Writing the "Real Jerusalem": British and American Travel Accounts in the Nineteenth Century

Mona Kattaya

Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, 1880.
Source: Library of Congress.

Introduction

While the main battles in the colonization of Jerusalem have been territorial, the astonishing resonance of colonization, its justifications and legitimization were laid down in nineteenth-century Holy Land travel accounts. This study examines a number of selected British and American pilgrimage accounts written in the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth as colonial texts that played a major role in sustaining imperial and Zionist ideologies. Their emotional, petistic and nostalgic language is also a language through which the city is subjected to a severe cultural violence which transforms it into the sole property of the traveler who disposes and appropriates it in whichever way he/she likes. My intention, is to examine how these travel accounts constructed a "reality" on paper; and to analyze how travelers interpreted Jerusalem, and how it betrays the colonizing gestures in the language of the

nineteenth-century pilgrimage/travel discourse.

The accounts of British and American pilgrims and travelers are uniquely built on a single colonial attitude whose ideological core is identical with the discourse of Zionism.. These travelers had a grand design on Jerusalem: the *re*-building of the Jewish "New Jerusalem", the capital of the Kingdom of Israel, which entailed that the "Old" Jerusalem had to be eliminated, literally, from existence. In terms of its imperial value, Jerusalem, in these accounts, had to be presented not as an end to itself, but merely as the means of attaining an altogether greater promise.

What is so unique about the meaning given to Jerusalem in the nineteenth century is that Jerusalem was produced for the West through a master discourse that was unique in being an ensemble of several discourses: the pilgrimage discourse, the Crusader discourse, the Zionist discourse, and finally the Orientalist discourse.

This cultural representation of Jerusalem was central to the process of turning that colonial vision into reality. The contribution of travelers with their written accounts to this campaign was particularly significant. British and American travelers were active agents in the construction of the colonial enterprise. Their two responses, namely the fascination with the landscape of Jerusalem on one hand and the search for the "real" Jerusalem on the other, were two complimentary mechanisms to further instill the necessity and legitimization of the colonization of Jerusalem.

Overcoming the "Great Disappointment": Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives

The faiths of many European travelers was severely tested and their expectations shattered, by their initial encounter with "sacred" Jerusalem. The Jerusalem they came to see was "profaned", had become "unholy", thus they had to look for the Jerusalem they sought somewhere else. Trying to come to terms with the "Great Disappointment", argues Obenzinger (1999), travelers showed "a greater interest in landscape and topography (outside the walls of shrines) and archaeology (beneath them), which, as a consequence, made searching for "evidences" often a process of reading/writing truth in panoramic views or beneath layers of fraudulence and decay" (51).

After their initial disappointment, travelers literally fled the city and took to the surrounding hills, finding the vision they sought in the open air and on the hilltops of the Mount of Olives. Lord Lindsay (1838) dismissed the city preferring the grand view the Mount of Olives offered,

> There is no spot (you will not now wonder at my saying so) at, or near, Jerusalem, half so interesting as the Mount of Olives, and, on the other hand, from no other point is Jerusalem seen to such advantage. Oh! What a relief it was to quit its narrow, filthy, ill-paved streets for that lovely hill, climbing it by the same rocky path our Saviour and his faithful few so often

trod, and resting on its brow as they did, when their divine instructor, looking down on Jerusalem in her glory, uttered those memorable prophecies of her fall, of his second Advent, and of the final Judgment, which we should ever brood over in our hearts as warning voice, bidding us watch and be ready for his coming! (244).

Positioned on the Mount of Olives, the travelers' view diminished the prominence of Islam and Arabs, and therefore, fulfilled their desired image of Jerusalem. At a safe distance, the traveler could live the vision of Jerusalem as the "joy of the whole earth". From this vantage point, Jerusalem was rid of its "disturbing" Arab and Muslim reality and attained an almost ethereal existence. "From Mount Olives Jerusalem should be seen first and seen last", said Philipp Schaff (1878; 234). It is from this position that travelers could maintain their power of dominance over the city. George Fisk (1850) ran to the Mount of Olives to renew his faith after his nightmarish experience of Jerusalem:

> No! – Let me sit on the Mount of Olives, from which the whole city is distinctly visible – let me get my heart attuned to the sweet music of holy meditation, till it glows with renewed energy of faith, and then let me look forth upon all these things *in the main*; let me feel that I am gazing on the *whole scene* of my adorable Redeemer's humiliation and triumph … (248).

The key word here is "whole". The depiction of Jerusalem, dismissed the details in favour of the panoramic view which presented the image of the city as a whole. Being in a commanding position is what Pratt calls the "monarch of all I survey" attitude (Pratt 1992: 201) as the traveler stood on the top of the Mount of Olives, removed from the people or the city, and most importantly surveying them.

Possessing Jerusalem

From their initial gaze at the passageways of the city to the commanding view from the Mount of Olives, the visual appropriation of the city came full circle; travelers descended into the city only to return again to the security of the commanding gaze:

> Here JERUSALEM lay at our feet as a map; and the beautiful broad level of the Temple site, encircled with trees and fountains; and still above on its left, the lofty terraces of Zion, with the sealed gate, in silent reverence waiting, till He whose right it is to reign, shall come and open its long untrodden threshold. Not an Arab crossed our way, and all around the silent lonely hills kept Sabbath with us: a sacred presence seemed to rest upon the Mount, and I was filled with awe, and lifted up my hands with streaming eyes, and

prayed that He would quickly come, our long expected, and stand again on
Olivet … (Minor; 80).

From the top of the Mount of Olives, Jerusalem was laid at Clorinda Minor's feet
(1851). It is from such a high stance that "the fantasy of dominance … [is] commonly
built …", (Mills 1991; 78-79). Only by looking *down* at the city could Minor feel she
was *really* in possession of it. Jerusalem where the "Temple site", "terraces of Zion",
"the sealed gate" (the Golden Gate of al-Haram), with "not an Arab" crossing which
implies this was the way Jerusalem should be:

> And while we prayed, a cloud of blessing came, which words may not
> describe; for in a moment, to my quickened sense, the heap of ruinous
> rubbish, and the Moslem's shrine, was seen no more, and on its site a city,
> pure and beautiful, arose; and in the midst, in glorious majesty, the King
> of Righteousness, supremely reigned; and all the hills around, in Eden
> loveliness, spread out, an undulating plain! (Minor; 81).

The eye of the traveler that constructed, arranged, and ordered the landscape was the
same eye that wiped out and potentially eliminated the Arabs and Islam from the city.
Minor's vision that was divinely inspired meant a total wiping out of Islam from the city.
Only on the premise of a city whose "rubbish" and "Muslim shrine" were obliterated
would a "pure and beautiful" city arise. According to Sara Mills, women travelers
who employed the technique of the commanding gaze are no different from their male
counterparts: "the panorama", says Mills, "is always a device for seeing the country as a
future colonised country, and thus the narrator who includes a panoramic scene arrogates
to herself the power of the colonial position" (Mills 1991; 78-79). Minor gazed out at
the city as it might be the "New Jerusalem" of the millennium, while Elizabeth Finn
(1866) looked down at it as future place of colonial rule: "Shall we yet again see eagles
gathering upon these heights? Is yon city once more to be the prize for which conquerors
of the world shall wrestle and shake the earth in the fierceness of their encounter? It were
still a worthy prize – and the eagles are hovering afar" (124).

Uncovering the Real Jerusalem

Bar-Yosef is one of many writers who locate the link between nineteenth-century
British and American travelers and the Mount of Olives in terms of the duality of anti-
urban "nature romanticism":

> Inviting travelers to attain a broad perspective and, at the same time, leave
> the corrupted and polluted city behind them, the Mount of Olives offered
> an ideal fusion between Protestant sensibilities, the contemporary passion
> for the picturesque, and the Romantic Alpine view… (80).

In this context, Henry Van Dyke's *Out-of-Doors in the Holy Land: Impressions of Travel in Body and Spirit* (1908) is a sustained celebration of natural romanticism.

> I want to … to return into the long past, which is also the hidden present, and to lose myself again. I want to make acquaintance with the soul of that land where so much that is strange and memorable and for ever beautiful has come to pass: (5-6).

Dyke's passage articulates the idea that there was an "essence" of Jerusalem that the traveler would attempt to discover, or re-discover, beyond all the "ruinous rubbish" of the present city; this is a typical Orientalist idea – what Said calls the "Romantic redemptive terms of a Christian mission to revive a dead world, to quicken in it a sense of its own potential, one which only a European can discern underneath a lifeless and degenerate surface" (Said 1993: 172).

If the Arabs were perceived as obstructing the path to the future, they were also the aberration in the journey back to the glorious past. As Norman Macleod (1866) suggests, "So let us for the present dismiss every attempt to associate *that* past with "the Jerusalem which now is." We may feel disappointed at this, yet I believe that it must be so" (128). Between "*that* past" and the "Jerusalem which now is" exists the Arabs whose elimination clears the path to the past; it was necessary to reclaim both the "Old" Jerusalem and the "New". If the panoramic view from the top of the Mount of Olives was one way to come to terms with the "Great Disappointment", going into the past was another.

In the travelers' obsessions with the past one can see the highly systematic way through which the Arab natives were erased from the image of Jerusalem. Travelers had one eye on the future, and the other on the past, which paradoxically, would lead to that bright future of the "New Jerusalem". Driven by the same sweeping desire to hold exclusive right to the land and obliterate its indigenous people, travelers propagated a very specific myth premised on historical grounds. This attempt to excavate into the past became an attempt to further separate the people from the land: having created an empty city, travelers would create an empty history.

Just before he entered Jerusalem, Edward Robinson (1841) declared that "…the object of our visit was the city itself, in relation to its ancient renown and religious associations; not as seen in its present state of decay and superstitions or fraudful degradation" (329). What British and American travelers propagated was the idea that there was a city that had nothing to do with the present reality, that there was *the* "city itself" that they would discover. By dismissing the present city for the sake of another Jerusalem, travelers claimed to have opened the way to the "real" Jerusalem, and thus their journeys were attempts to "rediscover" the "pure" core or "essence" of Jerusalem which was untouched by the "desecrating" hands of Arabs and Muslims.

Buried Jerusalem

To the accumulated metaphors about Jerusalem, travelers added the metaphor of a buried "real" Jerusalem under the "surface" of a Muslim Jerusalem. One can see how pervasive that metaphor was in Frank De Hass, the American Consul in Jerusalem (1889), whose account bore the title *Buried Cities Recovered: or, Explorations in Bible Lands*:

> But beneath this accumulation of filth, covered with rubbish, lies the "City of the Great King." Dig down almost anywhere within the old walls, fifty or a hundred feet, and you will come upon broken columns, grand gate-ways, massive substructures, and other remains of a great city – in fact, city over city, house on top of house, generation above generation. This buried city is the Jerusalem of Christ (De Hass 127-128).

Again, the past took precedence over the present which was perceived as nothing more than the accumulation of the "rubbish of centuries". Muslim and Arab history, civilization and culture were but the shadowy presence of a "fake" existence that was built on the foundations of the "real" city.

These myth materialized in the work of the Palestine Exploration Fund which came into existence in 1865 during a period when Britain was securing its imperial frontiers. The PEF fits perfectly into what one might call the colonization of Palestine via "scientific knowledge"; through it Britain literally opened up Jerusalem to scrutiny and "scientific research". This organization had a committee which consisted of representative from all Christian denominations in Britain, and two leading Jews as well, Moses Montefiore and Lionel de Rothschild.

> Its cartographical surveys of western and southern Palestine, conducted in 1871-8 and 1913-14, were carried out by members of the Royal Engineers, among them future imperialist agents like H. H. Kitchener and T. E. Lawrence. The British take-over of Palestine in 1917 would have been much less feasible had it not been for the one-inch map of the country produced by the PEF (Bar-Yosef;7).

The aim of this huge organization, as articulated by Claude Conder, the author of *Tent Work in Palestine* (1879) that was published for the PEF, was "to collect materials in illustration of the Bible … mistaken ideas and preconceived notions may be corrected …" (xix). Propagated in the name of the Bible, the PEF provided the religious justification for the British imperial project in Palestine; it was a "tool for extending British imperial influence and … a cover for obtaining strategic information to support British military interests", says Moscrop (3). The work of the PEF in Palestine was one way to implement colonial enterprise, but it was also one of the most effective ways to give sanction and validity to Zionist allegations:

From its beginning in the nineteenth century the Western discipline of biblical archeology, with its complete disregard for the historical, demographic and political realities of Palestine, was at the heart of the colonial tradition. It was established to validate Western roots in the Holy Land and authenticate the historicity of the Hebrew Bible. Virtually all biblical archeologists were Western Christians or Jews with a strong commitment to the historicity of the Bible, and interpreted their finds in light of the scriptures. No wonder, therefore, that archeological findings confirmed the Bible when researchers used the Old Testament to identify, date and interpret the significance of the towns, buildings, pottery and other artifacts they unearthed. The same biblical archeology became central to the founding myths of Zionism and to its creation of a new Hebraic consciousness. Driven by an invented tradition and the need to establish the veracity of the Old Testament, biblical archeology was passionately Zionist (Masalha 3-4).

Biblical archeology played an immense role in privileging European Christian Zionists' narrative over that of the indigenous inhabitants of Palestine. Western archeologists wanted to prove a historical right and to affirm a promise by God. As the new "Chosen People" to whom the land of Palestine was "promised", their existence was justified on the basis of historical right based on finding scientific proof for Jewish remains. The excavations were basically done with the intention of uncovering sources to prove and assert the rights of Jews, and their right, in the city.

Travelers who witnessed the work of the PEF from 1871 to 1878 commended the project for bringing "so fair a harvest" (Russell; 356). Philip Schaff (1878) paid due tribute to the huge work of the PEF; for him, the city of "our Saviour" lied buried "from twenty to eighty feet" under "the ruins and rubbish of centuries", but thanks to the "noble exertions of the Palestine Exploration Society…parts of the subterranean city have been brought to the knowledge of the world" (235); while William Edward Russell (1869), in a tone of vengeance, declares that the Turks themselves couldn't object to the project, they cannot "well withdraw the permission accorded to the present explorers, although they see the Haram itself perforated by shafts, and behold cranes, lifts, and pulleys at work in the Holy Enclosure of Omar " (356).

Al-Harem al-Sharif

If every place in Jerusalem caused a disappointment, what really excited travelers were the attempts to penetrate the visible mystery at the heart of the city: al-Haram al-Sharif. Until the Crimean War (1853-1856), Western visitors and settlers were not allowed to enter the al-Haram; those who did enter the sacred area in the first half of the nineteenth century had to obtain a special decree from the Turkish governor, while the majority were turned away from the al-Haram, especially at the time of prayer. The fact that travelers were forbidden to enter the area aroused feelings of resentment

and "called forth expressions of hatred against the Muslim population", says Sha'ban (134). Travelers protested against this Muslim "intrusion" on their "rights". Unable to enter al-Haram, travelers had either to recourse to books by Bonomi, Catherwood and Fergusson (Shepherd; 76); or they were allowed to look down into the platform of al-Haram from the terrace of the Turkish governor's headquarters nearby. These are the words of Edward Robinson's (1841) whose gaze roamed all over the "tabooed" area from the top of the Governor's:

> The great mosque itself, *Kubbet al-Sukhrah*, "Dome of the Rock," is an octagonal building with a noble dome standing upon a platform near the middle of the court, elevated by several steps above the general level. Quite on the southern side of the area, stands another large mosque, *el-Jami'a el-Aksa*; and there are other smaller mosques and buildings adjacent to the walls in other parts. The whole enclosure, with all its sacred buildings and appurtenances, is called *al-Haram*, "the Holy," and also *al-Haram esh-Sherif*, "the noble Sanctuary." In the northern part of the area, the rocky surface is visible, which has evidently been leveled off by art. The height of the wall around the court on the inside we judged to be from twelve to sixteen feet. – Towards the West the houses of the city rise steeply one above another, and the two hills of Zion and Akra are distinctly marked (361).

The skilled order of presentation compensated for Robinson's inability to enter the place. In the knowledgeable act of describing the platform of al-Haram, Robinson was also mastering it. This cultural translation in which the 'other' was perceived as "weak" became Robinson's way to dominate the place. It was a translation that took place within an ideology that insisted on the conferral of meaning from one culture to another. In his familiar codes and classifications Robinson *translated* the place and thrust it open to the Western reader, thus enunciating his Western culture as "'knowledgeable', authoritative, adequate to the construction of systems of cultural identification" (Bhabha;34). The depiction of al-Haram in this case rendered the traveler's gaze as a form of research. "The colonial look as authority made manifest", says Boehmer, "was also represented in motifs of *research*, scientific study, documentation, and survey" (73).

Trying to get into al-Haram became a new kind of sport, attempted by almost every traveler, a sort of revenge on the Muslims who ruled Jerusalem. Most travelers spoke of how they were nearly killed by just approaching al-Haram:

> At the risk of being driven back by threats and vociferations, if not by dangerous missiles, from the bigoted custodiers of the mosque, we went to the very margin of the tabooed territory, and exercised our visual organs with as much intenseness as circumstances could permit (Wilson; 414).

In this sense, the depiction of al-Haram demonstrated the travelers' awareness of their gaze as a form of conquest and predation: "All we could do was to turn ourselves as far as possible into eye and ear, treasure up stores for memory", said Elizabeth Rundle (1862;77). As the area of al-Haram became subject to the penetrating inspection of the Western traveler's eye, there came the epitome of the travelers' colonial thought and, more interestingly, of colonial effort. It is here that the traveler's gaze, its power to exterminate Jerusalem in the name of its logic, is most powerful: "When it descends from the heights of mountain ranges and hotel rooms, the gaze of the Western writer penetrates" the interior spaces of the non-European peoples "with the same freedom that it brings to the survey of a landscape", affirms Spurr (19), but it is in these interiors, Spurr maintains, that "the confrontation of cultures takes place face to face, or rather eye to eye, and it is here, at close range, that the gaze of the writer can have its most powerful effect" (19-20). Whether before or after it was opened to foreign visitors, and whether it was gazed upon in terms of research or conquest, the area of al-Haram became the locus of a war of representation staged between the Muslim, Arab identity and history of the place and the traveler's invading ideological eye.

If every single place in Jerusalem was invariably a disappointment, the visit to al-Haram al-Sharif was presented as compensation for the nightmarish experience in Jerusalem. In sharp contrast to the image of a degenerative, filthy, horrifying Jerusalem came that of al-Haram:

> We entered by a gate in the north-west angle, and were deeply impressed by a most unexpected experience. The contrast between the sordid streets we had just left and the grandeur of this sacred enclosure was such as almost took our breath away. The Mohammedans have good right to name this the "Noble Sanctuary." In place of evil-smelling filth, rough jostling, narrow roadways, decay, disorder, and noise, you enter suddenly upon spaciousness, cleanliness, silence, nobility, beauty (Rix; 225).

The colonial rhetoric of debasement (evident in the travelers' representation of the rest of the city) lies against another rhetoric of celebration. Travelers elaborated on how great the contrast was between their experience of the city and their encounter with al-Haram. Narrative voice, imagery, vocabulary were all employed with the aim of expressing how this contrast was visible and deeply felt. After the gloomy, plain Jerusalem, the scene was suddenly painted in colour:

> The Mosque was very beautiful, with its vast dome, and its walls of variegated marbles, and its noble marble platform, with its flights of steps and light arcades; and the green lawn which sloped away all round, and the cypress trees, under which a row of worshippers were at their prayers. It was the Mohammedan Sabbath; and troops of children were at play on the grass; and parties of women in white – Mohammedan nuns – were sitting near them; and the whole scene was proud and joyous (Martineau; 407).

The traveler preserved the theatricality of the scene. For Martineau, this was an Oriental scene to be enjoyed, but one that was interpreted through the classifications and familiar codes of the traveler's Western culture; "…within a familiar framework of grammatical and symbolic structures", argues Boehmer, "a traveler's imagination was able to work associatively … The fascination with difference competed with a reliance on sameness and familiarity" (16). Thus, the friday prayer became the "Mohammedan Sabbath", while the veiled Muslim women were "Mohammedan nuns".

The "aestheticization" of al-Haram marks the ratio of power between the viewer and the object; to treat al-Haram as having an inherent aesthetic value implied a position of power and privilege – the privilege of representing it as a material of a special nature. What is highly significant about this special representation of al-Haram is not that it marks the distance between the stage upon which al-Haram is represented and the creator of the drama, nor that it marks the transformative power of the traveler through which the nightmare of Jerusalem is drastically changed to the beauty, magic, serenity and nobility of the Orient, but that the sweeping colonial desire to possess the place evaporates as it is engulfed in the halo of a powerful "aestheticization". The representation of al-Haram obscures the colonial machine in operation. When Edward Russell (1869) said that "It is in the Haram alone we find the holy serenity and feeling of repose which Jerusalem should inspire" (361), this meant that the travelers constructed a dividing line between al-Haram and the rest of Jerusalem.

Nineteenth-century British and American travelers were unanimous in their views of al-Haram: Qubbat al-Sakhra was the exact spot where the Temple of Solomon once stood: "The Temple stood at the top of the hill…" and the "The top of the Temple Hill is, without dispute, the Sakhra Rock …", said Claude Conder (1879), the renowned archeologist from the PEF (357). According to the Hebrew Bible through which the whole of Jerusalem, including al-Haram, was interpreted, "the House of the Lord was built on the mount from which the City of David extended as a southern spur" (Peters;14). Peters affirms that the exact spot upon which the Temple of Solomon was erected "is not made clear" in the Hebrew Bible. According to him, it is just an *assumption* that,

> Solomon built the Temple atop the threshing floor that his father [David] had purchased from Araunah the Jebusite, though it must surely have extended far beyond it. We are merely guessing, however, and, perhaps somewhat more dangerously, envisioning backward from the platform that sits atop that hill today, the Muslims' Haram al-Sharif. We imagine it as Herod's first-century platform, which was built in turn on the site of Zerubbabel's earlier sixth-century platform, just as the latter was built atop Solomon's. The material evidence is entirely lacking, however, for even the site of Solomon's House of the Lord (14).

Nineteenth-century British and American travelers, however, expressed no shred of doubt concerning the "real" identity of the place: "Of the position once occupied by

Solomon's Temple, on Mount Moriah, no doubt can be entertained", said Edward Hogg (*Visit to Alexandria, Damascus, and Jerusalem, during the successful campaign of Ibrahim Pasha* 1835; 233). About the identity of the sacred rock within Qubbat al-Sakhra, they were also conclusive: the rock was "none other than 'the threshing-floor of Araunah,' where Abraham built his altar for the sacrifice of his son, and over which in after years the magnificent Temple of Solomon was erected" (De Hass;142). The rock, however, that these travelers were quick to identify was not mentioned at all in the Hebrew Bible (Peters;196). According to Peters, the only existing detailed description of the Temple complex "by both Josephus and the Mishnaic tractate Middoth make no mention of it …" (196).

Because the whole of the ancient Temple complex was deemed a sacred space at the center of which, "shielded from the profanity without, was an inner sanctuary" (Peters;14) and because al-Haram was identified as the place where the Temple once was, the area of al-Haram was celebrated as the *only* sacred place in Jerusalem. A complete segregation between the "profane" city and the holy space became a necessity. In his visit to Jerusalem, the famous American biblical scholar Edward Robinson (1841) had a definite task, namely to identify the exact area of the Temple complex: "… we are led irresistibly to the conclusion, that the area of the Jewish temple was identical on its western, eastern, and southern sides, with the present enclosure of the Haram" (428). About four decades later, Charles Warren, a member of the British Royal Engineers and one of the key officers of the British Palestine Exploration Fund, was sent on a similar task to map the biblical topography of Jerusalem and to investigate the site of the "temple". "Warren literally burrowed beneath Jerusalem to chart the original dimensions of the Temple Mount", says Shepherd (195), and his "precise documentation of his work remains basic data for the archeologists of today" (195). From a British point of view, Warren's major achievement was his ability,

> To establish, once and for all, the location of the disputed areas of biblical Jerusalem: the course of the walls of the city in various biblical periods, and in particular the so-called Second Wall, that of Herod's time; the area originally forming the Temple Mount; and the true site of the Holy Sepulchre (Shepherd; 200).

With the "location" of the Temple established on archeological and historical grounds, nineteenth-century travelers celebrated the sacredness of the area: "The most memorable spot on earth, and the only spot honored of God through long ages as the "habitation of his holiness," is Mount Moriah…" (De Hass;145). For nineteenth-century travelers the sacred area was marked, sealed off, from the "profane" city surrounding it, and the separation intended was *physical*. Travelers *re*-created the sacred area of the Temple complex, and in the process, they *re*-created the Temple itself.

Looking down at al-Haram from the top of the Turkish governor's house, Harriet Martineau (1848) *saw* not the presence of two edifices of the Qubbat al-Sakhra and

al-Aqsa but the past: "But with all this before my eyes, my mind was with the past. It seemed as if the past were more truly before me than what I saw" (407). What Martineau seemed to see beyond the two edifices was the "Temple":

> I seemed to see it [the Temple] now as it was then, with its glittering roof, whose plates of gold were too dazzling to look upon in the morning sun; and its golden vine, covering the front of the Holy place ... I looked for the place where the Sheep-gate was, and the Water-gate … I saw where the altar stood, whence the smoke went up from the morning and evening sacrifice: and the Holy Place, with the ark in the midst… (407-408).

The traveler's controlling perspective configured a "Temple" that *only* existed in the Western gaze. Despite the traveler's attempts to see the "Temple", al-Haram was visible. Because that edifice is part of the inseparable history of the place, because it is always visible no matter how hard travelers assumed otherwise, its *visibility,* its "offensive" encroachment upon the travelers, must itself be annihilated. In the following passage by Herman Melville, Qubbat al-Sakhra becomes a mere shadow:

> The South East angle of wall. Mosque of Omar – Solomon's Temple. Here the wall of Omar rises upon the foundation stones of Solomon, triumphing over that which sustains it, an emblem of the Moslem religion, which at once spurns that deeper faith which fathered it & preceded it. (85).

In calling it the "Mosque of Omar", Melville negates the identity of Qubbat al-Sakhra; more important is that he, by means of a single dash, presents the simple substitution of Qubbat al-Sakhra for Solomon's Temple; for him, as well as for his readers, both become interchangeable. But, the most striking image in Melville's representation of al-Haram is the production of a Jewish "substructure" whose value appears to be self-evident. In nineteenth-century travel accounts, the wall of the "Temple", literally, became deeply rooted in the land, as a foundation that sustained al-Haram which existed *only* at the "surface".

What is relevant in the context of how nineteenth-century travelers represented al-Haram is the way they projected it as inferior to a much grander "substructure". This evoked that first that the "real" meaning of Jerusalem lies buried underneath – a meaning that draws its power from the existence of the "Temple"; secondly, that the Jewish presence and identity were "a deep stratum" subject to no historical or geographical changes; and finally, that the indigenous inhabitants were superficial rootless people. It is from this logic of thought that Israeli archeology developed in the second half of the twentieth century:

> In Israeli archeology, the deep stratum, in the literal and figurative sense, is associated with the Israeli Jews, while the surface level is associated with the Arabs, as a recent "superficial" historical element without millennial

"roots". Since the Arabs are seen as "guests" in the land, their presence must be downplayed, much as the surface of the land has at times been "remodeled" to hide or bury remnants of Arab life (Shohat; 99).

To represent the Arabs as "superficial" elements in the history of Jerusalem, travelers would prove the superiority of Western Zionist claims, namely their right to the city of Jerusalem. For the new "Chosen People", going to the past was mainly an obsessive search for rootedness; the past testified to the exclusive Jewish claims to Jerusalem. Through this myth of the "real" Jerusalem, travelers negated Arab and Muslim connections to the city, thus legitimized their dispossession.

Mona Kattaya is an Egyptian academic. She is a lecturer at the Faculty of Arts, Ain Shams University, Cairo. Her PhD explored the representation of Jerusalem in 19th century British and American travel accounts (2009).

Bibliography

Bar-Yosef, Eitan (2005). *The Holy Land in English Culture 1799-1917: Palestine and the Question of Orientalism.* Oxford University Press.

Bhabha, Homi (1994). "The Commitment to Theory". *The Location of Culture.* London: Routledge.

Boehmer, Elleke (1995). *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature: Migrant Metaphors.* Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

Conder, Claude Reignier (1879). *Tent Work in Palestine: A Record of Discovery and Adventure.* London: Richard Bentley & Son. Online (http://www.archive.org/details/texts)

De Hass, Frank S. (1889). *Buried Cities Recovered: or, Explorations in Bible Lands.* Philadelphia: Bradley & Company. Online (http://www.archive.org/details/texts).

Dyke, Henry Van (1908). *Out-of- Doors in the Holy Land: Impressions of Travel in Body and Spirit.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Online (http://www.archive.org/details/texts)

Finn, Elizabeth Anne (1866). *Home in the Holy land.* London: James Nisbet and Co. Online (http://books.google.com).

Fisk, George (1850). *A Memorial of Egypt, the Red Sea, the Wilderness of Sin and Paran, Mount Sinai, Jerusalem, and other Principal Localities of the Holy Land.* New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. Online (http://books.google.com).

Hogg, Edward (1835). *Visit to Alexandria, Damascus, and Jerusalem, during the Successful Campaign of Ibrahim Pasha.* London: Saunders and Otley. Online (http://books.google.com).

Lindsay, Lord (1838). *Letters on Egypt, Edom and the Holy Land.* London: Colburn. Online (http://books.google.com).

Macleod, Norman (1866). *Eastward: Travels in Egypt, Palestine and Syria.* London: A. Strahan. Online (http://www.archive.org/details/texts).

Martineau, Harriet (1848). *Eastern Life, Past and Present.* Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard. Online (http://books.google.com).

Masalha, Nur (2007). *The Bible and Zionism: Invented Traditions, Archaeology and Post-Colonialism in Palestine-Israel.* London; New York: Zed Books; New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Melville, Herman (1976). *Journal of a Visit to Europe and the Levant, October 11, 1856-May 6, 1857.* Evanston and Chicago: Northwestern University Press.

Mills, Sara (1991). *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism.* New York: Routledge.
_____ (2004). *Discourse.* New York: Routledge.

Minor, Clorinda (1851). *Meshullam! or, Tidings from Jerusalem.* Published by the Author. Online (http://books.google.com)

Obenzinger, Hilton (1999). *American Palestine: Melville, Twain, and the Holy Land Mania.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Peters, F.E. (1985). *Jerusalem: The Holy City in*

the Eyes of Chroniclers, Visitors, Pilgrims, and Prophets from the days of Abraham to the Beginnings of Modern Times. Princeton: Princeton UP.

Pratt, Mary Louise (1992). "Narrating the Anti-Conquest". *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. New York: Routledge. Online (http://www.questia.com)

_____ (1994). "Travel Narrative and Imperialist Vision". *Understanding Narrative*. Eds. James Phelan and Peter J. Rabinowitz. Columbus: Ohio State University Press. 199-221.

Rix, Herbert (1907). *Tent and Testament: A Camping Tour in Palestine*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. Online (http://www.archive.org/details/texts)

Robinson, Edward (1841). *Biblical Researches in Palestine and in the Adjacent Regions: a Journal of Travels in the Year 1838*. Boston: Crocker and Brewster. Online (http://www.archive.org/details/texts)

Rundle, Elizabeth Charles (1867). *Wanderings over Bible Lands and Seas*. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers. Online (http://books.google.com)

Russell, William Howard, Sir (1869). *A Diary in the East during the Tour of the Prince and Princess of Wales*. London: George Routledge and Son.

Said, Edward W. (1981). *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World*. London and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

_____ (1991). *The World*, *The Text and The Critic*. New York: Vintage.

_____ (1992). *The Question of Palestine*. New York: Vintage.

_____ (1993). *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Vintage.

_____ (1995). *Orientalism*. New York: Penguin Book.

Said, Edward and Bill Ashcroft (2001). "Conversation with Edward Said". *Edward Said*. Ed. Patrick Williams. London: Sage Publications. 276-291.

Schaff, Philip (1878). *Through Bible Lands: Notes of Travel in Egypt, the Desert, and Palestine*. New York: American Tract Society. Online (http://www.archive.org/details/texts).

Sha'ban, Fuad (1991). *Islam and Arabs in Early American Thought: The Roots of Orientalism in America*. Durham, NC: Acorn Press.

Shepherd, Naomi **(**1987)**.** *The Zealous Intruders: the Western Rediscovery of Palestine*. San Francisco: Harper & Row.

Shohat, Ella (1997). "Columbus, Palestine and Arab-Jews: Toward a Relational Approach to Community Identity". *Cultural Readings of Imperialism: Edward Said and the Gravity of History*. Eds. Keith-Ansell Pearson, Benita Parry and Judith Squires. London: Lawrence & Weshart. 88-105.

Spurr, David (1993). *The Rhetoric of Empire: Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing, and Imperial Administration*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Wilson, John (1847). *The Lands of the Bible*. Edinburgh: William Whyte and Co. Online (http://books.google.com).