visible: it is unobtrusive and despite its large size it is hidden and invisible when glossing Jerusalem's – and even the Old City's – skyline. Indeed, despite the holiness of the Western Wall, what became the most common image of Israel's capital was the large and golden Dome of the Rock, which is located nearby and is highly visible, even eye-catching from both near and far. From the Zionist perspective, the problem with the Dome of the Rock as a metonym for the capital is that while it successfully indexed the adjacent Western Wall, it is a highly religious Muslim site. And, with the growing religious tensions and divides (the ongoing escalation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to religious terms) the Israeli state's regime had to grapple with this attribution.

Furthermore, there are other important semiotic differences between the Dome of the Rock and the Tower of David, over and above the fact that the former is a Muslim site of worship. First, graphically, the Dome presents precisely that – a round and decorated (golden-covered) structure. In Zionism's national imagery, the Dome of the Rock, as well as Jerusalem as a whole, enjoyed mostly feminine attributions and metaphors.[43] In the military language of the 1967 War, Jerusalem was a passive and nearly hidden city, waiting to be stormed and rescued by Israeli paratroopers. In Naomi Shemer's (aforementioned) famous song, which for years enjoyed the status of an informal national anthem, Jerusalem is portrayed as a gentle female image who is being sung to, praised, and perhaps courted (as in the famous verse "For all your songs I am a violin" [*Le-kol shirayikh ani kinor*], where 'your' is gendered as feminine). The passivity and femininity associated with the image of the city of Jerusalem (and its Old City) were further symbolically augmented by the fact that the Western Wall is a sign of Jewish defeat. This one is not merely a religion symbol, but it is also a remnant of one of the outer supporting walls of the Second Jewish Temple, and is therefore a symbol of the destruction of the Second Temple and of the suppression of Jewish rebellion by the Romans in the first and second centuries (specifically 70 CE).

Hence, the shift *away* from the Western Wall and from the round, feminine (i.e. passive) and Muslim Dome of the Rock, was also a shift *to* a site that was not collectively associated with Islam or with femininity. The Tower of David is not a round worship site or a relic of an ancient disaster or loss. To the contrary, it is a stern Herodian fortress whose associated minaret is visibly erect and standing sunny and bright (and phallic). In collective Zionist history it is not associated with defeat or disaster, and as a fortress it connotes defense and assertion. Also, it is not completely associated or even identified with religious symbols. Tunnel tours represent the Western Wall as a symbol of victimhood and hope for redemption, while the Tower is a phallic symbol.

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[43] Dalia Gavriely-Nuri, "The Social Construction of 'Jerusalem of Gold' as Israel's Unofficial National Anthem," *Israel Studies* 12/2 (2007): 108-109.

Now we turn back to images of the Tower of David that suffuse the city with the ideology the state wants to permeate. We will present six images, though many others exist in the city's spaces.

Municipality Street Posters

Fig. 3a: Poster on an electrical box

Fig. 3b: Illuminated billboard ads

Fig. 3c: Alrov Mamilla Residences

Fig. 3d: Lev ha-Ir neighborhood construction complex

Taken in May 2010, *Fig. 3a* shows a poster on an electrical box, a common element in the urban topography of Jerusalem. The poster presents the familiar frontal image of the Tower, with the upper third showing blue sky (connoting Israel's national blue-and-white flag). Graffiti appears on the poster. It reads in Hebrew, "Outside Israeli territory," with an arrow pointing directly to the Tower of David. To the right of the Tower, part of the poster is peeled away

(or ripped?), and in this gap an interesting and surprising figure is revealed – that of *Kishkashta*, a beloved puppet of a classic Israeli children's show who is shaped like a cactus and symbolizes the sabra figure of the native Israeli. There is an interplay of symbolic elements here, suggesting that the top-down strategy of flooding the urban topography with ideologically-laden images does not escape local activists, nor does the fact that the Tower is a political and hence problematical icon. The image of *Kishkashta*, whether drawn before the image was ripped or after it, also stresses the tension between hegemonic and non-hegemonic discourses, and between naïve and mundane images, on the one hand, and phallic images of ethno-national pride, on the other hand.

Standard municipal billboards present larger, detailed and obtrusive images of the Tower of David. The image in *Fig. 3b* was taken in the city's center on January 2011, where it was present a few months before and a few months after it was taken, as well. The billboard on the left-hand side carries an illuminated sign that says in Hebrew "The Tower of David Museum: at Day and also at night." The large poster below it presents two images of the Citadel's inner courtyard with the Tower in the top center taken at daylight (left) and nighttime (right).[44] Interestingly, the title of the illuminated sign above the billboard on the right-hand side is an ad for the City of David site (the text saying: "Come to discover!" and an image of the Harp on the left).

We mentioned earlier the Alrov Mamilla Project in its capacity as a site whose architecture structures shoppers' and pedestrians' view and tunnels it directly unto the David Tower. In addition, on the walkway's west and south entrance walls, large real-estate advertisements are hanging, which also reference the Tower of David (*See Fig. 3c*). As of 2012-13, the large advertisements face the Mamillah junction, and are located five minutes from the actual Tower, such that the posters and the Tower can be seen simultaneously by the pedestrian. The point is that this representation exists not away from or in the place of the actual object, but rather as a marker which redefines its object, or as Baudrillard would have put it, it simulates the object. These ads suggest the Tower of David as a visual icon to be consumed – specifically through the purchasing of high-end apartments in this complex.

The Tower of David also stars on a number of large billboards announcing the ongoing construction of a large residential complex (of some six buildings and 330 apartments) that is located in West Jerusalem, between the neighborhoods of Beit Hakerem and Givat Mordechai. The project's commercial title is "The

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[44] The many white spots that appear blurry in the image are one hundred white doves that traditionally represent Peace. The doves were released in a festive occasion that took place in December 2009 at the museum, with the participation of the city's mayor (Nir Barkat). On the occasion, Jewish and Arab children released the doves, together with little notes asking for the release of Gilad Shalit (an Israeli soldier who was then held hostage in the Gaza Strip and was actually released in October 2011).

Heart of the City" (*Lev ha-'Ir*), and its visual logo is appropriately a heart, in which the sun is seen on the left side, and the Tower of David on the right side (*See Fig. 3d*). In addition, a smaller shape appears on the left, which is the familiar and unique white structure of the *Heikhal ha-Sefer* (Shrine of the Book, housing the Dead Sea Scrolls) located in Jerusalem (near the Israel Museum) and commonly associated with it. The effect here emerges as the visual logo corresponds with the verbal title, such that inside the colorful heart the "City" is to be found – iconically represented through the Tower of David.

Postal Service Album and Stamp

Fig. 4a: "Jerusalem - From Generation to Generation" Prestige Booklet[45]

Fig. 4b: 2011 stamp "Visit Israel" with prominent view of the Tower of David[46]

[45] Jerusalem Booklet
http://www.israelpost.co.il/Mall.nsf/ProdsbyCode/425?OpenDocument&L=EN (accessed 5 November 2013)
[46] http://www.israelpost.co.il/mall.nsf/prodsearch?SearchView&query=%u05D9%u05E8%u05D5%u05E9%u05DC%u05D9%u05DD%20AND%20[product_category]=5*&SearchOrder=4&Start=1&Count=10

Fig. 4c: Jerusalem telephone book

Fig. 4d: Sugar packet found in a restaurant

Stamp-collecting has been a popular pastime in Israel for several generations, and each year the Israeli Postal Service issues a series of new stamps and related collectables. A 2010 issue of a Jerusalem stamp album series is called 'Jerusalem from Generation to Generation'—Prestige Booklet (*Fig. 4a*). The cover of the album displays three images emblematic of Jerusalem: The Kotel on the left, the Knesset on the right, and the Tower of David in the center. This Prestige Booklet costs 49 NIS (around 13 USD or 10 €). According to the description, "This booklet tells the story of the city of Jerusalem. It includes

reprints of 11 previously issued stamps on the subject of Jerusalem. For technical reasons the stamps might be slightly different (size, color tone etc.) to the stamps originally issued in the past. Both sides of the cover have gold-foil printing."[47] Relatedly, a 2011 stamp bears a prominent, upward-looking view of the Tower (*Fig. 4b*). In his study of Israeli and Palestinian postcards, Semmerling states that postcards depict "national selves" through a range of carefully-composed images that include nationalistic, ecological, or heritage-infused symbols. Stamps function similarly as a 'face' of the nation-state.[48] While some carefully choose the stamps they buy based on aesthetics or values, the transaction at the post office, where most Israelis purchase their stamps on an as-needed basis, is often swift and taken-for-granted. The Tower of David stamp thus circulates within and between plains of quotidian activity and symbolic representation.

The image of the Tower of David appears on the cover of the two recent Telephone Yellow Pages books of Jerusalem (*Fig. 4c*). This is atypical, as during all previous years, and in other cities in Israel, the directory's hard copy usually did not present symbolic-national images. While many nowadays prefer to search for phone numbers via the World Wide Web, and not the hard copy, it is worth noting that the printed directory is distributed freely and directly to *all* households in Jerusalem and the larger 02 area code – amounting to approximately 300,000 copies circulating annually. In this way, the frontal image of the Tower receives a high degree of visibility.

In June 2013 the first author of this article, on a visit to Jerusalem, went to a well-known café-restaurant called *Tmol Shilshom*. A Jerusalem establishment since 1994, it is owned and co-operated by David Erlich, a well-known and beloved figure. On the table beside salt and pepper shakers was a typical container of small packets of sugar and sweetener (*Fig. 4d*). The Elzan sugar packet that displays the Tower of David is part of a series of packets called "Landmarks in Israel." The author's companion remarked that this was a kind of trivia game; flipping the packet to the other side, one reads the name of the site followed by a description: "The fortress located on the highest place in the Old City, between the city walls and overlooking Ben-Hinom Valley, it was built by King Herod. [Located] in the strategic point that comprised a fortification throughout history with the aim of protecting the entire city from the west."
This knowledge game recalls products such as gum wrappers and cigarette box cards commonly marketed to children, requiring them to purchase or trade the items to complete a series.

By permeating the materiality of the mundane, these images undergo a process

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[47] http://www.israelpost.co.il/Mall.nsf/ProdsbyCode/425?OpenDocument&L=EN (accessed 5 November 2013).
[48] Semmerling, *Israeli and Palestinian Postcards*, 1-7.

of normalization, whereby they enter the realm of everyday activities (though as graffiti on the poster in *Fig. 3a* shows, never wholly without critique or backtalk). Note that in contrast to the sites we described in the previous section, these objects are more locally-inflected because they are either emplaced in an everyday and specifically Hebrew landscape that defines the borders of the nation state (as in the stamp album and the sugar packet series "Landmarks in Israel") or they partake of mundane and functional activities (looking up a phone number, adding sugar to a hot drink in a restaurant or café), and hence are viewed by everyone, not only by the elite.

Conclusions

In this article we have argued that an ideological shift in the visualization of Jerusalem is taking place, one that corresponds to the re-orientation of the Israeli state's economic and political agenda since the late 1990s and 2000s. The demise of the peace process saw a move towards right-wing politics, with far-reaching consequences for the contested city of Jerusalem. As we have indicated, since at least 1967 there has been a tradition of portraying the city via images of the Dome of the Rock/Kotel, indexing (from Israel's point-of-view) the sometimes uncomfortable yet nevertheless taken-for-granted dynamic of Israelis and Palestinians living cheek-by-jowl in a city that is holy to the three monotheistic religions. The new visualization of Jerusalem via the icon of the Tower of David corresponds to the shift away from negotiations with the Palestinians and to erecting barriers to difference—in effect, to building a citadel in which the myth of ancient Jewish homogeneity reigns. Hence, the move from the *dual* image of the Dome of the Rock/Kotel to the *singular* Tower of David signifies for us the rise of an aggressive and fundamentalist ideology that seeks to deny Jerusalem's non-Jewish or 'with-Jewish' pasts, and hence the possibility of imagining Jerusalem as a shared city. At the same time, the shifting representation also entails an attempt to (further) cement and legitimize Israel's claim to the Old City – and to all of occupied Jerusalem, i.e. 'unified Jerusalem' – with regard to all future peace negotiations.

These legitimization processes, which also entail an erasure of the Green Line, in a way, work both domestically as well as vis-à-vis external audiences, visitors, and supporters. This aspect is part and parcel of the fundamentalist ideology to which we refer. The opening of the country to foreign capital—particularly to real estate investment by diaspora Jews both within the Green Line and in East Jerusalem—means that actual capital is mobilized in the visual consumption of the image of the Tower. The re-branding of Jerusalem as the 'City of David' is thus accomplished through a mutually-constitutive cycle of simulation and reality, whereby signs of the Tower (in Baudrillard's terms, *the map*) and the actualization of Jewish ethnocracy (*the territory*) go hand-in-hand. The figure of the lone Tower as the emblem of Jerusalem constitutes a phase in the transformation of the image into simulation: By omitting signs of Palestinian

presence, it "masks the *absence* of a profound reality"[49] and paves the way for the simulation of a fiction of Jewish homogeneity. The Tower has become the object of a high-end visual consumer desire, where being able to see it instantiates the seer as authentically located in Jerusalem, and in its finest real-estate and touristic locations at that.

Importantly, our research is preliminary and so is our articulation of the disorienting shift in our experience of space in Jerusalem. We are naming a process that, as long-time (second author) and occasional (first author) residents of Jerusalem, we experience first-hand as affect, which we now attempt to theorize by working from the tangible to the 'system'. Further historical and archival research would be needed to quantify this shift, to find antecedents of the current iconography in previous eras, circulations among prior groups, and more. In this vein, we have not been able thus far to obtain a statement – an explicit discourse emanating from the mayor's office or the like – which addresses this process.

Rather, the 'naturalization' of this imaginary—how it became an obvious and natural element in contemporary visualization—is indicated in a recent supplement of the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz*, which appeared right before the last municipal elections in October 2013. The supplement's front page shows Mayor Nir Barkat posing before the Tower of David, while the story page (*Fig. 5*) shows a slightly different angle of the same, with the title "The Temple Mount is not entirely in our hands." These words refer to the historic saying "The Temple Mount is in our hands," perhaps the most famous 'catch-phrase' of the 1967 War for Israelis. It was declared by General Motta Gur, who headed the 55th Paratrooper Brigade that "liberated" the Kotel. He announced this in the army's telecommunication radio, and it is clear that he was aware of the historic nature of the moment and that he wanted to stamp it discursively (which he did successfully). The paraphrasing of this idiom in the aforementioned article addresses the fact that Mayor Barkat is running for elections and that his success is unsure. Saying the Temple Mount is still not 'in our hands' is the newspaper's way of saying that the Mayor's re-election is still not certain. What is essential here is the image, its recentness, and its role in elections, which suggest that the Tower of David is effective in the contemporary popular imagery and the current visual regime of Jerusalem associated with Mayor Barkat and Prime Minister Netanyahu. Moreover, the combination of the image and the caption evinces a discrepancy between the referent—the Temple Mount—and the new visual icon of the Old City, i.e. the Tower.

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[49] Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, 6.

Fig. 5: Haaretz newspaper supplement depicting Mayor Nir Barkat with the 'Tower of David' in the background

Through semiotic analysis (itself inspired by critical urban ethnography), we have sought to describe the city's davidization bottom-up. Further, as we have indicated in the Introduction, Jerusalem has been, and still is the object of various gazes that compete, complement, and sometimes contradict and exclude one other (such a multiplicity of images appears in *Fig. 4a*). Mapping the entirety of this visual matrix is a project that far exceeds the present article's scope, yet we traced what we argue to be a significant re-orientation in the hegemonic view of Jerusalem (from both 'inside' and 'outside', as it were).

On a final note, Dean MacCannell observes that walls help fundamentalists propagate the fiction that the past was free of difference.[50] The davidization matrix is a simulation that acts like a wall. We might say that by occluding Palestinian presence, and by perpetuating the fiction-cum-reality of Jerusalem as an exclusively Jewish city, this matrix assists in the denial of interaction between different actors, an interaction that forms the basis of society.[51] Crucially, however, the seamlessness of the imaginary contrasts with the reality that it can only be actualized by force, as ongoing struggles against forced evacuations in Palestinian neighborhoods like Sheikh Jarrah and Silwan attest. The simulation masks these urban battles but they constantly uncover its fictions, as graffiti on the poster.

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[50] Dean MacCannell, "Primitive Separations," in *Against the Wall: Israel's Barrier to Peace*, ed. Michael Sorkin (New York: The New Press, 2005), 28-47.

[51] Ibid., 33.

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Maristella Botticini and Zvi Eckstein, *The Chosen Few: How Education Shaped Jewish History, 70-1492.* **(Princeton – Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2012), pp. xvii-323.**
(Heb. Transl. Haim Rubin, Tel Aviv, 2012; It. Transl. Università Bocconi Editore, Milano, 2013)

by *Sergio Della Pergola*

The question of whether economic history should be written by a historian who knows about economics, or by an economist who knows about history remains open and probably will never be adjudicated. In sweeping generalization, economic historians mostly rely on perusing large bodies of archival sources including commercial transactions, legal acts, court decisions, dowries, prices of selected real estates and consumables, and are quite attentive to the specific and mutable political and social circumstances of each time and place. Economists, on their part, tend to develop theoretical models of quite universal applicability and to verify their inference with the help of large masses of quantifiable data somewhat less dependent on time and place uniqueness. The historian often would proceed through cumulative evidence, seldom venturing to generalization out of the given context; the economist more often would try to formulate broader generalization, validating it through empirical materials and statistical inference. In this sense, economists and other social scientists sometimes propend to outline the broader configuration of major processes that instead historians describe in detail from closer direct observation and of whose exceptions they also better know the details.

Ideally, either specialist should be well acquainted with the other's approach and aware of their complementarity, even if the question remains open of whom is readier to look at the forest around the individual trees and more willing to tackle the *longue durée.* Both types of scholarship are needed and probably the respective experts should join forces especially when the topic is complex and extends over wide geographical spaces and time spans, and it would be fortunate if such collaboration happened more often. Disciplinary misunderstandings might be reduced regarding general conceptualization and division of labor on questions of minor detail as well of deeper substance, expressly when both historian and economist seek to penetrate the depths of human mind to uncover the more recondite motives of individual and collective behavior.

This mutuality of approaches, sources and tools is certainly well represented in the collaborative effort of Maristella Botticini of the Università Bocconi in Milano, and Zvi Eckstein of Tel Aviv University and the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya, two scholars (B&E in the following) who have tested their skills both at developing some broader timeless and borderless conceptual

frameworks and at getting their hands dirty with the minutiae of miles of documentary shelves and piles of statistical tabulations. The central question B&E ask can be phrased in otherwise familiar words: Why is the economy of the Jews so different from all other economies? As corollary questions projected to present time, B&E ask why are there so few Jewish farmers? Why the Jews did become an urban population of traders, entrepreneurs, bankers, financers, lawyers, physicians and scholars? Why did the Jewish population shrink from several millions during the first century to what possibly was a historical low point toward the end of the fifteenth century? Hence, in their words, when, how and why did the Jews became the "chosen few?" To provide their answers to these queries, B&E lead us through a brave wide ranging ride across fourteen centuries of history, beginning with the fall of the Second Temple in Jerusalem under Roman occupation, and extending throughout the expulsion of Jews from the Iberian Peninsula.

When broadly reviewing the Jewish experience, there are two types of adversaries: those who attribute Jews every possible kind of abject conspiracy, and those who deny the originality or even existence of a Jewish collective experience. Putting aside the disturbing first type, B&E strive to fight the second type by strongly developing the view that social processes cannot be solely explained by means of instrumental and neutral economic relations but demonstrably rest on a platform of particular values and behaviors that carry symbolic contents. Conventional economic theory often is quite indifferent to these peculiarities or merely confines them to the residual input of "tastes." Economic history of the Jews, then, must be anything but mechanistic or deterministic as it unfolds in certain rather than other directions as a result of an array of norms and values significantly, or at least partly different from those of other population groups. Starting from the observation of a shared normative core, no matter how modulated by variable local circumstances, the result must be a certain parallelism of the economic histories of Jews in different countries, even under very different physical environments and political regimes. To understand the meaning of these broader trends, they must be appreciated in comparative global perspective.

One of the fascinating puzzles of Jewish economic history is that indeed there seems to be an amazing amount of parallelism in the economic lives of Jews under many and distant different skies. But there also is a huge hiatus between the rural societies described in early textual and other documentary sources, and the crafty, mobile, predominantly small and quite dispersed, often urban or semi-urban Jewish communities of later periods – let alone the heavily metropolitan contemporary Jewish concentrations. A rupture should have occurred at some point in this uninterrupted historical sequence, generating the growth and spread of literacy among the initially rural Jewish population, enhancing the comparative advantage in urban skilled occupations, and supporting the long-term persistence of a Jewish diaspora in search of

worldwide economic and occupational opportunities. Several explanations of this factual sequence have been offered in past literature in the general context of a dwindling Jewish population, namely mass expulsion from the pristine land of Israel with the consequent relatively late landing in other countries. Their late joining of extant consolidated societies could determine the Jews to be prevented from owning land, to be excluded from membership in craft and merchant guilds, to be exposed to periodical persecutions, expulsions and forced migrations mostly on religious grounds. A consequence could be incentivizing investment in human capital which in the past, likewise today, was highly portable and not subject to the risk of expropriation like land and other types of physical capital.

When dealing with these long ranging issues the question of Jewish demographic and socioeconomic continuity and change should be – and perhaps in Jewish cultural discourse not always has sufficiently been – perceived within the framing boundaries of a changing geography, making a keen effort to keep distance from an excessively Eurocentric vision of the Jews. The Jews deep into a time when regarding Europe (but not elsewhere) it makes sense to speak of the Middle Age were a largely Middle Eastern population, and therefore it is in that particular regional context that the great cultural and socioeconomic transformations could occur. The great transition of the Jews to a significantly literate people indeed occurred before or around the mid of the first millennium. This is the central tenet of B&E, around which they articulate much of their understanding of subsequent economic developments. The achievement or rather resilience of comparatively large scale literacy epitomizes the socioeconomic transition of Jews from antiquity toward modernity.

In B&A's view, the key factor in understanding both Jewish population decline and the transition to a non-rural and potentially mobile community is massive conversions resulting from the high costs of literacy education. They submit a parsimonious typology arising from the combination of two factors, personal wealth and the willingness to invest in education, and reach the conclusion that the second is a far better predictor of the resilience of a chain of subsequent generations of Jewish descendants in late antiquity. This major choice occurred in the context of a dramatic political crisis and collapse of the political sovereign component of Jewish corporate existence. This also was the era of the emerging as a major spiritual and political force of the half-brethren, then cousin, then rival Christian sects and denominations, and anticipated the emergence of the new great hegemonic force of Islam. As a general background, it should be remembered that this was an era of great population decline around the Mediterranean and in the Near East with the accumulation of political crises and instability, the fall of Rome, civil and economic decline, wars, epidemics and famine.

Keeping this in mind when we move to the next stage of history, massive urbanization of assumedly literate Jews in a context that still was mostly non-European epitomized the advantages and disadvantages of remaining Jewish in front of the incentives and constraints operating in the domains of trade opportunities, taxation rules, and religious norms. B&E maintain that only an extreme tax differential that overturned merchants' attachment to Judaism would lead Jews to convert, thus confirming the primacy of ideational commitment over mere economic calculus. On the other hand powerful incentives for Jews to persist and thrive in their relatively new economic specializations in trade and money lending also derived from characteristics acquired through a long tradition of cumulated knowledge and shared social norms, such as universal contract-enforcement institutions provided by Jewish law, and social and economic networks with other Jews. This was the more so as Jews possibly in the wake of Islamic expansion were rapidly extending their presence westward, penetrating into growing portions of medieval Western Europe. In other words, restrictions and persecutions that attempted to strangle or block altogether the Jewish presence in Europe were not the cause of the Jews' economic specializations but rather among their consequences.

The next important facet, perhaps not sufficiently present in the conscience of many a reader, is the dramatic rupture brought about by the 13th century Mongol conquests, which destroyed the cities of the Middle East, devastated its commerce, and dramatically reduced demand for urban occupations throughout the region. B&E explain that in the wake of this devastation, diminished opportunities to participate in urban crafts and trade led much of the Jewish population to convert to Islam. In other words, quite reversing a conventional mode of thought, under conditions of extreme crisis Judaism was shown to become the dependent variable of economic process and not its explanatory factor. A Jewish community to thrive needed a functioning and developed (in relative historical terms) urban and commercial society, and it was bound to crisis and decline, to the extreme consequence of disappearance when trade and the urban economy collapsed. If this hypothesis is true in the past, it is certainly worth validating under conditions of modernization and after.

A special excursus on Jewish moneylending, quite at the end of B&E's time span, helps at understanding the mutuality of relationships in the money market. Contrary to a simplified, univocal perception of the banking mechanisms, lenders and borrowers conspicuously overlapped – at least in the example illustrated through Italian archival materials. This intricate web provides important insights on the primacy of moneylending as an occupation, on the primary goal of restrictions – namely to prevent Jews from excessive real estate purchases, on the non-monopoly of Jews in the business, on their relations with the local governments, and on the relative advantages deriving from their extended networking and arbitrage experience and opportunities. It

is unavoidable to observe how vulnerable and how manipulated Jewish moneylenders could be when facing the public interests but also the private greed of local rulers.

Throughout their exploration work, and in order to build the factual pillars of their theoretical construct, B&E proceed cautiously using a vast range of different sources. From the archives of the Florentine Catasto just demonstrated to the Cairo Geniza, from Talmudic decisions and other responsa to a vast array of secondary literature. This said, there are a number of puzzling issues that B&E might wish to consider as they proceed further with their ambitious trip throughout Jewish economic history. Going back to the different approaches of historians and economists – in a sense the contrast between micro and macro paradigms – the reader finds a certain lack of attention to socioeconomic diversity within the Jewish collective. The analytic index – mainly devoted to places and notable individuals – nonetheless might have included items such as *charity*, *poverty*, or *stratification*, not to mention *social class*. It is not that these aspects of the Jewish economy across history are neglected altogether, but their importance vanishes in front of the main thread focusing on the admittedly leading role of educational attainment, or rather investment, as the main driver of Jews economic peculiarity versus other populations, and later on the supposedly dominant role of traders and especially moneylenders in the Jewish economy. In economic reality the role of distributive inequality was actually more than marginal if one thinks of the ample space it holds in the foundational rabbinical debates of *Gemarah*, and much later in the dense institutional web of medieval and early modern communities that had to confront pressing empirical circumstances. Much of the documented legal contentious probably involved middle and lower strata of Jewish society, but this seems to be out of B&E's main analytical focus.

In turn, Jewish attention to the poorer strata of population and the declared effort to alleviate their miserable conditions has been posited by some historical demographers as one of several explanatory mechanisms of comparatively lower Jewish mortality levels due to natural causes, as long as those can be documented. For sure, throughout history Jews massively suffered of additional, exogenous causes of death which either generated massive population declines, or stopped or considerably slowed down their natural increase until the early beginnings of enlightenment and emancipation. But it remains a fact that other things being equal and when the general conditions allowed that, Jewish population steadily anticipated the modern demographic transition and population surge. This clearly occurred after the later time limits set by B&E, but its sociocultural and economic logical premises neatly fit within their time framework.

Concern with population size is indeed central to B&E's main economic argument and in this respect it is intriguing they could not access the works of

several major Jewish demographers like Liebmann Hersch, Arthur Ruppin, Jacob Lestschinsky, and Roberto Bachi, all of whom had developed their own reviews of historical sources (namely Bachi's repertoire of population estimates for the Land of Israel) and theories about the possible size of global and regional Jewish populations before modernization. These omissions do not actually detract from the basic soundness of the long term population scenario presented here, namely the large fluctuations between a substantially large Jewish population in antiquity, sharp decline toward the early Middle Age, relative immobility through repeated episodes of instability throughout early modernity, and a much later demographic take-off.

Regarding the chronology of the great leap of ancient Jewry toward becoming the ancestors of the "chosen few" one would perhaps give more space to possible exceptions. For example, reading studies like Harry Leon's and others on Jews in ancient Rome, one does perceive that the profile of the old rural society does not fit the Imperial capital where – before and shortly after the fall of the Temple – Jews already showed up as a vociferous urban populace settled with their homes, synagogues and skills in peculiar neighborhoods of the big capital city. As noted, this was no more than a small minority within the broader Jewish demographic picture of the time. But theory development should not neglect the exceptions, giving them a role within the more general concept.

Another area that still seems to have significant potentiality for further thought is explanatory discourse. At one extreme, to call into cause Marxist interpretations of Jewish economic history, through Abraham Leon and others, might have been an oddity, but in reality one would have loved to see B&E confronting themselves with materialist historical explanations, were it for the sake of dismissing them. In other words, the call to a reading of economic history that substantively relies on cultural norms which evidently emerges from B&E's work would have become even more intellectually provocative once explicitly set against the opposite claim.

A more challenging confrontation might have been with a more significant reading of Simon Kuznets, the economy Nobel Prize, who is repeatedly mentioned but not really used in the book. Kuznets actually developed much of his theory about the economic structure of minorities in the light of the trends of Eastern European Jews and their great migration to the United States. However much of his broader "constraints" typology seems applicable to other historical situations as well, namely his insistence on the role of seniority among migrant populations as a factor of economic marginality or centrality, on the transmission of historically acquired skills as a relative advantage vis-à-vis other population groups, on the mechanisms of group solidarity, cohesion and proximity, on the mostly perverse but sometimes surprisingly friendly consequences of legal and other discriminations, and also

on the randomness of some developments within the whole gamut of economic mechanisms. Economic theory applied to the study of minorities thus arises from a combination of external and internal determinants, political, psycho-social, demographic, and genuinely economic. It generates unique patterns of population, geographic, and socioeconomic stratification which apply to Jews and to any other sub-populations, and do not seem to be confined within the modern period. Demonstrably more than one of these mechanisms operated over the wide period covered by B&E, leading toward an inherently multivariate explanation, along with investment in education as a possible primary causal factor. B&E stand light years removed from preconceived determinists like Werner Sombart, but they would gauge benefit from a somewhat more disenchanted assessment of the global Jewish environment during the fourteen centuries of their survey.

One of the challenges and perhaps advantages of economic theory is that, as noted, it may succeed at formalizing complex and fluid processes within one synthetic equation. For those among the readers who have followed the mathematical logic behind the formula, the expectation would become that the equation be actually tested with various data sets pertaining to different periods and geographical areas. In other words the strength of reducing complex reality to its essential rational bones should be proven and its ability to encompass human behavioral variance demonstrated. Instead the skillfully constructed models are left without empirical validation and thus they risk becoming more of an ornament to the text for some of the readers, which may be frustrating to some other readers.

But, all in all, B&E make for indispensable and enlightening reading for all those who are interested in a wide ranging reappraisal of the Jewish experience from both the historical and social scientific perspectives. One of their non-trivial merits is that they may serve as an antidote against others who have endeavored to deny the continuity and coherence of an unfolding Jewish history. Proposers of the putative modern invention of the Jewish people must tackle the evidence well-argued here of an uninterrupted chain of events and developments – indeed throughout different continents and under changing external circumstances and many complexities and contradictions. Nonetheless the inherent logical continuity of the developments at stake is persuasively outlined, not unlike some recent studies of population genetics (or historical archeology) have done from their own peculiar experimental perspective.

This study by B&E for sure will continue to stimulate new debates, which for a book is no minor achievement. In some cases the authors' thoughts on the past has been influenced more than they might be willing to concede by the circumstances of later periods not covered in the text up to the present. But their search for a large scale common thread, beyond specific transactions, family networks, local circumstances, or even gossip, importantly contributes

to elucidating and providing greater depth to a broad understanding of Jewish history, economy, and *mentalités*.

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Maristella Botticini and Zvi Eckstein, *The Chosen Few: How Education Shaped Jewish History, 70-1492*. (Princeton – Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2012), pp. xvii-323 (Kindle edition).
(Heb. Transl. Haim Rubin, Tel Aviv, 2012; It. Transl. Università Bocconi Editore, Milano, 2013)

by *Cristiana Facchini*

The Return of the Grand Narrative
In 1899, Henry Dagan published a short collection of interviews under the title *Enquête sur l'antisemitisme*.[1] All the most prominent French and Italian intellectuals of socialist beliefs were asked a few questions about the rise and spread of anti-Semitism. Amongst the many different answers given for it, a particular one emerged.
Most likely owing to a common socialist culture, the intellectuals that took part in this project explained that the rise of new forms of anti-Semitism could be better understood through the economic prism, therefore presenting anti-Semitism as a response to the economic struggle intensified by capitalism, and ultimately as a form of resentment that spread amongst impoverished middle classes. The chief editor of the *Journal des économistes* established a parallel that was almost a myth. He claimed that anti-Semitism and hatred against the Jews were to be compared to the expulsion of the Huguenots from France in seventeenth century, as economic and religious persecution usually ran parallel. The religious persecutions of the Huguenots could be explained as economic persecution that applied perfectly to Jews of the nineteenth century. According to this explanation, Catholic religious intolerance caused the expulsion of the most dynamic factions of society, and thus provoked the decline of Catholic nations. Surprisingly enough, this explanation was grounded in seventeenth century Jewish thought, an argument that was originally elaborated by Simone Luzzatto, a learned and sophisticated Venetian rabbi, in an attempted plea for tolerance of the Jews according to the doctrine of *raison d'état*.[2] The decline of Catholic countries was later to be explained as the result of the expulsion of Jews and the rise of new mercantile nations that preached religious tolerance, namely, those of Protestant leaning. How these arguments developed since the early modern period cannot be explored here. Nevertheless, they provide an ideal framework for the understanding of recent trends in historiography of the Jews and Judaism.

Religion and economy have been at the core of scholarly debate and public discussion since the inception of modernity as such. The groundbreaking work

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[1] *Enquête sur l'antisemitisme*, ed. Henry Dagan, (Paris: Stock 1899).
[2] See Simone Luzzatto, *Scritti politici e filosofici di un ebreo scettico nella Venezia del Seicento*, a cura di Giuseppe Veltri (Milan: Bompiani, 2013); Jonathan Karp, *The Politics of Jewish Commerce. Economic Thought and Emancipation in Europe, 1638-1848* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

of Max Weber and his underlining critique of Marxist interpretation of religion and economy played – and in some ways continue to play – a key role in addressing research in the field of religion and economic modernization. Weber also assigned a significant role to Judaism, although his work contributed to fueling an enormous debate and some resentful reactions, especially from Jewish intellectuals.[3] Ever since, historians have been debating the relationship between religion and economy, with each historiographical tradition opposing, criticizing, supporting or correcting Weber's hypothesis.[4]

Scholarly research on the economic behavior of religious minorities, and more precisely of merchant communities, has attracted a lot of attention. Works such as Yuri Slezkin and Francesca Trivellato, to mention just a few, analyzed the role of religious and ethnic minorities and the services they provided for their host communities from different angles.[5] Historiography on port-cities has suggested that religious minorities – and Jews especially – offered highly specialized services, which added to shaping a certain path to modernity.[6]

While the above-mentioned works dealt with early modern and modern Jewish history, certainly providing a 'grand narrative,' works that embrace the long sweep of Jewish history, or even the whole notion of Judaism, are much rarer in the context of postmodern narratives. In this sense, the book of Maristella Botticini and Zvi Eckstein is a novelty in the recent historiographical setting, and therefore calls for a short commentary.

The Chosen Few is a book that encompasses the history of the Jews from the destruction of the Second Temple (70 CE) to the expulsion from Spain in 1492. Attempts to write a comprehensive history of Judaism are very rare: there are a few excellent exceptions, with the most outstanding examples being sociologist Shemuel N. Eisenstadt's *Jewish Civilization* and *Judaism* by Catholic theologian Hans Kung. Both perspectives are culturally charged, the first one being from a Jewish standpoint, and the second from a Christian stance. Nevertheless, both are interesting as they convey modes of understanding Judaism in its extraordinary long history and in holistic terms: as a complex religious system, and subsequently, as a civilization that coped with many challenges of various natures.

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[3] Max Weber, *Ancient Judaism* (New York: Free Press, 1952).

[4] I refer, for example, to Catholic scholars who have tried to show how Catholicism fueled economic modernity, following Weber's path but attempting to amend it?. Trevor Roper offered a different interpretation of Weber's theory, claiming that modernity and capitalism were initiated by merchant communities who practiced a form of "erasmianism." Sombart opposed his interpretation of capitalism as a byproduct of Judaism, although with an anti-Semitic twist.

[5] Yuri Slezkine, *The Jewish Century* (Princeton - Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004); Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers: The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

[6] For a more complex view on minorities and port-cities see: Tullia Catalan, "The Ambivalence of a Port-City. The Jews of Trieste from the 19th to the 20th Century," *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History* 2/2011: 69-98.

Ancient Judaism underwent a form of seismic modification that, as Botticini and Eckstein describe, redefined the religious structure of Judaism. The most typical example is the disappearance of the sacrificial system that was organized around the temple of Jerusalem following its destruction in 70 CE. The political collapse of ancient Judaism is the starting point of the *Chosen Few*, which aims at understanding the epochal changes of rabbinical Judaism, and more precisely, the kind of culture Judaism prompted after what might aptly be called the great "trauma" of the collapse of its ancient and central structure. *The Chosen Few* deals with the relationship between religious rules and literacy, and accordingly, it attempts to investigate the transformation that Judaism underwent through a relatively long formative period. More precisely, the authors are interested in reassessing some tenets of Jewish history, from late antiquity to the early Renaissance, as they claim in their book.

The Chosen Few is divided into ten chapters, each one dealing with a specific topic: the first one introduces the general theme of the book, and particularly deals with the issue of demography; the second aims at assessing whether or not the Jews were a persecuted minority; the third chapter progresses through a chronological path and deals with the introduction of new rules related to religious literacy as a feature of ancient Judaism; chapter four is mainly theoretical, whereas chapter five delves into the consequences of literacy from 200-650. The sixth chapter follows up on and analyzes the transformation of Jews from farmers into merchants (750-1150); the seventh deals with migration and the eighth with the key issue of segregation and money-lending (1000-1500); the ninth introduces a lesser-known topic, which is the impact of the Mongol conquest, and finally, the last chapter summarizes the results and offers new insight into future research.

The table of contents clearly reflects major trends in historiography of the latest decades, although both authors address one of the main issues that have been on the agenda of historians and social scientist since the nineteenth century, when historiography on Jews and Judaism developed into a more or less professional discipline. How and why did Jews turn to certain specific professions, namely money-lending, medicine, trade, and a few other specialized urban occupations? The debate over Jews, Judaism and economy is an important part of Western thought, not to mention the very problematic essay composed by Marx on the "Jewish Question", which fired, along with other writings on religion, the scholarly and public debate on religion and its role in society. These questions reflected a different problem as well, which was related to the process of political emancipation of the Jews in European society. The issue over role of the Jews in the past was twofold, and reflected changes in the process of Jewish integration throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century. On one hand, supporters of Jewish emancipation suggested that the Jewish economic structure and specialization should also be changed, and that Jews must be permitted to practice professions that they

were previously barred from, due to religious hatred. Political emancipation and reforms, like the ones implemented in the Hapsburg Empire, contributed to a great extent in shifting the professional position of the Jews. These achievements and their relatively successful integration into the fabric of modern society incited resentment and new forms of anti-Semitism.

Historians and Jewish historiography in particular underlined how Jews were pushed by legal restrictions and impediments into despised and risky professions, namely to the performance of what was considered "polluted activities." This was especially true in Christian societies where, though often with a certain ambivalence, some economic activities were forbidden for specific social groups. Authors of *The Chosen Few* challenge a set of these historical explanations, and expressly claim that they are retroactive historiographical answers that may not be applicable to the history of the Jews in late antiquity and the medieval period. Let us briefly follow the authors on their journey.

The first assumption is that Jews in the ancient world (200b BCE – 200 CE) who lived in *Eretz Israel* were mainly occupied in agricultural activities. In a time span of a few centuries however, Jews of the Diaspora had dramatically changed their economic and professional position. How had that come into being? The change is particularly indebted to the introduction of a rule that proved to be central, according to Botticini and Eckstein's account. It is precisely the rule attributed to Yehoshua ben Gamla, a priest mentioned in the early rabbinic texts, according to which a compulsory obligation to teach Torah to children was enforced as a communal regulation. In comparative terms, this norm was introduced in the background of a religious world that was modeled after the rules of ancient religions, which focused on sacrificial offerings and temple activities, initiation and magic, fasting and prayers.[7] Despite their different beliefs and ritual structure, Roman and Greek religions, alongside Zoroastrianism, mysteries religions, Orphic and Dionysian cults, and Mithraism never implemented a law that imposed significant textual knowledge of a written sacred tradition. For historians of religion this is an important innovation indeed, even though the imminent spread of Christianity and Islam would introduce a great number of additional transformations to the religious world of late antiquity.[8] We will not discuss the issue extensively; suffice it to note that literacy was not one of the primary interests of other religious groups, which preserved, transmitted and elaborated religious memory in different ways and through other means.

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[7] These ritual settings relating to different religious systems appeared in the ancient world (chap. 3).
[8] For a brief introduction to these themes: Guy G. Stroumsa, *The End of Sacrifice: Religious Transformations of Late Antiquity* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2009).

Compulsory Jewish education, the goal of which was primarily religious and not universal, contributed to redefining the borders of Judaism when the "religious market" was fluid and very diverse. In chapter four, the authors apply some known theories based on choice analysis and economic behavior. Moreover, they highlight how a religious system is defined according to its appeal and capability to attract or sustain its members. Religion is one of the many commodities that are available on a relative free market, and it is likely to attract or reject on the basis of its appeal. Men and women will choose according to their expectations and needs. "Religious affiliation typically requires some costly signal of belonging to a club or network,"[9] and rabbinic Judaism required literacy and education. According to this norm, Jewish farmers had to send their children to school where the teaching of the Torah was enforced. In other words, it meant they had to invest time and resources in religious literacy, rather than having the help of their children in working the land. Any farming society would be well-acquainted with this problem.

On the basis of this assumption, the authors elaborate a model, which aims to explain the demographic crisis of Judaism between the first and seventh century, and the pattern of conversion. According to the model, the high cost of the norm was likely to drive away Jewish families that were unwilling to receive such low benefits or that were not wealthy enough to support such a request. The idealized Galilean village of around 200 CE, as it is envisioned by the authors, depicts several situations that are likely to provide an explanation for patterns of conversion in late antiquity. The religious farmer, whether wealthy or less so, would perform the norm because the benefits of belonging to the group were higher than the cost of literacy. Yet both the wealthy and the less affluent farmer might also choose to not obey the norm for a number of reasons, and thus would have to accept the social stigma that came with the label of *am ha-aretz*.[10] Ultimately, they might decide to convert and join a different religious group, especially one of the many Christian sects that proliferated in the late antiquity period, and that were quite familiar, particularly those still following certain Jewish rules (as the Ebionites did). Rich and poor were likely to pay the cost of compulsory religious literacy and belong to the group; or, they might avoid the cost and live on the margin of the religious group, ultimately deciding to convert to another religion.

This theory is fascinating and offers new insight into what can be termed self-segregation rules, focusing, in this case for example, on literacy more than the laws of purity. It also provides an explanatory theory for conversion that is applicable to societies that are relatively open and pluralistic in their religious organization. Examples of microhistory, which are not provided for this period, might shed light on the opportunities, constraint and options made available to a small or larger group of Jews. Their choices would be determined by a number of factors that would influence their actions and practice.

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[9] Botticini, Eckstein, *The Chosen Few*, pos. 2334.
[10] There is a lot of literature on *ammei ha-aretz*, "people of the land." Botticini and Eckstein affirm that they are those people/Jews unwilling to perform the norm of learning the Torah.

The implementation of the rule of religious education spread during the Talmudic period (200-650) when the society of farmers became literate. Talmudic literature, Gaonic *responsa* and archeological evidence from synagogues indicate a strong emphasis on universal education.

The implementation of rule over education coincides with the demographic decline detected by scholars. Although figures vary, there is a scholarly consensus on the dramatic drop of the Jewish population between the fall of the temple and the end of the Talmudic period. The causes of this decline were usually attributed to the impact of wars, famine, plague and changes in fertility rates. However, Botticini and Eckstein claim that these explanations are not supported by evidence, and the only explanation for the demographic demise of the Jewish population is conversion. As the theory suggests, conversion of Jews to Christianity escalated as a result of religious rules that enforced increased literacy in the framework of a farming society.

In the following centuries major changes took place in the religion and culture of the Jews, and the structure of the Jewish Diaspora was reconfigured. What were the consequences of this process? From chapter six onward, the theory defined in the previous chapters is used to explain the main, though inadvertent, changes in the social structure of Judaism. The world of literate farmers was destined to develop into a world of urban professionals composed of merchants, doctors, craftsmen, and artisans. As a part of the old Diaspora vanished in highly Hellenized areas, a new Diaspora rose in those regions that underwent a religious revolution around the seventh century CE. The majority of Jews now lived in Mesopotamia and Persia, where they slowly abandoned agriculture and moved to villages in order to practice new professions. This transformation reached its apex after the establishment of the Abbasid Empire.[11] "This occupational transition took about 150 years: by 900 the overwhelming majority of the Jews in Mesopotamia and Persia were engaged in a wide variety of crafts, trade, moneylending and medicine."[12]

The rise of Islam and the establishment of a world-wide, highly urbanized and dynamic empire offered the ideal setting for the benefits enhanced by literacy. The authors claim that, in the changing context of the Muslim caliphate, religious literacy had "spillover effects," meaning that skills acquired by learning to read and write might improve the ability to count, write contracts and letters, and therefore bolster practices of law-enforcement. The improvement in technology, science and art that accompanied the development of a sophisticated empire contributed to the dissemination of literacy at large, and these main changes in society contributed to reinforcing literacy among Jews. Using ample evidence from the Cairo Geniza and specifically Shelomo Goitein's research, the authors highlight that literacy was spread among Jewish communities of the Muslim world, where, one should add, seventy percent of Jewry lived.

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[11] Botticini, Eckstein, *The Chosen Few*, Chapter 5.
[12] Chapter 5, pos. 3326.

Following Avner Greif, the authors stress how rabbinic Judaism, with Talmudic and *responsa* literature, were able to build a system of legal protection which operated as a contract-enforcement mechanism, even in the absence of a state. In this sense, a common language and high literacy contributed to transforming Jewish settlements and their professional landscape radically, prompting a change that, according to Botticini and Eckstein, would continue in the following centuries.

The following chapters are devoted to describing the formation of a voluntary Diaspora, and focus on the rise of Western European Jewry. How did Jews arrive to the Christian countries of Western Europe?

Chapter seven and eight address the question of how the Diaspora came into being, and how Jews willingly moved from different areas – mainly to cities – in search of better social conditions and professional options. The arrival of Jews into the diverse and parceled Christian kingdoms of the Middle Ages suggests that Jews were invited, in small groups, to offer their highly specialized services. A parallel development in the cultural and religious milieu took place in the same period, with the emergence of the great rabbinic centers of France and Ashkenaz that contributed to normalizing support for these new settlements. By the year 1000, charters show that Jews could own land, and were involved in the fields of craft, trade and medicine in general, with highly specialized urban professions. However, money-lending was not a distinctively Jewish occupation. How did Jews become involved in money-lending?

The answer follows the path of argumentation which was set forth earlier. The authors explore different historical explanations, according to which Jews were pushed into money-lending: one suggests that they were thrust into it because of the exclusive membership of Christian guilds (Roth); another one emphasizes persecutions and portable capital as driving forces that produced this professional specialization, and the last explanation is given by Haym Soloveitchik, which regards the laws on buying and selling wine in medieval Europe. Because wine was a profitable commodity, Jewish involvement with this business needed to be formally and legally sanctioned from within the Jewish community. According to Soloveitchik, laws regulating wine trade and consumption were gradually softened by eminent rabbis – particularly Rashi – and the strict rules that forbade Jews to drink, buy and sell wine produced by Gentiles was slowly lifted.

Botticini and Eckstein offer some historical examples of a Jewish preference for money-lending. Both English and French cases illustrate how Jews became preeminent in money-lending and how later, between the thirteen and the fourteenth century, they were slowly replaced by Christians, especially Lombards and Florentines. Jews were expelled from England in 1290, more than a century after the appearance of ritual murder libels. In France, after reaching a key role in money-lending, Jews were expelled at the end of fourteenth century, and the same pattern is traceable throughout German lands

and elsewhere, with the exception of the Italian states and the Iberian Peninsula.

"We show that the entry and then specialization of the Jews in lending money at interest can be explained by their comparative advantage in the four assets that were and still are the pillars of the financial intermediation: capital, networking, literacy and numeracy, and contract enforcement institutions."[13] This is the leitmotif that supports the whole narrative, which is a grand narrative on Judaism: literacy and economic performances. An inadvertent revolution was launched by rabbis in the midst of a great trauma, and with the collapse of the ancient *politeia*, and through compulsory religious education of male children, a great transformation that would subsequently be well-suited for the social and economic integration in developed empires and economies was triggered. The theory is certainly intriguing and attractive, and at times very convincing. "Lachrymose history" is not part of this story, which instead highlights the positive and creative effort of Judaism in Muslim and Christian lands. Moreover, a number of historical certainties are challenged and a different explanation is offered, on the basis of microanalysis or detailed accounts of historical material. A wide and impressive amount of secondary literature is described and thoroughly discussed, along with a number of primary sources.

Ultimately, as I have already said, the book is both a historical account of Judaism, and a history of the Jews covering a relatively long historical period and which offers a fairly new interpretation through the lens of economic history. Such an undertaking indicates a certain interest in the return of grand narratives, after a period of postmodern historical practices that made a narrative of any kind impossible.

Nevertheless, as with every grand narrative that aims at providing one unique explanation for historical facts, this one provokes a number of questions and possible critical responses. I will mention only three problems that may be of some relevance.

1. First of all, one must recall that the Diaspora did not begin after the fall of Jerusalem, but rather, was a conspicuous and relevant component of ancient Judaism. Jews lived in metropolises, like Rome and Alexandria, and were likely engaged in urban activities. Historiography on Christianity has stressed that Christianity spread first and foremost in the great urban centers of the Roman Empire, although the movement of Jesus was mainly throughout villages. The fascinating theory of conversion offered by the authors is therefore interesting, but needs to be supported by more evidence.

2. Considering the wide scope of the book and the claim to a universal and general explanatory theory of Judaism, some comparison with other similar groups was needed. In which way did Judaism in the Muslim empire differ from Christian minorities, which in turn were endowed with similar trades?

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[13] Chapter 8, pos. 6131.

How then are Armenians, Greek Orthodox, or various sectarian religious groups to be evaluated when they competed with Jews and performed similar roles?

3. Theory and history are somehow disconnected in this book. The theory the authors offer is applied to very different historical, social and religious contexts. One wonders if the organization of economy in the Muslim empire and the one in Medieval Christian Europe does not bear multiple and dissimilar features, resulting in a perpetually different relationship with Judaism, when not directly influencing it.

Anachronism is generally inevitable, but my impression is that it strikes as too strong an element in this narrative. Is it possible to assume, with the help of economic theory and modeling, that a peasant in the ancient world would behave exactly as a contemporary peasant in a third world country? The long journey back in time requires, among other things, identification with a world that might have been radically different. Moreover, this long journey is often an intricate path into a labyrinth, which the historian is impelled to explore in its multiple directions.

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Pál Hatos and Attila Novák (eds.), *Between Minority and Majority. Hungarian and Jewish/Israeli Ethnical and Cultural Experiences in Recent Centuries* **(Budapest: Balassi Institute, 2013), pp. 262.**

By *Ferenc Laczó*

The volume *Between Minority and Majority* results from a joint conference of Hungarian and Israeli historians and sociologists organized by and held at the Balassi Institute in Budapest in 2011 and simultaneously published in its Hungarian and English versions.[1] Few topics related to Hungary have received more international attention in recent years than the reemergence of Hungarian Anti-Semitism and the resulting tensions and controversies. The volume under review consciously aims to offer an alternative to such mainstream thematic priorities that, in the critical assessment of its two editors, Pál Hatos (intellectual historian and scholar of religion as well as Director of the Balassi Institute since 2010) and Attila Novák (historian, sociologist and a leading Hungarian expert on the history of Zionism), largely reproduce narratives of suffering (p. 7).

Instead, *Between Minority and Majority* starts from the perception of similarities between Hungarians and Jews/Israelis. More particularly, it aims to analyze and occasionally also to compare the history of Hungarian and Jewish diaspora and the shifting meaning of identities – without ignoring crucial differences. What might appear like a bold discursive move in the present in fact has a long and complicated intellectual prehistory as well as its more concrete scholarly origins in Hungarian minority studies of recent decades. Hungarian minority studies has namely not only flourished and become highly diversified since the end of communism but has found a balance between focusing on Hungarian minorities living outside Hungary and exploring other kinds of minorities, including Jews.

The conference volume features a majority of Hungary-based contributors, altogether nine of them, including highly accomplished authors such as, for instance, Balázs Ablonczy, Victor Karády or András Kovács, alongside three Israel-based academics, namely Judit Frigyesi, Guy Miron and Raphael Vago as well as two Hungarian scholars from Romania. It thus ought to come as no surprise that the volume as a whole partially reflects the aforementioned specific thematic mix of Hungarian minority studies. *Between Minority and Majority* offers a host of articles on various Jewish themes that range from an assessment of Jewish educational achievements in modern Central Europe (Victor Karády), reflections on (the relative scarcity of) Hungarian-Jewish musical compositions (Judit Frigyesi), a comparison of various waves and ideologies of the use of Hebrew in Hungary of modern times (Viktória Bányai)

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[1] The Balassi Institute is the Hungarian functional equivalent of the German Goethe Institute.

all the way to German Jewish and Hungarian Jewish (Guy Miron) as well as Transylvanian Jewish debates on the contours of the future in the inter-war period (Attila Gidó). All these topics are discussed by leading experts with relevant previous publications. At the same time, some of their findings are made available in English here for the first time.

The contributions on Jewish topics are framed by the first and the last study of the volume that, respectively, deal with the determinants of political community and its applicability to the triangular Hungarian-Romanian relations (Levente Salát) and with Hungarian public life and identity in the United States (Attila Papp Z.) that make no references to Jewish history or identity. In other words, *Between Minority and Majority* includes some of the major findings of Hungarian Jewish studies that are further enriched by the discussion of other important issues of Hungarian minority studies.

This also implies that the intriguing comparativist ambition of the book is only rarely realized. This ambition does, however, assume a prominent place, above all, in Tamás Turán's "Two Peoples and Seventy Nations" that insightfully traces the intellectual history of drawing Hungarian-Jewish parallels of national destiny. In this immensely learned contribution, Turán explores the theological-historical-philosophical aspects of such parallels instead of reproducing a characteristic reduction of modern times, namely that of restricting the scope of the question to the empirical-socioeconomic-political dimension. In the course of his balanced reflections, Turán explains that "core elements of ancient Jewish historiography played a role in the formation of Hungarian national consciousness" (p. 62). On the other hand, he also highlights the "inherent, strong ambivalence" of such "historical homologies and fate-comparisons" (p. 64).

The comparative question does reappear in other studies such as Raphael Vago's "Israel-Diaspora Relations: Mutual Images, Expectations, Frustrations" that identify a host of issues common to Jews and Hungarians without meaning to overemphasize their similarities (p.110). Tamás Gusztáv Filep's exploration titled "Hungarian Jews of Upper Hungary in Hungarian Public Life in Czechoslovakia (1918/19-1938)" adds a further complexity of Hungarian-Jewish history to the book: it focuses on the problem of a Jewish minority within a Hungarian minority. Presenting the "significant" and even "proportionately large" roles Jews played in the Hungarian political and social life of inter-war Czechoslovakia (169), Filep argues that the repeated non-Jewish Hungarian complaints of the time, according to which Jews had deserted the Hungarian minority, ought to be rejected through these rich evidences to the contrary. The desirable as well the probable future of a Hungarian- (but also German-)speaking Jewish minority was also heavily debated in inter-war Transylvania. This serves as the subject of Attila Gidó's study, "From Hungarian to Jew: Debates Concerning the Future of the Jewry

of Translyvania in the 1920s" that identifies three major options: the continuation of Hungarian affiliations, the strengthening of Jewish identity and the attempt at a new assimilation into Romanian culture and society. Gidó presents the much increased popularity of the secular Jewish national platform as the most significant inner-Jewish change of the times – which did not necessarily mean the end of Hungarian cultural involvement though.

In sum, *Between Minority and Majority* offers a coverage of some of the major themes and most significant findings of Hungarian Jewish studies, while it is also visibly indebted to the thematic priorities of Hungarian minority studies. Most significantly, it attempts to re-launch the Hungarian-Jewish/Israeli dialogue on a new basis of commonalities and shared experiences. It is a significant question whether this seemingly less confrontational but certainly not uncontroversial approach will yield further joint ventures: will the publication of this volume lead to the establishment of a novel scholarly platform or remain a single initiative of the turbulent early 2010s that aimed to challenge more mainstream framings of Hungarian-Jewish affairs?

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Klaus Kempter, *Joseph Wulf. Ein Historikerschicksal in Deutschland*, (Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 2013), pp. 422.

by *Ulrich Wyrwa*

For quite some time the narrative has been repeated that in the 1950s and 1960s very few Germans were willing to face up to the Nazi past and deal with the murdered Jews of Europe. Only during the 1970s, after the change of government and the protest movement of the younger generation, so the narrative goes, did segments of the German population begin to come to terms with the Nazi past. The biography of the Jewish historian Joseph Wulf by Klaus Kempter demonstrates just how little this picture is true.

Wulf was born in 1912 as the son of a successful Polish-Jewish businessman. He grew up in Cracow, and immediately after the German occupation of Poland, he joined the Jewish resistance movement there, along with his wife Jenta. After his arrest he was sent to Auschwitz as slave labour for the IG Farben company. He survived because he successfully fled during the death marches. His wife, however, was hidden in a sinkhole together with their six-year old son David thanks to the help of a Polish peasant.

After the liberation, Joseph Wulf began to collect documents regarding the persecution and murder of the Jews of Europe for the Jewish Historical Commission in Poland, which he had co-founded. Furthermore he took a stand for a European network of Jewish historians and he worked to establish documentation centres in various countries. After the pogroms of 1945/46, Wulf left Poland in 1947. He first went to Sweden and then to France. There he constantly worked for the Association of the Polish Jews, and together with a Polish-Jewish colleague living in France he established a Historical Commission.

After political disagreements with his colleague, Wulf and his wife moved to Berlin. Here he continued working for the documentation of the German politics of persecution and murder of the Jews, and he started a remarkably successful job as an early historian of the "Churban" (the term for the Holocaust or the Shoah at that time). In close cooperation with Leon Poliakov, with whom he had already worked together in France, Wulf published in rapid succession three copious volumes of documents regarding the history of the persecution and murder of the Jews in NS Germany: first the huge volume "The Third Reich and the Jews," published in 1955, followed the next year by the second the volume "The Third Reich and its Servants," and in 1959 they presented the third volume "The Third Reich and its Thinkers." All three received remarkably positive reviews in German newspapers and they all achieved an unexpectedly high circulation.

Furthermore Wulf wrote a series of biographies of individual perpetrators, published a large number of articles on the Holocaust, including, for example, in a high-circulation journal published by "The Federal Agency for Civic Education" (a West German government institution), as well as for the magazine "Der Spiegel" and the weekly "Die Zeit." He also published monographic studies to remember the erased culture and way of life of East-European Jewry. In addition to his printed papers, he wrote a vast number of manuscripts for radio broadcasts regarding the Nazi period, and as soon as television began to make its appearance, he also delivered scripts for films on the Third Reich for this new mass medium. On top of these efforts to enlighten German public opinion, Wulf was engaged in judicial investigations and criminal proceedings against Nazi perpetrators.

Whereas Wulf's commitment to come to terms with the German past had had a remarkable impact on the German public sphere, the established historical scholarship in Germany ignored his historical-scientific and historical-didactic efforts ignominiously. The Munich Institute of Contemporary History (Institut für Zeitgeschichte), established in 1949 for the scholarly research of the Nazi regime, refused Wulf's approach of collecting the sources to document the Nazi crimes in their entirety. They alleged that he was unable to analyse the NS period soberly because he was a victim, adding that he was not educated as a professional historian. This notorious incapacity and this serious failure of the German historiography has just been studied and documented precisely by Nicolas Berg in his detailed monograph.[1]

Among Wulf's comprehensive projects regarding the elucidation of the German past was his idea to establish in Berlin a centre for documentation and historical research on the Nazi reign of terror. As a seat of this centre he proposed the mansion of the Wannsee Conference. To create this institute Wulf succeeded in founding an international society for its promotion, and even the government of Berlin had indicated its approval. Nevertheless, soon after, the project failed.

With great disappointment Wulf noticed further that at the beginning of the 1970s, public interest in his publications decreased – an experience which marked a sharp contrast to the narrative mentioned above, that German society only began to come to terms with the Nazi past after the political change and cultural movement of that decade. Instead of dealing with the persecution of the Jews and with antisemitism, Wulf saw that the new historical and public interest was in generalising theories of fascism.

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[1] Nicolas Berg, *Der Holocaust und die westdeutschen Historiker. Erforschung und Erinnerung*, (Göttingen: Wallstein 2003).

Furthermore Wulf noticed with alarm that in the context of the Near East conflict new antisemitic/anti-zionist positions were spreading in Germany.

Wulf's suicide in October 1974 has been interpreted in previous biographical essays as an act of desperation, as a reaction to his unavailing efforts to account for the German past and because of his disappointment about the failure of his project for the centre for research and documentation.

As Kempter demonstrates clearly, all these experiences could not have shaken the conviction of the engaged scholar Wulf. Instead they would have provoked him toward an even stronger public engagement. What Wulf was really not able to get over was the death of his wife Jenta in August 1973. Wulf lived in Berlin, as Kempter points out aptly as a "skeptischer Solitär" a "sceptic solitary" or "recluse" regarding his Berlin surroundings. He did not want to have personal relationships neither with Gentile German intellectuals nor with German Jews. The death of his wife therefore had struck him so deeply, that he took his own life the following year.

Kempter has published an outstanding biography of the exceptional life of Joseph Wulf. He gives a new picture of Wulf's historical scientific efforts and his public engagement.

Only two minor remarks might be added. Kempter has given a short presentation of the volume "The Third Reich and its Servants", in which Wulf and Poliakov had given some brief remarks on the persecution of the Jews in fascist Italy. The wording of Wulf however is much more appropriate than the paraphrase of Kempter. Whereas Kempter wrote erroneously and repeating old legends that Mussolini had issued the racial laws only because of the pressure of his German allies, Wulf and Poliakov in their writings of 1956 wrote precisely that Mussolini had decided in 1938 of his own accord to issue the anti-Jewish laws.

The second annotation is related to Wulf's project of the centre for documentation of the Nazi persecution of the Jews. Kempter remarks that many years later, in 1992, a memorial centre had been founded in the Wannsee Villa for the documentation of the Nazi terror against the Jews. Kempter ignores however, that only four years after Wulf's death the Mayor of Berlin announced in his memorial speech for the 40th anniversary of 9 November 1938, that a centre for research on antisemitism would be founded at the Technical University of Berlin, and the profile of this institution has incorporated explicitly central ideas from Wulf's original conception.

Despite these brief remarks, Kempter has written an impressive and remarkable biography of Joseph Wulf, and the benefit of this volume must be seen primarily in the evidence presented that Wulf was by no means a disregarded, sidelined, or ignored individual. He may have had moments of exasperation and despair, but as Kempter has demonstrated clearly, Wulf had

such broad public success with his huge oeuvre, that one must picture Wulf for certain periods "rather as a happy person."

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Asher Salah, *L'epistolario di Marco Mortara (1815-1894). Un rabbino italiano tra riforma e ortodossia* (Giuntina: Firenze 2012), pp. 269.

This latest work by Asher Salah (Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, Jerusalem) is an interesting contribution to the understanding of the religious and cultural history of Nineteenth century Italian Jewry: a field of research that has not yet been sufficiently explored, since almost all of the available studies focused on the political and social aspects of emancipation and integration, relegating religion to the background. The volume is published in the series "Quaderni di Materia Giudaica," directed by Mauro Perani, president of the AISG (Italian Association for the Study of Judaism) and full professor of Hebrew at the University of Bologna.

Born in Viadana (near Mantua) in 1815, then part of the Habsburg Empire, Marco Mortara lived a very sedentary life, never going far from home. He studied at the Rabbinical College of Padua, where he graduated in 1836, and was called to occupy the rabbinic chair of Mantua in 1857: a position he would never leave. His education in Padua tied him very tightly to Samuel David Luzzatto (ShaDaL) (1800-1865) and his teachings. Mentor and pupil later remained in close contact, as is made evident by the letters they exchanged in the following decades. From these premises originated Mortara's rationalist attitude, his deep hostility towards any cabalistic influences in Jewish rites and *siddurim*, and his explicit dislike for the cabbalist Elia Benamozegh (1823-1900), a famous, influential and controversial figure, rabbi in Livorno. Married to Sara Castelfranco, Mortara had four children, among which the jurist and future Senator Lodovico deserves a special mention. Salah appropriately emphasizes that Mortara's life and work was situated at the " 'hinge' between two generations" (p. 16), in a context in which young people were identified as the champions of assimilation and total abandonment of Jewish life and culture, while the older ones were described as the representatives of a *ghetto* mentality. The rabbi of Mantua participated with great enthusiasm in the cultural and religious laboratory that sought to outline a future for Judaism and Jews, their relations with progress and modernity, the new national (and nationalist) context, within a State inspired by liberal principles. Among his best-known public statements we find *Il matrimonio civile considerato giusta le norme del diritto e dell'opportunità* (1864) [Civil Marriage analyzed through the rules of law and opportunity] and *Della nazionalità e delle aspirazioni messianiche degli ebrei. A proposito della questione sollevata dall'onor. Pasqualigo* (post 1873) [Of the nationality and the messianic aspirations of the Jews. On the problem raised by the Member of Parliament Pasqualigo], with which he took part in very lively political debates. Among his scientific writings, the most relevant is the bio-bibliographical volume *Indice alfabetico dei rabbini e scrittori israeliti di cose giudaiche in Italia* (1886) [Alphabetical index of rabbis and Israelite writers of Judaic things in Italy]. In 1855 he published his *Compendio della religione israelitica metodicamente*

esposto ad uso dell'istruzione domestica e delle scuole [Compendium of Israelite religion methodically exposed, to be used in schools and domestic education], a new catechism that was his contribution to the fervent discussion on the education of the younger generation of emancipated Jews. He wrote on all major Italian and European Jewish journals, but despite being in contact with intellectuals like Moritz Steinschneider, he remained always a rather marginal figure. Relatively influential in the context of the Italian rabbinate of his time, Marco Mortara represents well its limits and provincialism. Not able to read German, he had a second-hand and mediated knowledge of the great European cultural revival and biblical studies, of all the research and interpretations linked to the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, and according to Salah his mastery of French was also quite precarious. For a scholar of Jewish culture, Bible and religion this might be disappointing, but for a historian of Italian Jewry in the age of emancipation and integration these are important data, that shed light to some aspects of the process of the integration of the minority.

The volume (with a Preface by Mauro Perani, pp. VII-XIII) contains the edited text of 205 letters, of which 162 are written by Marco Mortara and 43 were sent to him by his various correspondents, between 1831 and 1890. Most of this material - retrieved by Salah in a number of archives, mostly public, in Rome, Florence, Budapest, New York, Philadelphia and Jerusalem – is written in Italian. The texts are divided into two sections — *Letters from Marco Mortara* (pp. 59-218) and *Letters to Marco Mortara* (pp. 219-254). The editor made the meritorious attempt to reconstruct the ongoing conversations and their contexts. In this way, the book manages to shed light not only on the single figure of Marco Mortara, but also on some of his most frequent correspondents, including in particular the very well known scholar Samuel David Luzzatto and David Graziadio Viterbi (1815-1879), who studied in the same years at the Rabbinical College of Padua and was rabbi of Padua until 1867. Salah provides also a useful apparatus of footnotes and comments. Mortara's correspondents are almost exclusively Jews: it is an interesting and meaningful fact, but this should not make us think of a socio-cultural isolation from the broader Italian context. This *corpus* of letters might not be complete, and in any case it is only one of the multiple lenses through which we can observe and interpret the life of an individual.

The introduction signed by Salah, which occupies the first 55 pages of the book, is a thorough critical essay and doesn't limit itself to an accurate description of the sources. It reminds us, and rightly so, of the importance of the letter as the main medium for cultural circulations and intellectual exchanges in the XIXth century. The debates on Judaism, Reform, assimilation, and later on Zionism were no exception, and the sections dedicated to letters from contributors and readers that we find in all the major Jewish journals of the time confirm this idea. Unfortunately, very little of this

material has been studied, and as far as the Italian rabbis are concerned, Salah's research is unique.

In Mortara's letters, one of the most interesting topics is the attitude of the Italian rabbinate toward Reform, as it is emphasized by the subtitle of the book, *An Italian Rabbi between Reform and Orthodoxy*. If we consider the Jewish Reform as a movement/interpretation that questions "the authority of the canonical texts of Judaism," "the function of the rabbis" and "the observance of the precepts that have acquired legal force on the basis of tradition and rabbinic authority" (p. 40), it is necessary to reiterate a widely known concept, namely that a real reform movement did not catch on in Italy. This does not mean, however, that what was happening elsewhere in Europe, and especially in Germany, was uninfluential. On the contrary, it was heatedly discussed. Salah's thesis, in line with what had already been noted by other scholars, is that the "reform failed to take root in Italy not because it was too foreign to the Italian Jewish *Sonderweg*, but because it was orthodoxy that ended up absorbing part of its programs, as it happened, though in different ways, even in Germany with the neo-orthodoxy movement" (p. 41). From these premises, and an accurate reading of his letters and writings, Mortara emerges as a conservative orthodox, but favorable to a non-dogmatic interpretation of certain rites and rules, open to certain adaptations to or compromises with modernity and with the new condition of the Jews as citizens of a modern nation-state. A plastic response to changes had been — it is claimed by Mortara and others — a characteristic of Talmudic Judaism. In this sense, and only in this sense, he considered himself and was perceived as a progressive "reformer." He was the main (unsuccessful) promoter of the idea of a rabbinical synod, to avoid the problems caused by the fragmentation of Italian religious leadership and to reach commonly accepted and authoritative decisions.

While sharing this broad interpretative approach, I think it would have been useful to explore more in depth the theme of an Italian Jewish (religious) *Sonderweg* with some comparative elements with the European context, while in fact the one I cited is the only hint we find in the Introduction of a peculiarity of Italian style Judaism and orthodoxy: it is a peculiarity which becomes more and more accentuated during the nineteenth century, in relation to the absence of a recognized and structured reform movement, and whose effects are still visible today. On the more general topic of cultural influences, I think that the observations on the mediated and filtered way in which the German debate impacted on the majority of the Italian Jewish world — much more familiar with French culture, with the exception of the areas subject to direct Austrian rule — are meaningful and would deserve more investigation. Mortara couldn't read German, but Salah notes that among the modern authors mentioned in his letters and in his printed works the most cited are Germans, followed by the French. If we find only a handful of Italians, it can be attributed to the

intellectual poverty of the Italian debate on the topics discussed in the letters and in the scientific works, in which non-Jewish politics and culture are almost absent. This does not mean that Mortara was not fully implanted into the Italian culture and society of his time. This is probably the most relevant limit of the book, or rather of the introductory essay: the Italian dimension of Mortara's life and culture is completely missing. This *lacuna* is particularly striking because his life crossed all the major events of the Risorgimento and of the cultural, political, administrative and legislative unification of the peninsula. In this way, the essay fails to capture a crucial side of the character and its analysis remains incomplete. Nonetheless, it must be acknowledged that the volume is the result of a long and difficult research (as the construction of a *corpus* of letters always is); it finally makes these sources available in a serious and scrupulous edition, and its importance for scholars of Italian Jewry is unquestionable.

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