

הקדמה

PREFACE

مقدمة

Margret Kampmeyer /
Cilly Kugelmann

Preface

The problem with Jerusalem, a Palestinian taxi driver explained many years ago, is that too many Jews, Muslims, and Christians see this city as the forecourt of heaven and already seek entry while still alive. And, one could add, from time to time they combine their respective road to eternal life with a ruthless claim to truth, which does not make life in this city any easier. The sacred character attributed to Jerusalem is both a blessing and a curse: it means renown and revenue, but also battle, occupation, and destruction. Like no other city in the world, Jerusalem thus stands concurrently and contradictorily for peace and redemption, as well as for hate and violence.

Within the walled Old City and beyond, there are now roughly 255 churches and Christian sites, approximately 160 mosques and Muslim places of prayer, and between 80 and 110 synagogues and prayer rooms, depending on the source. The exact number of places of worship is not documented, but it is likely that Jerusalem has the highest density of sacred buildings worldwide. The sanctity once enshrined in this city by Solomon's Temple, which successive potentates repeatedly superscribed with new belief systems and buildings, defines Jerusalem's five-thousand-year history.

According to Jewish tradition, the Temple with the Holy of Holies, the repository of the Ark of the Covenant, is considered the dwelling place of God, where the Shekinah, His eternal presence, is found. Both temples, the First Temple of Solomon and the Second, Herodian Temple, were located on a hill on which an artificial plateau had been raised. The western side of the Temple Mount is now, in a broader sense, one of the sacred sites of Judaism: the Wailing Wall. In Arabic, the Temple Mount is called *Haram esh-Sharif*, »the Noble Sanctuary,« with the Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa Mosque. Today, the Temple Mount encompasses the most fiercely contested square meters of Jerusalem.

Biblical Times

In biblical times, Jews were prescribed three pilgrimages to Jerusalem: harvest festivals, which included sacrifices in the Temple. After its destruction by Rome and the concomitant end of the sacrifice ritual in the year 70 CE, numerous forms of remembering the lost temple and the besieged city developed in the Diaspora: Jerusalem lived on as the center of Eretz Yisrael, the »Land of Israel,« in the sense of a metaphysical home in the Holy Land. Prayer is directed toward this homeland; visual quotes of the temple are found on decorative objects, with which Torah scrolls are embellished; when houses are built or renovated, a piece of masonry or a small section of a wall remains untreated or unpainted in memory of the

destroyed temple. On the ninth day of the month of Av—the Tisha be-Av—the destruction of the temple is commemorated in deep mourning, and Psalm 137 is recited: »By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down and wept« and »If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its skill!« Other historical events in Jewish history are also tied to Tisha be-Av and associated with the primal catastrophe, the destruction of the temple. The saying »Next year in Jerusalem« is spoken by Jews in and beyond Jerusalem at the end of the Seder, as well as on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement: it is an expression of the hope of the coming of and redemption through the Messiah.

Whereas rabbinical Judaism had to reinvent itself with a transcendental image of Jerusalem in the Diaspora, in the second century the destroyed city was rebuilt by Emperor Hadrian as the Roman colony Aelia Capitolina. On the site of the temple, a sanctum for the gods Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva was erected and a statue of Hadrian raised—and Jews were temporarily forbidden to enter the city. With the assertion of Christianity as the official state religion of the Roman Empire, Emperor Constantine had memorial buildings erected in Jerusalem and Bethlehem on the sites of Christ's birth, death, and resurrection, and established the all but forgotten and provincial city of Jerusalem as a new religious center. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which encompasses the presumed grave and the rock of Calvary, became the goal of pilgrimages and one of the most sacred sites in Christendom.

After its destruction by Shiite Fatimids, who conquered Jerusalem in 979, it was rebuilt in the eleventh century and over the years experienced further extensions and modifications. Despite recurring internal disputes over jurisdiction, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is jointly administered to this day by six of the oldest Christian confessions. The power of the keys of the church, a relic from the period of the Ottoman rule, the origins of which are said to go back to Saladin, continues to lie with two Muslim families, who open and close the church every day. Today, more than fifty Christian confessions are at home in the city of Jerusalem.

In 635, the Muslim rule of Jerusalem began and—with the exception of the era of the Crusades—continued for 1,300 years. Umayyads, who had conquered the city, and later Abbasids, Fatimids, Seljuqs, Ayyubids, and Mamluks ruled Jerusalem until the Ottoman army, led by Sultan Selim I, took the city in 1615. The Ottoman rule lasted until the beginning of the British mandate in 1920.

The significance of Jerusalem for Islam is derived from the Night Journey of Muhammad, who ascended into heaven from here. Prayer was directed toward Jerusalem until Mecca took over this function, and Jerusalem is the third most sacred city of Islam after Mecca and Medina. It was the goal of the smaller pilgrimage following or in preparation for the larger pilgrimage to Mecca. On the abandoned area of the destroyed Jewish temple, the Umayyads built the Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa Mosque, which, in the eighth century, consolidated Jerusalem's position as the religious center of Islam.

During the Middle Ages, scholars from throughout the Islamic world taught and studied in Jerusalem, and droves of Muslim pilgrims were drawn into this intellectual and theological center with numerous schools, mosques, and houses of study. Over the centuries, the respective rulers repeatedly and painstakingly restored the structural signs of the Muslim presence. To this day, the Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa Mosque continue to define the visual appearance of the city and underscore the Muslim claim to Jerusalem.

The Crusaders' Impact

Nevertheless, these buildings also experienced superscriptions. Through the Crusaders in the late eleventh century, the previously primarily spiritual orientation towards Jerusalem became associated with a territorial claim, which was then enforced. After it was seized in 1099, the sacred Muslim area of the former Temple Mount was rededicated to Christianity, the Dome of the Rock was topped by a cross, and a royal palace was installed in the mosque, until Saladin reconquered the city in 1187. After the fall of the Crusader States, the religious significance of Jerusalem for Christianity remained intact. The city was depicted as the religious center of the earth and navel of the world, and the number of pilgrimages increased. The Holy Sepulchre enjoyed widespread renown as a replica and souvenir; it was also crafted as a miniature model by noble and wealthy pilgrims. To this day, these Holy Sepulchres are preserved in many places throughout Europe and have themselves become goals of paschal pilgrimages. The custom of liturgically connecting the sites of the Passion established itself in the fourteenth century as the Via Dolorosa and entered European churches as the Stations of the Cross. Jerusalem is omnipresent as a religious concept in the countries of Christian Europe.

The political claim of the Crusader States was also not completely extinguished, and it was the successor states of the Crusaders which, in the nineteenth century, called back with more missionary than territorial ulterior motives. Even before this, France and Russia had declared themselves protective powers of Latin and Orthodox Christians.

Despite various potentates, the historical sites of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam have remained—with more or fewer restrictions—accessible for the faithful of all religions throughout the centuries. It was only against the backdrop of national aspirations that they became embattled territories—from the Jewish temple, of which only the western wall of the temple plateau has been preserved, to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Muslim sanctum.

Jerusalem in the 19th and 20th Century

The Zionist idea of finding a way out of European antisemitism through a sense of national self-fulfillment and the return to the biblical homeland motivated several waves of migration to Palestine, primarily from Eastern and Central Europe. Between the late nineteenth century and the end of the Second World War, approximately 450,000 Jews entered the country; initially regarded with suspicion, they were later combatted with military force by the local Arab population.

The Arab national movement against the Ottoman rule, which emerged at the same time, fought for an independent, united Arab kingdom, into which Palestine was also to be integrated. In the pursuit of their objectives, both the Zionists and the followers of the Arab national movement relied on the support of Great Britain. However, the geopolitical interests of the victorious powers, which replaced the Ottoman Empire with new border demarcations in the Near East, led to a series of conflicts, in which Palestine and Jerusalem were also implicated. Their consequences can still be felt today.

Contradictory British assurances of national independence to both the Arab and Zionist sides formed the basis of a still seemingly irreconcilable conflict between Palestinian and Jewish claims to the same territory. The ongoing immigration of Jews to Palestine between 1921 and 1929 was the trigger of Arab riots that culminated in a massacre of the Jewish residents of Hebron on August 23 and 24, 1929. In Jerusalem itself, Mohammed Amin al-Husseini, the Mufti of Jerusalem,

who also strove to involve Hitler in his nationalization plans, initiated an uprising and a general strike, which was suppressed by British troops. In turn, paramilitary Jewish underground organizations were responsible for the attack on the British mandate administration on July 22, 1946 in the King David Hotel in Jerusalem. The acts of violence from both sides led the British to consider a division of Palestine, a topic that was discussed for the first time in May 1937 by a commission of inquiry, which has gone down in history as the Peel Commission.

The UN Partition Plan did not, however, lead to an Israeli and a Palestinian state, as the international community had hoped, but rather ultimately paved the way for the founding of the state of Israel on November 29, 1947, as well as the Israel-Palestine conflict, in the center of which Jerusalem continues to stand to this day.

After the end of the first Israeli-Arab war, which began—immediately after the declaration of Israeli independence—during the night of May 14, 1948, Jerusalem was divided into Jewish and Arab sectors: on January 4, 1950, West Jerusalem was declared capital of the new state, while the eastern sector of the city and the West Bank were annexed by Jordan. Neither the Israeli nor the Jordanian action was recognized internationally. The expulsion of Palestinians and the massacres carried out by parts of the Israeli army during the course of the 1948 war were triggers for the flight of a large part of the Arab population; the consequences of these events continue to determine the Israeli-Arab conflict to this day and, for the Palestinians, are the *Nakba*, or the catastrophe.

From the Palestinian viewpoint, the conquest of East Jerusalem in the Six-Day War in 1967 and its subsequent annexation made the division of the city into East and West Jerusalem permanent. The systematic disadvantage of East Jerusalem and the discrimination of its population, as well as the simultaneous demand for the integration of both sectors of the city into the Israeli state, led to mistrust and fear, which divide united Jerusalem almost as radically as the walled streets did before 1967. The Temple Mount now stands in the center of these conflicts. Yet not only political disagreements between Palestine and Israel are sparked by this, but also those between members of different religious orientations within the Jewish community.

It is almost impossible to present an overall view of these complex historical inter-relationships in a detailed and balanced manner. With the exhibition *Welcome to Jerusalem*, we have thus decided to track down the characteristic feature of the city, the fate of which is closely linked with the sacredness attributed to it—ideally and economically, culturally and politically. We present Jerusalem especially as a city which is seen as being an indispensable, sacred place for the three monotheistic religions. We strive to explore the tensions between the holy and the physical city, which are responsible for the fact that Jerusalem constantly comes into the firing line of political battles.

With the aid of historical exhibits, media presentations, and artistic reactions to the manifold challenges of this city, several thematic fields are addressed, which illustrate the confrontation between the spiritual and secular dimensions: in »Mapping the City,« Jerusalem is mapped out within the geography of its surroundings and presented in various cartographic works; »Pilgrimages« presents religiously motivated travels of devout Christians, Jews, and Muslims;¹ »The Holy City« focuses on the sacred buildings of the three monotheistic religions, including the old cemeteries. In the sector titled »Temple,« the architecture, function, and meaning of

¹ We owe the fundamental insight that the economy of Jerusalem was always determined by pilgrims and pilgrimages to Wolfgang Zwickel, who competently supported us in the preparations for the exhibition from the very beginning. The model of the Herodian Temple and the historical multi-media installation on the meaning and function of the temple could not have been realized without his help.

the sacrificial cult is presented as a place of communication between God and His people Israel: the starting point that once defined Jerusalem as a sacred place. »Both Sides of the City Wall« addresses the modernization and expansion of the city at the end of the Ottoman Empire; the local connection of modern tourism and politics are outlined using the example of prominent hotels.

The exhibition extends the horizon on present-day Jerusalem by showing contemporary art. Mona Hatoum, Gustav Metzger and Fazal Sheikh deal with incidents of recent historical moments that relate directly to their own personal experience. While each has their own creative approach, their works make aesthetic statements which encourage multi-layered and diverse interpretations. This is true of the conceptual piece »Present Tense« by Mona Hatoum about newly mapping Palestine after the Oslo Accords. Gustav Metzger's »Jerusalem, Jerusalem« highlights the two-faced nature of the present-day terror in Jerusalem. »Memory Trace« by Fazal Sheikh—presenting images of the ruins left behind by the violence after the 1948 war—deals with the cultural and historical landscape of Palestine. The »Vest of Prayers« by Andi Arnovitz, video installations by Yael Bartana and by Nira Pereg, and the photo series by Wolfgang Strassl of the settlements surrounding Jerusalem round off the artistic perspective.

Finally, Jerusalem—for both Israel and Palestine the immutable core of national self-determination—is presented as an embattled city. What everyday life looks like under these conditions is related by a trail of contemporary commentaries by residents of Jerusalem from the ZERO ONE project *24h Jerusalem*.

The present publication accompanies the exhibition. Here, authors from various backgrounds present their views of the historical, political, and cultural aspects of Jerusalem—and, in the epilogue, also a view of a possible future.