



Martin Gilbert's Jerusalem

Jerusalem: Illustrated History Atlas, by Martin Gilbert. New York: MacMillan Publishing Inc., 1977. 128 pp.

Jerusalem: Rebirth of a City, by Martin Gilbert. New York: Elisabeth Sifton Books, Viking, 1985. 238 pp.

Jerusalem in the Twentieth Century, by Martin Gilbert. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1996. 412 pp.

Reviewed by Saliba Sarsar

A Partial View of Jerusalem History

Historians come in a variety of colors and so do their interpretations. There are those who faithfully reflect the essence of what has transpired, and others who fabricate a neat and useful past. Accuracy, balance, and scholarship are the qualities of the first kind; advocacy and ideology are characteristics of the second. The first stands for principle and inclusion, the second for power and self-interest.

In *City of Stone: The Hidden History of Jerusalem*, Meron Benvenisti, the former deputy mayor of Jerusalem and a thoughtful historian, states that "history is written by victors, and not the vanquished."

A tour of the Museum of the City of Jerusalem, according to Benvenisti, makes evident how the name "Arab" is not on the chronological charts and in the exhibits. He writes, "it is easier to define the Arabs as Muslims, for there is no 'Muslim nation.' But there is, of course, a Jewish nation.... Thus one may ignore the Arab identity of the city's inhabitants."¹

As I read Martin Gilbert's three books on Jerusalem, I felt ill at ease to gradually discover that Arab identity and voice, both Christian and Muslim, in Jerusalem is underrepresented and often nonexistent. The beneficiaries are Western Christians and Jews in the nineteenth century and Israeli Jews in the twentieth century, who are given the lion's share of the credit for breathing life into the city. Gilbert—whom publicists describe as one of the world's great historians, the official biographer of Winston Churchill, an author of over fifty books, and the host of the A&E television series *Jerusalem with Martin Gilbert*—misses no opportunity to advance the Orientalist and Zionist viewpoints. He makes no effort to dispel any notions of stereotyping or possible bias on the part of Westerners or Jews who have written about Jerusalem. His photographic and documentary evidence is at best one-sided and incomplete in all three books, which will be considered separately.

Jerusalem: Illustrated History Atlas

Gilbert traces the history of Jerusalem from biblical times to 1977. In 66 maps and over 113 prints or photographs, he portrays "something of the City's many trials and tribulations, and of the lives and experiences of its citizens through more than thirty centuries" (p. 3). The work, with its British edition published by Gilbert in

conjunction with the Board of Deputies of British Jews, appears impressive given its data, interesting illustrations, quotations, and historical descriptions. As one scratches the surface and digs deeper, however, a different image takes shape.

The Preface thanks 38 individuals, one of whom is Arab, and 24 libraries, agencies, and institutions, two of which are Arab. The rest are either British or Western and Jewish or Israeli Jews. The bibliography identifies 71 historical studies, biographies, and memoirs, with only two Arab sources; 127 books by pilgrims, travelers, missionaries, tourists, soldiers, surveyors, and town planners between 1615 and 1976, with no Arab references; and 37 atlases, single sheet maps, and guide books between 1833 and 1965, with only two by Arabs. No wonder that only two out of 60 quotations are by Arabs. The photographs or prints, moreover, indicate an equal bias. While Jews are shown at prayer, at work, fleeing an Arab riot or attacked by Arabs, Arabs are in arms, at a scene of an ambush, relaxing at home, or playing cards! Who is accomplished and true to faith? Who is the aggressor and the destroyer?

The book begins with a print published in 1705, depicting Jews rebuilding Jerusalem under Nehemiah (p. 6). The opposite page shows a map of Jerusalem from ancient times to the destruction of the Second Temple. The descriptive paragraph above the map speaks of the city as a Jebusite fortress that was conquered by the Jews under David. No mention is made of the Arab argument, as advanced by M. S. Aamiry in *Jerusalem: Arab Origin and Heritage*, that the native inhabitants are descendants of the Semitic Arab tribes of Amorites, Canaanites, and others, with the Jebusites, who built the city, as a sub-group of the Canaanites.² The Muslim Arab

¹ Meron Benvenisti, *City of Stone: The Hidden History of Jerusalem* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), p. 5.

² M. A. Aamiry, *Jerusalem: Arab Origin and Heritage* (London: Longman, 1978).

conquest of the city in 638 C.E. is interchangeably referred to it as the Islamic conquest, and the year is misidentified in two places as 629 C.E. (p. 12) and 637 C.E. (p. 14). No map of Jerusalem under Muslim Arab rule is given, but the reader is rushed to the Crusader march to Jerusalem and Crusader Jerusalem.

The Muslim Arab or Arab appears when a problem occurs. Below a map illustrating the Jewish search for a secure haven between 1000 and 1600 C.E., Gilbert explains,

But no century was entirely free from problems: thus in 1586 the Ottoman ruler, or Kadi, deprived the community of the use of its synagogues; in 1726 local Muslim Arabs seized another synagogue (which they held until 1816) and burnt the scrolls of the law. (p. 19)

Interestingly, Gilbert cites the same act on page 27, but the year is changed to 1720. Another explanation gives the following:

Even Crusader rule did not deter one Jew from trying to settle in Jerusalem, for in 1140 the Spanish-born poet and philosopher Judah Halevi set out for Jerusalem via Cairo. According to legend, he was approaching the City Walls when an Arab horseman, leaving by one of the Gates, trampled him to death. As he lay dying he is said to have recited one of his own poems: "Zion, shall I not seek thee?" (p. 21)

On a map of Mamluk and Ottoman Jerusalem, the Zion Gate is referred to as Dung Gate and vice versa. In 1368, Gilbert states, "Muslims murder twelve monks on Mount Zion, and harass those who remain." In 1780, he adds, "Monks of the Monastery of the Cross massacred by Arab marauders" (p. 25).

A journey of a Jew to Jerusalem in 1479 (p. 29), a Christian pilgrimage from Venice to Jerusalem in 1670 (p. 35), and the impressions of a British traveler in 1842 (p. 39) are described and illustrated. No Arab or Muslim pilgrimage is discussed. The eighteenth century and the first three decades of the nineteenth century are totally ignored, but twenty pages are devoted to the period from the 1830s to the 1890s. Four sets of figures showing a Jewish majority in Jerusalem during 1845 (p. 37), 1868 (p. 43), 1889 (p. 53), and 1896 (p. 55) are cited. This is done without distinguishing between Christian Arabs and non-Arabs and without adding Arab Christians to Arab Muslims, thus making it impossible for the reader to know the number of Arabs vis-à-vis Jews in Jerusalem. This point becomes more important as we examine Gilbert's *Jerusalem: Rebirth of a City*. With Jews no longer a plurality but a majority in Jerusalem in the twentieth century, Gilbert starts to distinguish between Christian Arabs and Muslim Arabs as appears for 1905 (p. 57); 1912 (p. 59); 1922, 1931, and 1944 (p. 71); 1944 (p. 85); and 1947 (pp. 89 and 91). The figures for the three communities in 1944 (Jews: 92,143; Muslim Arabs: 32,039; Christian Arabs: 27,849) differ on page 71 from page 85 (Jews: 97,000; Muslim Arabs: 30,630; Christian Arabs: 29,350). No explanation accounts for the difference.

Gilbert devotes forty pages to the 1900-1948 period. Emphasis is placed on the (uneven) growth of Jerusalem, the British military rule and mandate, and the conflict between Arabs and Jews. The text becomes clearly one-sided as Gilbert explains the violence that punctured the British Mandate years and preceded the creation of Israel in 1948. In particular, Gilbert shows his ideological leanings by distinguishing between Jews and Jewish acts while lumping Arabs or Arab acts

together when listing killings and reprisals. For example, he writes:

Between 1920 and 1940 Arab hostility towards Jewish immigration, and towards the Jewish presence in Jerusalem...was inflamed by agitators and fanatics, and led to many violent attacks on individual Jews. Five Jews were killed in 1920, six in 1929, twelve in 1936, nine in 1937, twelve in 1938. Throughout 1936 the Jewish Agency prevented a small group of extremist Jews from carrying out reprisals, but in 1937 these extremists, acting alone, killed 15 Arabs, and in 1938 a further ten. (p. 79)

Gilbert's style of omitting facts or slanting evidence is also evident in his statements that Jews were killed by Arabs or Arab terrorists while Arabs were killed by British troops, by Jews in self-defense, or by small Jewish terrorist groups as reprisals.

The last twenty-five pages of the book cover the period from 1949 to 1977. Attention is given to divided Jerusalem, the June 1967 War, and the multiple cultural, educational, and health projects that were undertaken by the Jerusalem Foundation. Unlike the detailed facts of the period surrounding the 1948 War, nothing is mentioned of those killed and wounded in the June 1967 War, the confiscation of Arab lands and property, and the building of Jewish settlements on Arab areas in Jerusalem.

Jerusalem: Rebirth of a City

Gilbert takes the reader on a tour of Jerusalem through sixty years between 1838 and 1898. His main thesis is that the city "was transformed from little more than a crumbling ruin into a bustling metropolis" (p. xi). Illustrated by 11 maps

and 135 photos, several of which are contained in his first book, this book contains "a series of vignettes, drawn decade by decade from the descriptions of residents and visitors...to provide not only the facts but also the atmosphere of those sixty years" (p. xi). He correctly points out that the photographers and printmakers gave Jerusalem an idealized image, one that was different from "the earthly Jerusalem." Yet he proceeds to selectively use their diaries or art to give a partial view of the city.

Gilbert thanks 27 people and 10 libraries, with none of them Arab. He consults 90 books published between 1838 and 1898, with no Arab references; a list of 87 historical works, biographies, and memoirs, with 3 books by Arab authors; and 27 photographic sources, with only one of them of Arab or Armenian origin.

In the Preface to the book, Gilbert rushes to cite the demographic statistics for Jerusalem in 1838, the starting year of his coverage. "In 1838," he states, "Jerusalem had fewer than 16,000 inhabitants. Of these, 5,000 were Muslim Arabs, 3,000 were Christian Arabs and 6,000 were Jews" (p. xi). Why begin the book in 1838, and not in 1800? Is it because the rebirth of the city was initiated in 1838 or because the Arabs were in the majority prior to 1838 and needed no recognition? Moreover, in *Jerusalem in the Nineteenth Century: The Old City*, Yehoshua Ben-Arieh gives different data than Gilbert and, if all non-Jews (most of whom were of Arab origin) are viewed collectively, then the number of the Jewish population does not reach that of the non-Jewish population until 1870 (see fig. 1). Yet the Arab population does not figure largely in Gilbert's book.

Figure 1
The Population of Jerusalem by Communities (1800-1870)
 (approximate figures)

Year	Jews	Muslims	Christians	All Non-Jews	Total
1800	2,250	4,000	2,750	6,750	9,000
1836	3,250	4,500	3,250	7,750	11,000
1840	5,000	4,650	3,350	8,000	13,000
1850	6,000	5,400	3,600	9,000	15,000
1860	8,000	6,000	4,000	10,000	18,000
1870	11,000	6,500	4,500	11,000	22,000

Source: Yehoshua Ben-Arieh, *Jerusalem in the Nineteenth Century* (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben Zvi Institute and New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984), p. 279.

The 1838-40 period is referred to as "wretched times" (p. 1) for its "despondent, almost rural state" (p. 7). What occurred, however, influenced the Western image of and Jewish presence in Jerusalem. These include Edward Robinson and Eli Smith's discovery of Hezekiah's tunnel (including the section at the Gihon end, which had been built by the Jebusites more than 300 years earlier); David Roberts's sketching journey through the Holy Land; and for the Jews especially, Sir Moses Montefiore's second visit to the city, which generated a serious promise of financial help.

The 1840s, described as one of "conflicts and commotion," saw the growing influence of Britain, France, and Russia. Gilbert notes that a major effort of the English Church focused on converting Jews of Jerusalem to Christianity. The Christian communities competed or even fought against each other and against Jewish interests. The Muslims, according to Gilbert, were detached from such quarrels and looked with pain at Western penetration of their city. No sources are given here except for a conversation Gilbert had with an unnamed distinguished Jerusalem Arab who saw in David Roberts's prints "a source of anguish, a pointer to bad times, when pride and spirit

had been crushed and the city's true guardians humiliated" (p. 40).

The 1850s are titled "more bustle, and more business." Gilbert's narrative highlights the growth of British influence in the city and the protection Britain gave to members of the Jewish and Christian communities. As in the other parts of the book, Gilbert relies heavily on the writings of Western diplomats, missionaries, and visitors. James Finn, British consul in Jerusalem between 1846 and 1863, is quoted at length. Finn, who referred to the Bedouins as "the wild Arabs" (p. 71), was defended by Ashkenazi rabbis, who appealed directly to Queen Victoria not to recall him. According to Gilbert, the rabbis told the Queen, "Year by year...the 'dread' of Finn had so increased among the Muslims, 'the dwellers in this land', that they had been unable 'to do their pleasure for doing evil' to the Jews 'Thy servants'" (p. 117).

As it proceeds, Gilbert's account continues to focus almost exclusively on Jewish and Christian developments. We learn that the 1860s witnessed the construction of several buildings, such as the Montefiore cottages and the Evelina de Rothschild Girls School by Jews and the Syrian Orphanage, the Austrian Hospice,

and the Russian Orthodox Church by Christians. Numerous archaeological explorations were conducted, particularly by Charles Warren, a British Royal Engineer, on such sites as Solomon's Pool, Siloam Pool, and Qal'at Jalud. Five out of around twenty-three pages of text chronicle the 1863 visit of Prince Albert Edward—Queen Victoria's eldest son who later became King Edward VII—while little substance is devoted to the daily life of the indigenous Arab population. The chapter is titled "Jerusalem to Perfection" and has reference to "fanatical Muslims" on its first page (p. 105) and a quote by Mark Twain on its last page:

Rags, wretchedness, poverty, and dirt, those signs and symbols that indicate the presence of Moslem rule more surely than the crescent-flag itself, abound. Lepers, cripples, the blind, and the idiotic assail you on every hand. (p. 137)

During the 1870s, several quarters were built for the three communities outside the Old City: six for the Jews, two each for Christian Arabs and Muslim Arabs, and one for both Christian and Muslim Arabs. Gilbert, calling this chapter "Advice for Travelers," cites the general warning given by consuls to travelers, instructing them "to avoid the risks crossing the warring regions" (p. 154). (These regions are to the southeast of Jerusalem, where war had erupted between the two largest tribes of the Negev desert.) However, the title has little to do with Jerusalem as Gilbert admits. "But Jerusalem, unaffected by such distant battles, remained a tourist objective. In 1876 the publication of Baedeker's guidebook to Palestine and Syria included 134 pages on the city: described not only as a historic city, but as a modern traveler's destination" (p. 154).

In treating the 1880s Gilbert dwells on the growth of eight or nine Jewish suburbs

outside the Old City and Jewish buildings inside the Old City but outside the Jewish Quarter, giving little attention to the Muslim Arab suburbs outside the Old City. He notes that a dozen Christian hospices, convents, and churches were also built, including the British Ophthalmic Hospital, the German Catholic Hospice, and the Notre Dame de France. As with his examination of the 1860s, Gilbert gives lavish coverage to European royalty, devoting a large section to the Jerusalem visit of Queen Victoria's two sons, Prince Albert Victor and Prince George (pp. 177-181). The latter became King George V in 1910. While Gilbert titles his chapter "Battles Ancient and Modern" (alluding to the controversy over whether Jesus' crucifixion took place on the rock enclosed by the Church of the Holy Sepulchre or at Jeremiah's Grotto), very little information is given on the Arab community while page after page focuses on the Jewish community. Jewish settlement, business and trade, education, and philanthropy are discussed, with the latter described as "one of the main spurs to the growth of Jerusalem" (p. 182). Meanwhile, the continued and growing economic, political, and administrative centrality of the city in the social and national life of the Palestinians is largely ignored.³

By the 1890s, according to Gilbert, major progress in Jerusalem had occurred, thanks chiefly to Jews and Western Christians. A tripling of the population since the 1830s had also taken place, with the Jewish community being the largest. The railway from Jerusalem to Jaffa and the railway

³ For a good account of the growing importance of the city during this period not only as the economic and administrative center of Ottoman Palestine, but also as the center of a burgeoning Palestinian nationalism, see Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

station began service. In regard to Arabs, Gilbert quotes from a book by Bishop John H. Vincent and Reverend James Lee: "Every Jew and every Christian who makes a visit to Palestine resents in his own feelings the presence of an alien people in the land of the Hebrews and Christians" (p. 215).

Gilbert gives the year 1898 special coverage. Jerusalem was readied to receive German Kaiser Wilhelm II and his entourage. Even Theodor Herzl made his first trip to Jerusalem that year. Western impressions of what the "Muslims" thought did not change, as Gilbert quotes from Edwin Wallace, the American consul:

They look with a measure of scorn upon Jews and Christians, and, were it not for the financial benefit to them resulting from the presence of these representatives of despised religions, would gladly be rid of them. (p. 221)

Jerusalem in the Twentieth Century

In this third book, Gilbert's coverage of Jerusalem and its three communities is more detailed and somewhat more balanced. Possible explanations relate to the temporal proximity of events and the inability of "the historian" to twist known facts.

As in his other two books, however, Gilbert is parochial in his sources. He thanks 32 people, with only two Arabs among them, and indicates 13 sources of photographs, with only one or two Arab among them. The 21 reports and official statements he lists have one Arab reference; the 20 guidebooks have none; the 126 books have four; and the 19 articles have four. In this book of 412 pages, Gilbert has one single interview with an Arab personality. As he states, "I was also fortunate to have had the chance to gain an important Palestinian-Arab perspective from Anwar Nusseibeh, a distinguished

scion of one of Jerusalem's most distinguished Muslim families" (p. xv).

The book's introduction and twenty-one chapters delineate twentieth-century Jerusalem history, with titles depicting major events such as "The Riots [sic] of 1936 and their Aftermath," "A Tale of Two Cities, 1950-1967," and "From Annexation to Intifada, 1980-1989." The main premise is that Jerusalem was transformed from "a small provincial town of the Ottoman Empire" to "the busy capital of an independent nation, Israel" (p. ix) and that struggle, uncertainty, and hope characterize the movement toward the twenty-first century.

Gilbert begins his account of the twentieth century with several of the city's "awakenings"—more Christian pilgrims, more buildings by Christian Orders, and further Jewish expansion. The Muslim and Christian Arabs, called a "substantial minority" by Gilbert, "felt aggrieved at the new-found Zionism of so many Jews" (p. 10). Gilbert quotes from Mrs. A. Goodrich Freer, a British traveler, who compared "the 'street Arab' of Jerusalem with a London urchin" (p. 12). The end of the Ottoman Empire and the start of British military rule and mandate over Palestine followed World War I, which subjected Jerusalem to turmoil and the unknown.

Gilbert correctly points out the intensity of Arab feelings against the Balfour Declaration, which still lingers today. Yet without adducing any credible historical evidence, he credits the British with enhancing Muslim Arab conditions. As he puts it, "the Muslim Arabs of Jerusalem had felt that their national aspirations were being ignored, and their lives subordinated to Constantinople and the Ottomans. The Christian British, led by a Jewish High Commissioner [Herbert Samuel], were determined to change this" (p. 95). Gilbert admits that Arab sensitivities continued to be aroused by the successful penetration of

the Zionists into their land. As he tells it, a struggle between the Jews and the Arabs took place as Britain was accused of favoritism by both sides. Intercommunal conflict turned into violence. In stereotypical Zionist fashion Gilbert blames the Mufti Haj Amin al-Husayni's statements and actions for "the harsher tone" of the Muslim voice in Jerusalem (p. 96), the riots of 1929 (pp. 119-128), the characterization of "the Jews as the enemy of Islam in Jerusalem" (p. 132), and the protraction of the 1936 strike and disorders. Gilbert does not present the Arab viewpoint, as outlined by Taysir Jbara in his work on the mufti, that the mufti was a national leader struggling to reverse the British plan of reducing the Arabs to a minority in Palestine.⁴ Instead, Arab insistence on halting Jewish immigration and creating an Arab state in Palestine is viewed as the cause of violence, while only Jewish extremists are held responsible for exacerbating the violence (p. 148).

In discussing World War II Gilbert points out that while the war engendered "a unifying sense of patriotic endeavor" among the Jews of Jerusalem, the Allied cause received less fervor from the Arabs (p. 160). The end of the war did not bring peace in Arab-Jewish relations. While Gilbert sees Arabs behind most of the 1945-47 turmoil, he is explicit in his condemnation of the Irgun and the Stern Gang for making "a cruel mark on the city" and in his praise of the Jewish Agency and the Hagannah (p. 182). The years 1948 and 1949 radically altered Palestine's map. The

British Mandate ended, Israel was created, and approximately 780,000 Palestinians—57,000 Jerusalem Arabs among them—were turned into refugees. Violence and counter violence continued. This includes the massacre by the Irgun and the Stern Gang of 254 Arabs at Deir Yassin on 9 April 1948 and the killing by Arabs of 77 Jews who were part of a Hadassah Hospital convoy on 14 April 1948. While Gilbert mentions the massacre in less than 18 lines (p. 199), he details the ambush in more than 90 lines (pp. 203-205). In this, Gilbert joins what David K. Shipler describes in *Arab and Jew* as "the mainstream in Israel [who] also conspired to cover up the most vivid evidence" about the massacre.⁵

Gilbert calls the period from 1950 to 1967 "A Tale of Two Cities," symbolizing the split of Jerusalem into East and West, under Jordan and Israel, respectively. Regarding the early 1950s, he writes that "deserted Arab quarters such as Talbiyeh, Katamon, and Bakaa, and abandoned Arab villages such as Ayin Karem and Malha, were becoming Jewish suburbs" (pp. 249-250). The whereabouts of their Arab inhabitants is ignored, but much is quoted from the letters of Mary Clawson, an American whose husband was an economic advisor to the Israeli Government, and who initially did not even know that Jerusalem was a divided city. Israel is then praised for developing West Jerusalem, and Jordan is blamed for ignoring East Jerusalem. "Under Jordanian rule, East Jerusalem was still only a town, rather than a city" (p. 267). If Jordanian officials cared more for Amman than East Jerusalem, as Gilbert argues, does that entitle Israelis more so than Palestinian Arabs to East Jerusalem? In the 1960s, Gilbert states that many

⁴ Taysir Jbara, *Palestinian Leader: Hajj Amin al-Husseini, Mufti of Jerusalem* (Princeton: Kingston Press, 1985). For an important revisionist account of the mufti that debunks the Zionist demonization of him without idealizing his motives, see Philip Matar, *The Mufti of Jerusalem: al Hajj Amin al-Husayni and the Palestinian National Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988).

⁵ David K. Shipler, *Arab and Jew: Wounded Spirits in a Promised Land* (New York: Penguin Books, 1986), p. 39.

Christian Arabs left the city as a result of "Muslim hostility" (p. xii) or because they were "unhappy at the growing preponderance of Islam in Arab Jerusalem" (p. 267). His point is totally unsubstantiated. The possibility that Christian Arabs left because of the political turmoil or the economic uncertainty is never entertained.

Gilbert covers the 1967 War in detail, focusing mainly on Israel's military moves and victory. Jordan's King Hussein is criticized for joining Egypt and Syria against Israel. "For King Hussein, however, the temptations of joining a victorious Arab coalition were too great" (p. 273). The alternative explanation that Hussein's hands were tied by his sense of Arab duty and pride is not presented. Mayor Teddy Kollek's actions and concerns during the war are revealed. The Arab experience in the war and its immediate aftermath are not mentioned, except as seen through the eyes of Jews like Elie Wiesel, who wrote, "I saw such children [of the vanquished Arabs] in the Old City.... They were afraid of us, of me. For the first time in my life, children were afraid of me" (p. 296). In discussing the reunification of Jerusalem, Gilbert uncritically accepts Kollek's own propaganda about Israeli measures in the city, describing them as making Jerusalem more modern and attractive for Jews and Arabs alike.⁶ Gilbert does, however, correctly point out that "For the Arabs of Jerusalem, the sight of the new Israeli building [in Ramat Eshkol, French Hill, Gilo, and East Talpiot] was ominous" (p. 305).

As Gilbert presents it, the last three

decades of the twentieth century brought about episodes of discord and violence and some collaboration in Jerusalem and Palestinian-Israeli relations. The dismantling of the border between East and West Jerusalem in 1967 did not erode the psychological barriers between the two communities. The Israeli search for "harmony" of the 1970s led to annexation in 1980 and to the Intifada between 1987 and 1992. Anwar Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in November 1977 prepared the way for an eventual peace treaty between Israel and Egypt, but did not calm Palestinian fears about Israeli designs. Gilbert speaks of Jewish and foreign musicians, painters, poets, and writers finding inspiration in Jerusalem (p. 321), but is silent about Palestinian accomplishments under very difficult conditions in culture, education, and social life, and Palestinian efforts to dialogue with Israelis. The peace demonstration around the Old City in 1990 is not part of Gilbert's cosmology, but is mentioned by Amos Elon, whom Gilbert knows well. As Elon states in an article on "Peace Now," which was published in the *New Yorker* on 23 April 1990 and reprinted in Elon's *A Blood-Dimmed Tide*:

But here, for an hour or so, some thirty-thousand Israelis and Palestinians held hands and formed a human chain almost three miles long all around the Old City walls, chanting: WE WANT PEACE! WE WANT PEACE! In her long history of religious and communal strife Jerusalem had never seen anything like it. It was the largest demonstration in the history of the city, the first ever jointly attended, by Palestinians and Israelis.⁷

⁶ For an examination of the actual record of the Kollek administration in dealing with Jerusalemite Palestinians, see Amir Cheshin, Bill Hutman, and Avi Melamed, *Separate and Unequal: The Inside Story of Israeli Rule in East Jerusalem* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

⁷ Amos Elon, *A Blood-Dimmed Tide: Dispatches from the Middle East* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp. 161-62.

Gilbert summarizes the 1990s with a review of the main local and regional events, including the 1990-91 Gulf War, the negotiations between the Palestinians and Israelis in 1993, and the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin in 1995. He concludes his book by quoting from Rabin's speech of October 1995 in Washington, D.C., in which he stated, "Jerusalem has a thousand faces, and each of us has his own Jerusalem." True, but why did Gilbert write a sizeable book from a narrow, Israeli-Jewish perspective and attempt to pass it off as a comprehensive history of Jerusalem in the twentieth century?

Awaiting A New History of Jerusalem

The missing or dehumanized image of the Arab is evident in the three books. Arab contributions are ignored or shrouded in a negative light, and an aura of Jewish jurisdiction or justification over Jerusalem is established. Gilbert's view of Jerusalem reflects the standard Orientalist or Zionist idea on history. His narrative is centered

on the classical mission of the Christian West to civilize or save the Holy City during the nineteenth century and the Zionist notion of heroism and the miraculous in transforming, defending, and unifying "Yerushalaim" during the twentieth century.

An honest history of Jerusalem goes beyond the mythic to capture the true essence of the several communities, their interrelationships, and their challenges and opportunities. It celebrates what is common and different and inspires "the other" to participate as well. Gilbert's books give a parochial and slanted understanding of the history of Jerusalem.⁸ A new history of Jerusalem awaits its author!

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⁸ For a more complete picture of life in the city, there are good resources available. In addition to the books already mentioned above in the notes, worth consulting are: Michael Dumper, *The Politics of Jerusalem Since 1967* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); Ali Said Khalaf, *Something of Our History* (Jerusalem: Abu 'Arfat, 1979 (Arabic)); Michael Romann and Alex Weingrod, *Living Together Separately: Arabs and Jews in Contemporary Jerusalem* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991); John Rose, *Armenians of Jerusalem: Memories of Life in Palestine* (London: Radcliffe Press, 1993); and Salim Tamari, ed., *Jerusalem 1948: The Arab Neighbourhoods and their Fate in the War* (Jerusalem: The Institute of Jerusalem Studies & Badil Resource Center, 1999).